

Developing a Dropout Early Warning and Intervention System (DEWIS)

Phase 1: Laying the Foundation



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Introduction

Achieving a high level of education and skills has become an economic necessity in the 21st Century. However, according to statistics from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), 27.5 percent of students in the Class of 2007 did not graduate on-time with their peers. The consequences of not graduating from high school are serious for both individuals and society as a whole. Students who exit school prematurely face an uphill battle throughout their lifetime in securing a livable wage in the global economy.

Discussion of effective dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval is a hot topic in schools across the nation. In particular, emphasis on the creation and development of dropout early warning data systems is of great interest. While much work is being done in this area, little has been written about the details surrounding the development, implementation, and use of such a system.

Guided by current national research and the recommendations of the Washington State Building Bridges Early Warning Data Subcommittee, OSPI formed a Breakthrough Action Team (BAT) to develop and pilot a dropout early warning data and intervention system. This was a collaborative effort with the Shelton School District, Educational Service District #113, and the Washington School Information Processing Cooperative (WSIPC).



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700 South 1st Street - Shelton, Washington 98584 (360) 426-1687



Developing a Dropout Early Warning and Intervention System

A Dropout Early Warning and Intervention System (DEWIS) provides a framework for educational planning that is outcome oriented and promotes greater involvement and ownership in the decision making process by key stakeholders.

The primary benefit of this type of systematic planning includes the ability to identify and describe, in consistent terms, those students who are at greatest risk of academic failure so that intervention can occur early. Other benefits include the ability to correlate, with a retroactive view overtime, specific interventions to academic success, thereby allowing schools to confidently develop and implement appropriate intervention programming.

Project Model

This project utilized the “Breakthrough Strategy*” as frame work for implementation. “Breakthrough” is a proven method for successfully changing organizations, using the principle of *Rapid Cycle Change*.

*The Breakthrough Strategy, by Robert Schaffer (Collins, 1989)

- Pull together *small teams* to deliver *concrete, measurable results on critical issues* in a *short time frame*.
- Develop “razor sharp goal”- must be challenging but achievable- within existing resources and authority, quantifiable, focused on bottom-line results



*Third Way Consulting Group

Project Goal

The project goal was to develop an early warning data system that effectively identifies students “at-risk” of dropping out and an intervention process to link identified students with services and monitor progress. The project was implemented in the following locations:

- Shelton High School (Grades 10–12).
- CHOICE (Challenging High School Opportunities in Continuing Education) High School (Grades 9–12).
- Oakland Bay Junior High (Grades 8–9).

To make Phase One of the project manageable and to work within given time constraints, a decision was made to implement the project at the junior and senior high school levels. Phase Two of the project will include implementation of the DEWIS system at the elementary level.

Important Project Note

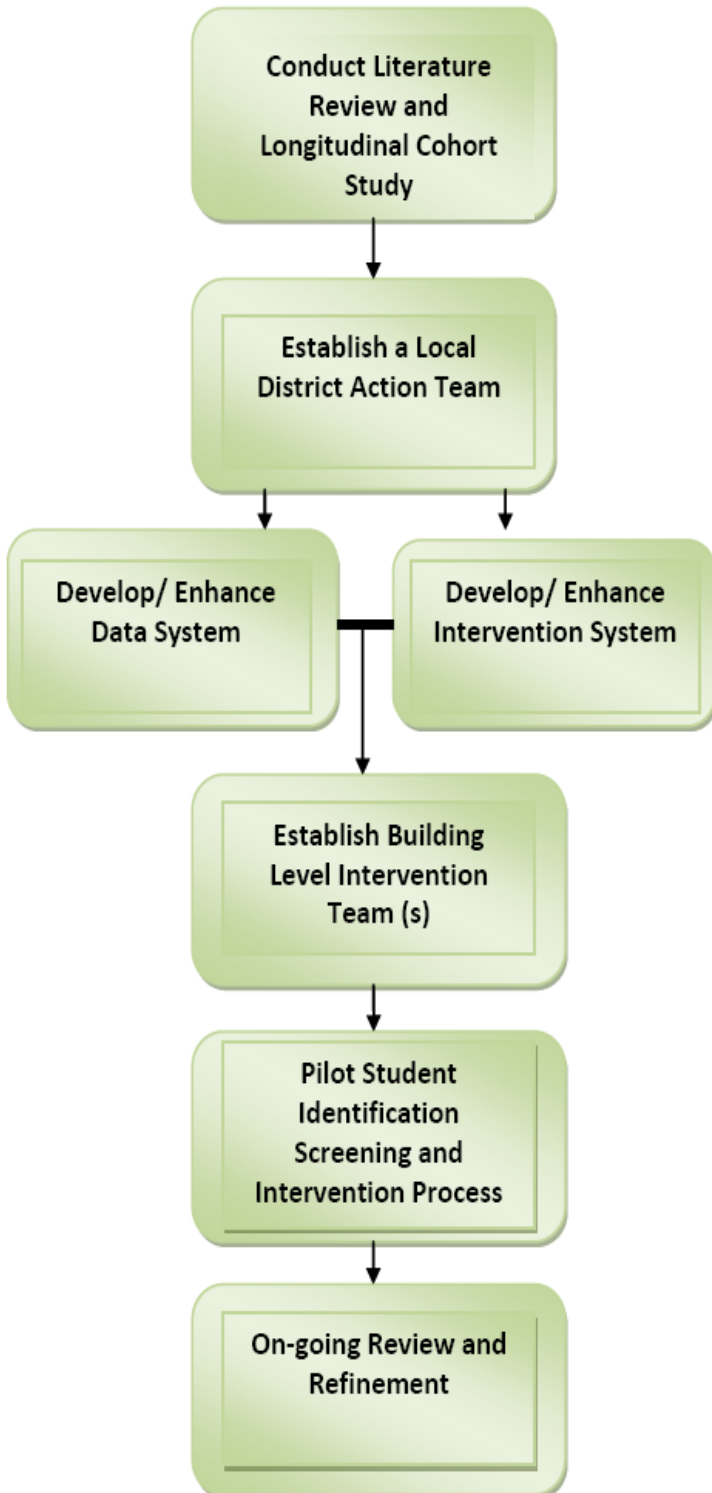
This report provides a concrete example from one cross agency partnership to implement a dropout early warning and intervention system. The goal was to use data to make informed decisions regarding the identification of students “at-risk” of academic failure and to address the needs of these students.

