



## Success Highways™ Implementation Models

Districts across the country implement *Success Highways* in a variety of ways, including:

### Incorporation into Core Content

As resiliency skills relate to academic success, many schools distribute and share resiliency data with core academic teachers, and/or incorporate the *Success Highways* curriculum into core academic content. For example, with the help of *Success Highways* professional developers, Milwaukee Public Schools Genesis High School teachers incorporated the *Success Highways* resiliency data into their formative data review. They then incorporated the 15 lesson *Success Highways* teacher-driven curriculum into their high school English and math classes. Through the lesson pedagogy, teachers worked with individual students to review their own data and monitor their progress and take responsibility for their growth. Milwaukee Public Schools and University of Wisconsin researchers analyzed this approach using a quasi-experimental, peer-reviewed research technique in South Division High School, WI. They were able to establish a correlation between students who learned resilience skills using the *Success Highways* paradigm with higher grades, higher attendance, and an increased rate of passed classes. These results were then replicated at other schools with large free and reduced lunch populations (Solberg et. al., 2001).

### Freshman Transition/9th Grade Academy

The literature suggests that all successful secondary school transformations occur within the context of a positive learning environment. Along with increasing academic achievement, this effort must include ensuring that students are challenged and engaged in learning, providing individualized learning experiences addressing individual needs, and helping students to see the relevance of their coursework by creating connections (Perlman & Redding, 2007). This is particularly important at the inception of the high school experience. Referred to as the "ninth grade bulge," students in ninth grade comprise the largest percentage of the overall high school population because they are much more likely to fall behind during this critical year and not be promoted to the tenth grade (Wheelock & Miao, 2005).

The Denver Public Schools (DPS) Ninth Grade Academy focuses in part on incorporating *Success Highways* in order to combine resiliency mastery with English and math enrichment. The goal of the Academy is to target progress in achievement, engagement, and graduation rates. Academic data was collected on approximately 900 participants of the program in 2007 as well as a comparison group comprised of approximately 700 DPS students who did not attend the program and were of similar academic proficiency, grade level, gender, race/ethnicity and free and reduced lunch status. The study found that students who participated in the Ninth Grade Academy outperformed the comparison group in reading and writing test scores as well as G.P.A.; additionally, they held higher attendance records and lower tardy rates and were less likely to be suspended or expelled. Furthermore, the Ninth Grade Academy students were significantly less likely to drop out of school and more likely to be on track to graduate (Denver Public School, 2009). Similar to the Denver model, Johns Hopkins Talent Development High Schools utilized *Success Highways* in its 9th Grade Freshman Seminar course in Chicago and Baltimore high schools. Compared to a similarly situated Talent Development control group, studies demonstrated that students exposed to the *Success Highways* content reported statistically significantly higher academic connections and school importance.

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## Success Highways™ Implementation Models (continued)

### Middle School

Transition from middle to high school is a critical point in a student's academic career. Research indicates that this time is often characterized by increased disengagement and a decline in grades, motivation, and attendance. Furthermore, many students either do not make it to the ninth grade, or they arrive lacking the preparation to successfully navigate the new academic and social demands of high school. Failure to meet these challenges is linked to school failure and highlights the fact that students' experiences during their first year of high school have significant implications (Perلمان & Redding, 2007). Unsuccessful high school transition is associated with higher dropout rates, delayed graduation rates, and low achievement (Herlihy, 2007). It is also important to note that these challenges are more prevalent in urban, high-poverty schools and among African American and Latino students and students with disabilities. Literature suggests that students with the necessary academic and socio-emotional supports follow smooth transitions from middle school to high school, and supports the implementation of transition programs and suggests that these interventions are linked to positive student outcomes such as higher student engagement and lower dropout rates (National High School Center, 2007).

The use of *Success Highways* has been successfully used in Broward County middle schools to ease the transition to high school. Teachers consistently reported they appreciated the content to address the nascent post-pubescent social emotional changes that occur during the middle school years (such as negative peer acceptance, confidence issues, and stress). Qualitative studies show that the schools' use of the *Success Highways* paradigm provided a more personalized learning environment and providing a self efficacy framework for academic ownership.

### Advisory

Schools around the country are utilizing *Success Highways* as an advisory component. Advisory is intended to facilitate meaningful interaction between teachers and students and provide a time for teachers to identify and respond to students' needs proactively. Interventions such as *Success Highways* are organized to match the needs of individual students with appropriate nonacademic interventions to support their academic learning. When implemented with fidelity, it will result in providing a meaningful and productive advisory time (Martin & Halperin, 2006). Effective examples of middle and high school advisory include Sunnyside Unified School District where all 8th, 9th and 10th graders were assessed on resiliency. A significant number of middle and high school guidance counselors and teachers were trained in interpreting the data and in using the *Success Highways* pedagogy in their advisory periods. All 8th grade students participated in the *Success Highways* content and many 9th and 10th grade students participated in *Success Highways* Down the Road enrichment activities. Transitioning 8-9th grade students who displayed resiliency risk factors are being specifically targeted by high school guidance for more specific advisory interventions.

### Response to Intervention/Social Emotional Tier I Intervention

The use at Sunnyside also fits into a Response to Intervention (RtI) model. RtI integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavior problems (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010). Within an RtI system, *Success Highways* provides a "social-behavioral" assessment and Tier I early intervention content. The validated data and monitoring framework is an integral part of the progress monitoring cycle and will both diagnose why students are struggling and provide scripted universal interventions. Its assessment component also provides information on which students either did not respond to the universal *Success Highways* intervention and/or need additional interventions.