It is important to note that the process outlined here represents an ongoing project. This document covers Phase One which describes the data system and intervention development process. Phase Two will cover the details of building level intervention system implementation, as well as progress monitoring and administrative functions. Certain passages in this report cite the work of others who have studied dropout warning systems or intervention systems. All information in this report without a source citation is synthesized directly from the work of our local/regional/state team and based on information contained in the project resources section of this document.

DEWIS Process Model and Steps to Implementation

The DEWIS Process Model and 7 Steps outlined below reflect the work to date by the state level BAT Team to accomplish the project goal.

DEWIS Process Model



7 Steps to Implementation

1. Conduct an early warning cohort study and/or review the results of such studies in other districts to identify early warning indicators that are predictive of dropout for students at different grade levels.
2. Establish a local district action team.
3. Develop/enhance data system.
 - Establish the warning thresholds as appropriate for different grade levels.
 - Establish protocol based on information available in existing systems to generate ancillary reports for students who are identified at risk.
 - Determine capacity of existing data system to track indicators and modify indicators to make them consistent.
 - Establish data intervention codes.
4. Develop/enhance intervention system.
 - Catalog the intervention responses available in the schools and in the community.
 - Determine timing of screenings.
5. Establish building level teams(s).
 - Train identified building staff on data system protocols and functioning.
6. Pilot student identification screening and intervention process.
7. After period of implementation (e.g., 3 months, 12 months), review system function and refine.

STEP 1: Literature Review and Longitudinal Cohort Study

The state level BAT team began the project with a review of available dropout prevention and intervention literature to identify best practices.

Research shows conducting a longitudinal cohort study followed by the regular analysis of student data is the critical first step both for determining the scope of the dropout problem, and for identifying the specific students who are at-risk of dropping out and should be considered for extra services or supports. The effectiveness of programs to reduce dropping out depends on whether they are provided to the students who are most in need and whether they are designed to meet student needs. Programs designed to target students at-risk of dropping out need a way to identify the population they wish to serve.

While school districts and individual school buildings track dropout information and related demographics, this information does not always illustrate the risk factors associated with dropping out.

"Longitudinal data, information collected and accumulated overtime, permit(s) analysts to follow the progress of individual students as they progress from grade to grade as members of a 'cohort,' a group of students who start out in the same grade at the same time. Such data makes it possible to observe what happens to students who develop risk factors *at any point* along the way, and thereby to paint a more detailed, nuanced portrait of the patterns and pathways students tend to follow as they move toward dropping out or graduating from high school." (Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons for Building an Early Warning Data System, Achieve Inc., Craig D. Jerald, President, Break the Curve Consulting, June 2006).

To conduct a longitudinal cohort study, districts can use existing database information on previous cohorts (those students whose expected graduation dates have past). Looking at past student cohorts of both graduates and dropouts allow districts to identify predictive risk factors associated with their dropout populations.

"The development of comprehensive, longitudinal, student-level databases that include unique student identifiers has permitted researchers to identify factors associated with dropping out. Such databases now permit school personnel to better identify the individual students at-risk of dropping out, and to identify them earlier. Researchers agree that student absences, grade retention, and low academic achievement are indicators for dropping out, and research shows that critical transition points such as the move from middle school to high school are difficult for already struggling students. Low socio-economic status and behavioral problems are also known risk factors for dropping out." (United States Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, September 2008).



The Importance of Leadership

The leadership role is critical to success in developing and implementing a Dropout Early Warning and Intervention System (DEWIS). Research on the impact of leadership on organizational outcomes, including those for public education, has provided significant evidence of a correlation between intentional behaviors on the part of leaders and progress toward attainment of organizational goals.

The collaborative project described in this publication developed a leadership team comprised of individuals from three organizational levels within the public school system in Washington – school district (Shelton), regional educational service district support agency (ESD 113), and state education agency (OSPI), and the student information system vendor (WSIPC). The symbiosis created by these four strategic partners was critical to the success of the project. Local leaders drew inspiration and motivation from the involvement and interest of the state education agency leaders. The work of the local leaders was supported by Shelton School District and ESD 113 staff, including program directors, data center staff, grants funded program staff, student assistance professionals, and executive leadership.

STEP 2: Establish a Local District Action Team



The Shelton School District Breakthrough Action Team (BAT)

Teamwork was found to be the critical element to implementing the Dropout Early Warning and Intervention System to meet the needs of students at-risk of dropping out of high school before graduating.

Local Action Team Representation

- Superintendent.
- Principals.
- Counselors.
- Learning Support Staff.
- School Nurses.
- Teaching Staff.
- Career and Technical Education.
- Tribal Representatives.
- Juvenile Court Representatives.
- School Psychologist.
- Special Education.
- Drug/Alcohol Intervention Specialist.
- Research and Data Specialists.

A solid team with strong leadership and diverse representation of district, school staff, and community partners is essential to the implementation of a dropout early warning system and intervention process.

Leadership

Active and committed leadership is needed at both the district and building levels to ensure the following components are achieved:

- Setting clear project goals and expectations—keeping activities that propel the group toward reaching the goal always on the forefront.
- Understanding of the community in order to select those participants who will be valuable contributors.
- Composing a group that is willing to collaborate in a strong sense of teamwork.
- Determining a meeting time that is best for all involved.
- Creating buy in with building administrators and planning for regular communication to update on project progress and for support during building level implementation.

Selecting Team Members

It is essential that a responsive team be developed locally to address the needs of at-risk students to prevent them from dropping out of school. Below are several team building recommendations:

- Establish a group that represents a cross-section of the stakeholders in the school community.
- It is vital that each school building have at least one representative. These individuals will take the lead on implementing the project at the local building level.
- Roles and responsibilities must be established early in the process; effective communication is key.
- Access a leader/facilitator who understands the community in order to select those participants who will be valuable contributors.
- Be active, meet regularly, and be intentional—be willing to strive to reach the goal in due time.
- Compose a group that is willing to collaborate in a strong sense of teamwork.

Developing a Work Plan

A solid work plan provides structure and guidance to help keep the team on task. It is important to:

- Establish a representative group of the school community that is not too large.
- Remember the work is dealing with human beings, not just data and numbers.
- Provide time for reflection and evaluation of activities.

What the Literature Says

In “*Identifying potential dropouts: Key lessons for building an early warning data system*” Jerald (2006) identifies two important categories of risk factors to address when building an early warning system:

1. **Academic Performance:** Low grades, low test scores, F’s in English and math, falling behind in course credits, and being held back one or more times all have been linked to lower chances for graduation.
2. **Educational Engagement:** High rates of absenteeism or truancy, poor classroom behavior, less participation in extracurricular activities, and bad relationships.

Jerald, C. D. (2006). *Identifying potential dropouts: Key lessons for building an early warning data system—A dual agenda of high standards and high graduation rates*. Washington, DC: Achieve, Inc.



Data System Requirements

A good dropout early warning system relies on student information that exists at the school level. For many schools this information is already available in their student information systems. Data systems should include the following student information:

- A unique student identifier that allows an individual student to be tracked by grade level and from elementary to middle to high school.
- Accurate enrollment information, including entry and exit by school attended.
- Demographic information, including eligibility for the federal free and reduced-price lunch program, race/ethnicity, gender, and age.

Universal Screening Criteria: Identifying Risk Factors

Early warning indicators can vary by school or district. The variables below are a place to start, but continued refinement and exploration of different variables like mobility, transfers, behaviors, student perceptual data, and other possible elements should be used to continuously improve and enhance the early warning system. The following variables have been used to screen for student risk:

Academic Credits (At grade level)—The student’s grade level and number of credits accumulated to date to prepare for graduation. Current state data systems also may collect two related data elements of GPA and expected year of graduation which could also provide an understanding of student progress. Local school districts should be collecting student level information directly relating to students accumulation of academic credits towards graduation.

Basic Skills (two failed state exams)—These data elements are collected by all state agencies, but for some they may be end of course or diagnostic assessments.

Grading (Failing course(s))—This is a common data element available at the local school level. Some state data systems are now starting to collect this for transcript reporting.

Adjudication (Truancy)—Student association with juvenile justice system.

Attendance/Enrollment Status (Greater than five days absent)—This data element is captured in most data systems. The local level should be targeted to actual student daily attendance activities.

Retention—This element can be either present in the system or determined by the relationship of the students’ date of birth (age) and students current grade level.

Conducting a Preliminary Screening

Once the screening criteria have been established, a preliminary screening of all students should be conducted. This process will generate a list of identified students of concern. It is recommended that this list be reviewed by school staff (i.e. school counselors, intervention specialists, advisors). Feedback from this process may identify data integrity issues which may prevent accurate identification of students.

The universal screening list is a starting point. Academic risk factors illustrate only part of the issue. Ancillary reporting elements, including nonacademic factors, help to complete the picture of an individual student's risk factors, and can inform decision making by administrators.

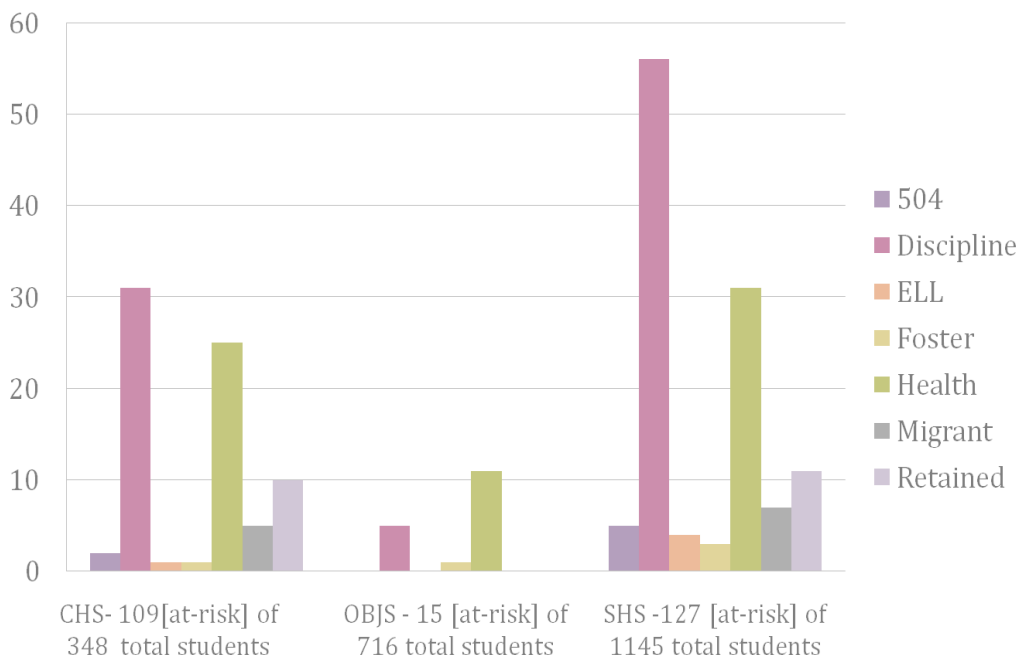
These additional data elements have been found to be helpful:

- 504 *Does the student have a 504 Plan?*
- Dropout *Has the student had a previous dropout withdrawal?*
- Discipline *Suspension/Expulsion as well as other infractions.*
- D&F Grades *Grades from current course work.*
- ELL *Is the student enrolled in an English Language Learning program?*
- Migrant *Is the student enrolled?*
- Foster Care *Is the student in the Foster Care system?*
- Health *Does the student have health issues?*
- Retention *From grades prior to grade 5.*



Shelton Universal Screening/Ancillary Report Summary

As illustrated by the chart below at Shelton High School, 127 students were identified by the universal screening as at risk. Of those students 56 (44 percent) have significant discipline issues, and 31 (24 percent) have significant health concerns. These secondary risk factors may not have been identified had the team not decided to include nonacademic risk factors in the screening process. The literature indicates that the consideration of nonacademic barriers to learning is a vital component to the development of a comprehensive dropout early warning system.



"Using the DEWIS we have been able to identify and then reach out to those students who have been flying under the radar who were in need of services or an intervention. Without using the DEWIS those students otherwise may have not been brought to our attention."

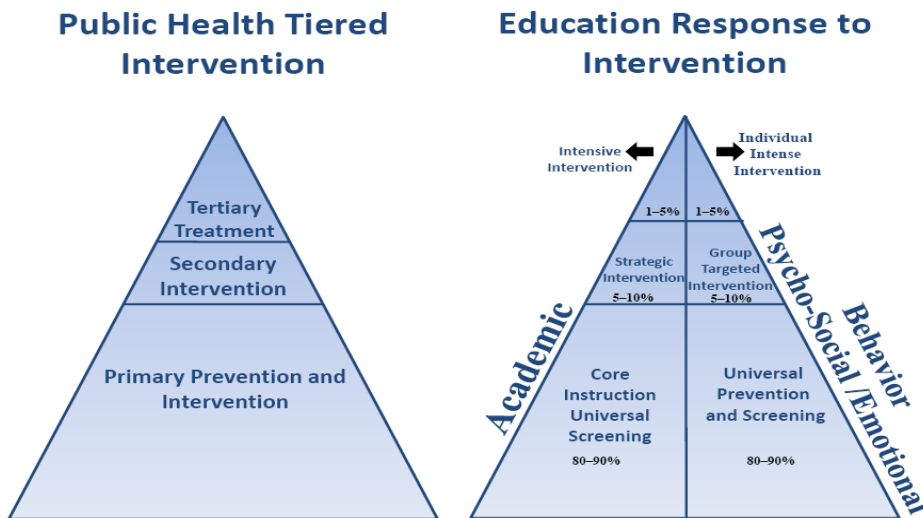
-Shelton BAT Team Member

STEP 4: Develop/Enhance Intervention System

Identifying students at-risk of dropping out by using an early warning system is only the first step in addressing the dropout challenge. Next steps include: identifying and cataloging programs and resources available both within the school district and in the community; utilizing a tiered intervention model to outline a service delivery plan; and developing a progress monitoring system.

Response to Intervention Model

In the DEWIS development and implementation process outlined here, the Response to Intervention (RTI) model is used as a framework for cataloging interventions, and also for the development of an intervention process.



Tiered intervention models have been used extensively for many decades in public health. RTI is a tiered intervention model modified for education. Note that this approach includes multiple tiers of increasingly intense scientific, research-based interventions that are matched to student need. Consider the following example:

	Public Health	Education	
	Cardiac Health	Dropout Prevention, Intervention, and Retrieval	
		Academic	Behavior (social-emotional)
Tier 3 Intensive Individual	Cardiac surgery, ICU care, end of life care.	Credit retrieval, Special Education.	Intensive case management, intensive individual interventions (chemical dependency treatment, behavior contracts, mental health Interventions, etc.)
Tier 2 Targeted Group	Diet/lifestyle modifications, medication intervention.	Differentiated instruction, group tutoring programs.	Afterschool programming, group mentoring programs, chemical dependency groups.
Tier 1 Universal	Health Education, Health screenings (weight, B/P, EKG, etc.)	Core curriculum, standardized assessment.	District counseling services, dropout early warning system, universal screening component.

Response to Intervention

“RTI” is an assessment and intervention process for systematically monitoring student progress and making decisions about need for instructional modifications or increasing intensified services using progress monitoring data.

“RTI” Overview

- Uses all available resources to teach all students.
- Uses high quality, research-based instruction and behavioral supports in education.
- Uses an assessment system which includes: universal screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments.
- Uses multiple tiers of increasingly intense scientific, research-based interventions that are matched to student need.
- Uses a collaborative and/or prescriptive approach by school staff for development, implementation, and monitoring of the intervention process.
- Uses data to inform instruction and to guide educational determinations.

Batsche, G., Elliott, J., Graden, J., Grimes, J., Kovaleski, J., Prasse, D., et al. (2005). Response to Intervention: Policy Considerations and Implementation. Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Directors of Special Education.

The local action team needs to catalog existing programs and resources (both school and community based). This is an important step for two reasons: to establish a baseline of available services, and to identify gaps in services. This is a time consuming process, necessitating both group work and individual interviews with team members. One or two people should be identified to take the lead on this task.

Below is a sample matrix used to catalog interventions. A separate matrix should be completed for each tier of the RTI Model. See appendix A for a matrix template.

Benefits of a School/Community Partnership Approach

This project was able to draw on the expertise of members from the Mason County Consortium for Student Achievement. This diverse group of school, tribal, and agency staff were foundational members of the Local Breakthrough Action Team.

Partners in this project:

- Demonstrated a willingness to share resources and participate in joint activities.
- Gained a preliminary sense of their common concerns related to identifying and serving students at risk of dropping out.
- Developed a shared understanding of the gaps in existing services and resources.
- Began to adopt ongoing mechanisms for sharing information among themselves and with key community stakeholders.

Domain	Program/Activity	Student Eligibility	Provider	Description
Academic	Tutoring			
	Afterschool			
	Adult Education			
	IEP			
Basic Needs	504			
	Food			
	Clothing			
	Transportation			
	Child Care			
	Public Assistance			
Employment	Translation Services			
	Exploration			
Health	Apprenticeship			
	Physical			
	Mental Health			
	Substance Abuse			
	Nursing Services			
	Hearing			
	Vision			
Legal	Dental			
	Delinquency			
	Truancy			
Social-Emotional	Assistance			
	Advocates			
	Liaisons			
	Foster Care/CPS			
	Behavioral			
	Counseling			

Coding Available Interventions

Coding interventions serves several functions and acts as a bridge between the data system and student support services. This process allows for tracking of individual student enrollment and progress in support programs, as well as the aggregation and analysis of data to inform action.

Development of an intervention coding system included incorporating the tier level number associated with the RTI model, the first letter of the domain name and then alphabetizing the program/activity and assigning that letter as part of the 3-letter code, i.e., 1AA = Academic Tutoring and 1AB = Academic After School (these two examples are both at a tier 1 intervention level).

Domain	Program/Activity
Academic (A)	Tutoring (A)
	After School (B)

Intervention Process

Once data and intervention systems have been developed, the project moves from the larger team to the local individual building level. Most schools have some existing team approach to identify and meet the needs of “at-risk” students. It is important to integrate the DEWIS with these existing teams and processes. Full implementation of a DEWIS approach requires that identified students be paired with staff members who are responsible for providing student and family support and progress monitoring.

Project leadership will need to work closely with the local building representatives and school administrators to identify existing teams and approaches used to identify and serve “at-risk” students. Teams should utilize the results of the universal screening and ancillary reports to identify additional intervention team participants. For example, if a high percentage of identified students have health concerns, it would be important to involve the school nurse.

The following functions need to be considered when assigning roles and responsibilities for intervention team members:

- Conducting universal screening and compiling student level and aggregate building level reports.
- Team facilitation.
- Data entry/record keeping.
- Individual student and family support.
- Student support/case management.

"By implementing the Dropout Early Warning System and the Breakthrough Action Team, our school has been able to prioritize the students who are in need of more attention towards academics and social services."

-Heather Morrow, Education Advocate,
Family Resource Coordinator

Information Management

It cannot be overemphasized how important it is to have data entry and student information system staff involved at every level of the DEWIS development. Many of the duties of a **lead** data management person include:

- Ensuring and overseeing the integrity of the data.
- Knowing the capabilities and limitations of the data system.
- Understanding how users will use the data system.
- Recognizing the limitations of the users.
- Problem solving data inconsistencies.
- Maintaining and assigning security access to data system.
- Understanding laws regarding privacy for student and how it might affect security rights for users.
- Training members and staff to use data system and providing data system support as needed.

Data Entry/Record Keeping

- Enter and assign interventions to students.
- Create ancillary reports that will give a holistic view of student.
- Maintain daily records to keep data current.
- Smile—the ones that graduate will be well worth the effort of everyone involved.

STEP 6: Pilot Student Identification Screening Intervention Process

Building Intervention Teams

The first task of the building team is to establish universal screening timeframes. It is recommended that a universal screening on the entire student body be conducted shortly after each grading period. Once students are identified individual student reports (to include universal screening and ancillary report information) must be compiled.

- Intervention teams meet to review screening results :
 - Identify students who are already receiving services-document services using intervention codes. Review effectiveness of current interventions.
 - For students not currently receiving services determine the most appropriate level of intervention and specific services.

- Identify a staff person responsible for providing student and family support and progress monitoring. Tasks include:
 - Making appropriate referrals.
 - Providing ongoing progress monitoring.
 - Addressing any unmet needs.

- Plan for and schedule following progress monitoring meetings. It is recommended these occur at least once a month.

The Importance of Ongoing Progress Monitoring

For any DEWIS system to be effective, it is essential that progress monitoring be conducted frequently. Regular progress monitoring will allow the team to estimate improvement rates and to identify students who are not demonstrating adequate progress. Over the long term, this process will allow the team to compare the efficacy of different forms of intervention and identify any additional services that may be needed by students.

The following is a sample, student specific, intervention/student success form to help guide the Intervention Team process:

DEWIS INTERVENTION STUDENT:			
Intervention Team Members: School and Grade Level: _____		Assigned To: Academic Advisor: _____	
Date and Term: _____		Academic Advisor: _____	
STUDENT RISK FACTORS			
Criteria flagged circle each that applies: Credit retrieval #: _____ Foster care Adjudication (truancy) Attendance (>5 days absent) ELL			
Basic Skills (failed state exam) Subject area: _____ Retention Health Issues Migrant			
Discipline Failing grades Classes failed: _____			
NARRATIVE			
Additional information: Academic Advisor: _____			
Other teachers: _____			
School Nurse: _____			
Assigned case manager: _____			
PREVIOUS INTERVENTIONS			
[Parent Involvement] Any attempts to involve parent(s)/guardian(s)? Result: _____			
[Behavior] Has the student's support team developed a behavior intervention plan? Yes/No Describe: Result: _____ What classroom behavior management techniques have been used? In which classrooms? Result: _____ Referrals to administrators? Yes/No Frequency: _____ Reason: Referrals to counselor? Yes/No Reason(s): Result: _____			
DEWIS INTERVENTION STUDENT:			
Intervention Team Members: School and Grade Level: _____		Assigned To: Academic Advisor: _____	
Date and Term: _____		Academic Advisor: _____	
[Academic] Additional academic support? Yes/No Circle: After-school program tutoring mentoring Other: _____			
Other team members involved: Result: _____ IEP or 504? Yes/No Which: _____ Briefly explain accommodations planned: _____			
STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN			
[Intervention Strategy]	[Person Responsible]	[Target Dates]	[Desired Outcome]
CONCLUSION			
[Notes]			
[Scheduled Follow-up Meeting]			

Full size copies of the DEWIS Student Information forms can be found in Appendix B of this report.

STEP 7: Ongoing Review and Refinement



With Phase One successfully completed, the state level BAT team has made a commitment to continue to work together on Phase Two. Phase Two will include:

- A longitudinal cohort study.
- More work on RTI professional development activities and integration of the DEWIS system with the newly developed Shelton RTI team.
- Review and refine the building level intervention system implementation including a more detailed plan for progress monitoring.
- Extend this work to the elementary school level.
- Develop a plan for how administrators can use the information gathered from this process to make informed decisions related to needed programming and school improvement strategies.
- Perceptual work (such as focus groups or surveys) with our clients (students and parents) to ascertain which barriers to achievement are the most significant to them, as well as which interventions are most helpful, or what type of intervention is not accessible.
- Continue to share what we have learned.

Acknowledgments

Without the hard work, dedication, and wisdom of the local Shelton School District BAT team, this work would have not been possible. We greatly appreciate the work of the following individuals:

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Dan Ryder
Susie Wirzbicki

CHOICE Administration
Squaxin Island Tribe
Capital Regional Center
OSPI
CHOICE Teacher
OBJH Administration
SHS Administration
CHOICE Counselor
District Psychologist/Secondary
MC Juvenile Court
Assistant Superintendent
OBJH Counselor
Skokomish Tribe
True North
Skyward Database Support
School Nurse
BB/ESD 113/Shelton High School
RTL/BB ESD 113
BB/ESD 113
SOCK/BB/RTL
SHS Counselor

sanderson@sheltonschoools.org
warcher@squaxin.nsn.us
sbeauregard@esd113.k12.wa.us
annie.blackledge@k12.wa.us
ebrees@sheltonschoools.org
bbudge@sheltonschoools.org
pcusack@sheltonschoools.org
kfletcher@sheltonschoools.org
vforbes@sheltonschoools.org
hfh@co.mason.wa.us
wghansen@sheltonschoools.org
dholden@sheltonschoools.org
ahkriska@skokomish.org
cjohnson@esd113.k12.wa.us
klundeen@sheltonschoools.org
amadea@sheltonschoools.org
hmorrow@sheltonschoools.org
lnelson@esd113.k12.wa.us
rpulsifer@esd113.k12.wa.us
dryder@esd113.k12.wa.us
swirzbicki@sheltonschoools.org

Supportive leadership was key to the projects' success.

Working across systems can sometimes be difficult. Limited time, funding, and differences in each system's mission, infrastructures, policies, and practices can be barriers to effective collaboration. This project began with the full support of respective leadership from all of the organizations involved. The leadership of OSPI, ESD 113, Shelton School District, and WSIPC acknowledged potential barriers up front. They committed the time of individual team members to participate in the project, made themselves available to address any systems barriers the team encountered, and closely monitored the progress of the project. The support of this project validated our statewide educational infrastructure model and exemplified what a committed group of professionals can accomplish when they are able to overcome systems differences and work together for a common purpose.

**Realistic timelines and professional development activities are important.**

The project began using the breakthrough method for implementation. The essence of the breakthrough model is to pull together small teams to deliver concrete, measurable results on critical business issues in a very short time frame—typically 90–100 days. While this approach allowed the team to achieve significant results in a short period of time, it limited the amount of time that could be spent on developmental activities and professional development opportunities. As a consequence the team moved through the development phase of the intervention system too quickly, forcing the team to return to foundational design activities several times. This halted progress on some aspects of the project and required a few significant revisions along the way. This was especially true at the local building level where only a few of the intervention team members were involved on the local BAT team.

It is critical to start with a complete picture of the students that are dropping out.

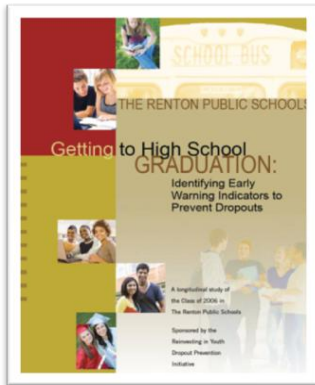
Reflecting upon the first year of implementation, the team agreed that a longitudinal cohort study should have been conducted prior to the development of the local team. In lieu of a cohort study, the team chose to establish early warning indicators based on information gained from an in depth literature review. By not immersing the local district team in their own student data, a critical step in creating buy in from building level staff was inadvertently bypassed. If administrators and school staff are to make decisions that lead to the development of clear objectives and strategies for school improvement, it is important that they be involved in the collection, management, and analysis of student data to effectively assess areas where students are not achieving.

Information management is integral to the development of an efficient DEWIS data system.

It cannot be overemphasized how important it is to have highly trained and committed data entry and student information system staff. The foundational components of comprehensive information management are data entry, reporting, cleaning, and interpretation.

Equal attention must be given to both the data components used to identify and monitor students and the human team that must implement the intervention system.

Dropout early warning system literature mainly focuses on the development of a tool to identify students at-risk. A lot of time was spent on the goal of implementing the data system; however, the team found that support of the human system was equally important and needed much more attention than originally anticipated. In Phase two the team will dedicate more focus on the intervention system necessary to address student needs and monitor their progress. Local building teams will provide the leadership to refine and evaluate the intervention process.



Getting to High School Graduation: Identifying Early Warning Indicators to Prevent Dropouts

Contact Renton School District for more information on this publication.

Getting to High School Graduation

Reinvesting in youth, in partnership with Renton Public Schools in Renton, Washington, conducted a longitudinal cohort analysis of students progressing from sixth grade through high school graduation.

Based on this study, they identified five indicators to a student dropping out before graduation:

INDICATOR 1: Transition Risk

- Middle to high school.
- Between school years.
- Quarters just prior to graduation.

INDICATOR 2: Achievement Risk

- State Exam failure in seventh grade.

INDICATOR 3: Academic Risk

- Ninth grade academic success or failure.

INDICATOR 4: Attendance Risk

- Class attendance.

INDICATOR 5: Disruptions Risk

- Entered middle school after sixth grade.
- Entered high school after ninth grade.
- Transferred within district 3+ times.
- Transferred out of district and later re-enrolled.
- Withdrew/failed to show up but returned later.



Achieve Inc. Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons to Building an Early Warning Data System

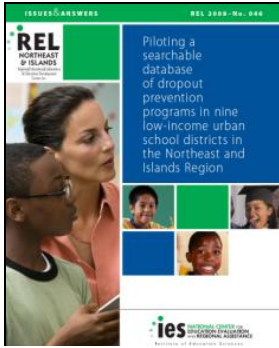
http://www.achieve.org/files/FINAL-dropouts_0.pdf

Early Warning Data Systems

Database—Will We Have To Buy or Build To Do This?

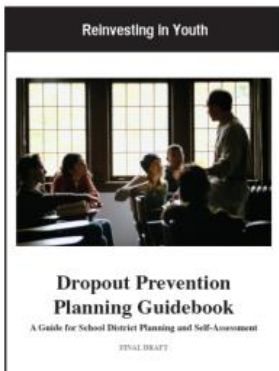
In general, such databases should include:

- A unique student identifier that allows an individual student to be tracked by grade level and from elementary to middle to high school.
- Accurate enrollment information on each student, including entry and exit by school attended.
- Student demographic information, including eligibility for the federal free and reduced-price meal program, race/ethnicity, gender, and age.
- Student transcript information, including courses attempted, courses completed, grades, credits earned, and any instances of being retained in a grade.
- Student attendance.
- Student behavior grades or discipline records.
- Student graduation and dropout information.



Piloting a searchable database of dropout prevention programs in nine low income, urban school districts in the Northeast and Islands Region:

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlas>



Reinvesting in Youth: Dropout Prevention Planning Guide book

<http://psed.org/images/stories/LandT/riy/finalguidebook-tool.6.30.08.pdf>

Piloting a searchable database

“Despite evidence that some dropout prevention programs have positive effects, whether districts in the region are using such evidence-based programs has not been documented. This report details a pilot project to generate and share knowledge by building a searchable database of dropout programs and policies.”

To generate and share knowledge on dropout programs and policies, this report details a project to create a searchable database with information on target audiences, prevention strategies, age ranges, in-school and out-of-school staff involvement, and whether programs were reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse. Based on the dropout prevention literature, the database identifies nine service goals (such as increase school attachment and decrease truancy) and 17 core strategies (such as community learning curricula and tutoring/extra classes) and maps these across schools, districts, and programs and policies.

Five Dimensions of Dropout Prevention Related to Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools/Districts

District Systemic Support

- (1) Clear and Shared Focus.
- (4) High Levels of Collaboration and Communication.
- (6) Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning.
- (7) Focused Professional Development.
- (8) Supportive Learning Environment.

Collaborative Networks

- (4) High Levels of Collaboration and Communication.
- (8) Supportive Learning Environment.
- (9) High Levels of Community and Parent Involvement.

Use of Data

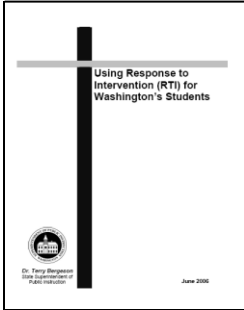
- (5) Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Aligned with Standards.
- (6) Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning.

Teaching and Learning

- (2) High Standards and Expectations.
- (5) Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Aligned with Standards.
- (7) Focused Professional Development (e.g., training around instruction).

Leadership Development

- (1) Clear and Shared Focus.
- (3) Effective School Leadership.



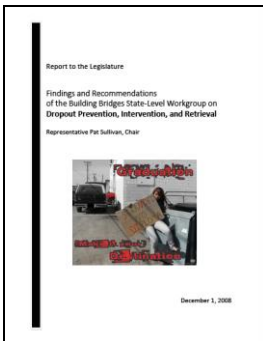
Using Response to Intervention for Washington's Students (June 2006)

<http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/pubdocs/RTI.pdf>

Using Response to Intervention for Washington's Students is designed to: (a) explain the principles and components of the RTI process; (b) provide guidelines related to decision making within a RTI system; (c) recommend how to use RTI data in identifying specific learning disabilities; (d) answer common questions; and (e) identify additional resources that school districts may use in developing their own RTI systems. Recent research shows that multi-tiered models are effective educational practices within schools to bring high quality instruction to **all** students.

The RTI concepts presented in this document make use of a multi-tiered approach that incorporate the aspects of a personalized education. The use of “tiered” models is common in both education and mental health. For example, there are many similarities between this RTI framework and Washington’s K–12 Reading Model. While this manual intentionally aligns with the K–12 Reading Model, RTI may be applied to other academic content areas such as math, written language, and social behavior.

Due to the state’s cultural and linguistic diversity in student populations, resources, geographic areas, rural, urban, and suburban populations, it is expected that no two school districts or even school buildings will implement RTI in precisely the same way. With that in mind, this manual has been designed to propose a framework for schools and districts that choose to implement RTI.



Findings and Recommendation of the Building Bridges State-Level Workgroup on Dropout Prevention, Intervention, and Retrieval (December 2008)

<http://www.k12.wa.us/BuildingBridges/pubdocs/BuildingBridgesWorkgroupLegislativeReportDecember2008.pdf>

The Building Bridges Workgroup on Dropout Prevention, Intervention, and Retrieval urges bold and comprehensive action at the state and local level to solve this problem. They propose actions in three primary areas to change the systems that provide support for struggling students and dropouts.

First, the state must create a clear vision and goals to address the dropout issue and track progress toward achieving them. State policymakers must direct state agencies to work with each other and with schools, families, and communities to achieve those goals so that we have a coordinated system of cross-agency supports at the state and local level.

Second, school districts need resources and systems to plan and develop comprehensive, culturally relevant dropout prevention and intervention programs and activities, and to improve their capacity to work effectively with families and the local community to help all students graduate.

Third, we must create a dropout retrieval system which provides a meaningful career pathway option for students who have dropped out and are not likely to return to the K–12 school system. We cannot afford to give up on the many thousands of youth who have already dropped out or are so credit deficient that completion of a diploma before age 21 is highly unlikely. They need specialized and adequately funded education programs that are an integral part of Washington State’s basic education system.



Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Mona Johnson

Director, Learning and Teaching Support
(360) 725-6050

mona.johnson@k12.wa.us

Annie Blackledge

Program Supervisor, Building Bridges Program
(360) 725-6041

annie.blackledge@k12.wa.us

Ron Hertel

Program Supervisor, Readiness to Learn
(360) 725-4968

ron.hertel@k12.wa.us

Educational Service District 113

Mike Hickman

Assistant Superintendent
(360) 464-6710

mhickman@esd113.k12.wa.us

Todd Johnson Ph.D., CRC

Director, Center for Research and Data Analysis
(360) 464-6740

tjohnson@esd113.k12.wa.us

Lynn Nelson RN, MSN, NCSN

Program Director
(360) 464-6866

lnelson@esd113.k12.wa.us

Sue Beauregard

Student Records Coordinator
(360) 464-6768

sbeauregard@esd113.k12.wa.us

Shelton School District

Gordy Hansen

Assistant Superintendent
(360) 426-1687

wghansen@sheltonschools.org

Kitty Lundeen-Ness

Information Technology Coordinator
(369) 426-1987

klundeen@sheltonschools.org

Washington School Information Processing Cooperative

Sue Furth

Director, WSIPC Customer Connection
(425) 349-6530

sfurth@wsipc.org

**Appendix A:
Intervention Catalog Template**

Domain	Program/Activity	Student Eligibility	Providers	Brief Description
Academic				
Basic Needs				
Employment				
Health				
Legal				
Social-Emotional				

Appendix B:
DEWIS Student Intervention Form

DEWIS Intervention Student:		
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top; border: none;"> Intervention Team Members: School and Grade Level: Date and Term: </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top; border: none;"> Assigned To: Academic Advisor: </td> </tr> </table>	Intervention Team Members: School and Grade Level: Date and Term:	Assigned To: Academic Advisor:
Intervention Team Members: School and Grade Level: Date and Term:	Assigned To: Academic Advisor:	
Student Risk Factors		
<p>Criteria flagged circle each that applies:</p> <p>Credit retrieval #: _____ Foster care Adjudication (truancy) Attendance (>5 days absent) ELL</p> <p>Basic Skills (failed state exam) Subject area: _____ Retention Health Issues Migrant</p> <p>Discipline Failing grades Classes failed: _____</p>		
Narrative		
<p>Additional information:</p> <p>Academic Advisor:</p> <p>Other Teachers:</p> <p>School Nurse:</p> <p>Assigned Case Manager:</p>		
Previous Interventions		
<p>[Parent Involvement]</p> <p>Any attempts to involve parent(s)/guardian(s)? Result:</p> <p>[Behavior]</p> <p>Has the student's support team developed a behavior intervention plan? Yes/No Describe:</p> <p>Result:</p> <p>What classroom behavior management techniques have been used?</p> <p>In which classrooms? Result:</p> <p>Referrals to administrators? Yes/No Frequency: _____ Reason:</p> <p>Referrals to counselor? Yes/No Reason(s):</p> <p>Result:</p> <p>[Academic]</p> <p>Additional academic support? Yes/No Circle: After-school program tutoring mentoring Other: _____</p> <p>Other team members involved: Result:</p> <p>IEP or 504? Yes/No Which: _____ Briefly explain accommodations planned:</p>		

**Appendix B:
DEWIS Student Intervention Form**

DEWIS Intervention Student:			
Intervention Team Members: School and Grade Level: Date and Term:		Assigned To: Academic Advisor:	
Student Success Plan			
[Intervention Strategy]	[Person Responsible]	[Target Dates]	[Desired Outcome]
Progress Monitoring			
[Scheduled Follow-up Meeting]			
[Follow-up Notes]			