DIPLOMAS NOW

Summer Institute

Philadelphia, PA

July 20-23, 2009





With generous support of \$5 million from the PepsiCo Foundation, the DIPLOMAS **NOW** initiative is looking to identify seven cities in which to implement its model over the next three years.

DIPLOMAS NOW

Site Operation Manual Summer 2009 Version





With generous support of \$5 million from the PepsiCo Foundation, the DIPLOMAS **NOW** initiative is looking to identify seven cities in which to implement its model over the next three years.

Diplomas Now Site Operation Manual

Summer 2009 Version

Table of Contents

Tab 1: Overview

- I. Welcome to Diplomas Now
- II. Building and Sustaining a Collaborative
- III. Diplomas Now Partners

Tab 2: Diplomas Now - Essential Components

Tab 3: The Early Warning Indicator System

- I. Shared Performance Impact Goals
- II. Success in the A, B, Cs: The Early Warning Indicator Metric
- III. From Student Reports to Student Intervention
 - Data Collection
 - Using the Data: Formal Monitoring and Program Structures

Tab 4: In School with Diplomas Now

- I. Building Collaboration
- II. Partner Roles and Responsibilities
- III. Key Structures and Tools

Tab 5: Appendix

Tab I: Overview

Table of Contents

- I. Welcome to Diplomas Now
- II. Building and Sustaining a Collaborative
- III. Diplomas Now Partners

I. Welcome to Diplomas Now

Welcome to Diplomas Now! We are excited that you are going to be a member of a Diplomas Now secondary school working to address the national dropout crisis and keep students on track to high school graduation.

This draft manual, produced during the summer of 2009, is intended for individuals who will be leading the day-to-day work at a Diplomas Now school in the 2009-2010 school year. Additions to the manual will be developed during the upcoming year to provide more information about city-and national- level support, and further guidance on the Diplomas Now implementation will be informed by your work.

The purpose of Diplomas Now

Diplomas Now combines the experience, capabilities, and resources of three highly-regarded national social change organizations – the Talent Development Middle Grades and High Schools whole-school reform models, Communities In Schools, and City Year – in a very intentional and integrated manner. Building on the work being done at a pilot site in Philadelphia in partnership with the Philadelphia Education Fund, the School District of Philadelphia, and the Feltonville School of Arts and Sciences, Diplomas Now is poised to expand to public school systems across the country. **Our goal is clear:** *to transform the high -poverty secondary schools that produce most of the nation's dropouts.*

Each of the organizations in Diplomas Now has demonstrated through rigorous third-party evaluations that their efforts lead to significant improvements in critical student and youth development outcomes, including attendance, behavior, and on-time grade promotion and achievement. It is our belief, however, that only by *combining our efforts* will it be possible to transform secondary schools so they have the tools, techniques, strategies, and capacities to ensure that all of their students stay on the path to high school graduation and adult success.

The need

A recent report by the *America's Promise Alliance* makes it clear that the United States is in the midst of a high school dropout crisis of staggering proportions. The details are alarming:

- Every 26 seconds another student gives up on school, resulting in more than one million American high school students leaving school every year.
- In urban public schools that serve primarily low-income and Latino or African-American youth, between 40% and 60% of entering freshman do not graduate from high school.
- Nationally, 40% of African-American, 33% of Latino and 8% of Caucasian students attend a high school with a 40% or higher dropout rate.

Consequences for students who do not graduate from high school are well documented. We know that high school dropouts are three times more likely than college graduates to be unemployed and eight times more likely to be in jail or prison than high school graduates. Dropping out not only impacts the students who drop out and the nation as a whole, but also can undermine the communities in which large numbers of dropouts are concentrated. In high poverty urban and rural communities, the percentage of 18 to 24 year olds without a high school diploma who are neither in the labor force nor attending an educational institution can reach Depression-era levels of 50% or more. These youth cannot support themselves, let alone a family.

The cost of this crisis to America is clear and staggering: The more than 12 million students projected to drop out over the next decade will cost the nation about \$3 trillion.

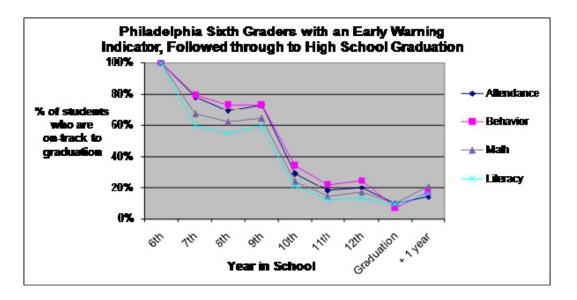
Diplomas Now research background – Defining the need

Fortunately, the dropout crisis is solvable. We know where the problem is concentrated; we know which schools produce most of the dropouts; we can identify the students who, absent effective interventions, will not graduate. Effective interventions validated by high quality research and evaluation exist. The foundation of the Diplomas Now work is to get the *right interventions to the right students at the right time* with the intensity needed and the scale required to keep them on the path to high school graduation.

Research conducted by Johns Hopkins University, the Philadelphia Education Fund, and other research centers sheds valuable light on how the problem can be tackled. We now know that:

- More than 50% of the nation's dropouts come from 12% of the high schools (2,000 in total). Each of these high schools is fed by two or more middle grade schools in which students are already falling off the path to graduation.
- Youth who drop out of school send strong distress signals for years before leaving, as early as 6th grade, indicating that their high school experience is deeply influenced by their middle and elementary school years.
- According to comprehensive studies in multiple urban high-poverty school districts, there are three key "off-track" indicators that predict student failure to graduate on time:

- Attendance Secondary students who miss just 10 or more days in a year are at increased risk of falling off the path to graduation. Students who miss 20 -30 or more days of school in a year between the 6th and 9th grade (for other than one-time health reasons) seldom graduate. In school districts that serve high-poverty populations, it is not uncommon for 20, 30, and even 40 percent or more of students to exhibit this level of absenteeism in the middle and high school grades.
- Behavior usually exhibited by a negative report card mark for behavior. While out-of-school and in-school suspensions can be highly predictive of student dropouts, often more predictive of dropping out is sustained mild misbehavior (e.g. not completing assignments, acting out in class, getting in disagreements with teachers), that is most often reflected on students' report cards.
- Course failure in math or English Students who fail mathematics, English or any two courses in a given year between 6th and 9th grade are at high risk of dropping out. Course failure is a better predictor of not graduating than standardized test scores and typically occurs with either poor attendance or behavior.



Philadelphia Early Warning Indicators

Starting in the upper left-hand corner, follow the lines in the chart from left to right. This represents students who ended 6th grade with one of the indicators. You will see the proportion of students who remain on-track to graduation falls from year to year during grades 6-12 with a steep drop following 9th grade. Students with any one of the indicators have only a 10-20% chance of graduating from high school.

These Early Warning Indicators held true in other cities, in that students who had any one of the four EWIs faced a low chance of graduation.

Students in high-poverty environments who exhibit even one of these off-track indicators between the 6th and 9th grade typically have no more than a 25% chance of graduating, and collectively about 80% of eventual dropouts send one or more of these distress signals between the 6th and 9th grade. (See the chart above for Philadelphia-specific research for 6th grade students with any one of the indicators.) In the high schools that produce most of the nation's dropouts and the middle grade schools that feed them it is common for hundreds of students to send these distress signals. Reducing the number of students exhibiting these "off-track" indicators would mean more children attending school, succeeding academically and, therefore, becoming far less likely to fail or drop out.

Using the data

Diplomas Now rigorously collects and disseminates individual student-level data. Because of the emerging clarity regarding what it means to be off-track, we know which data merit attention. By regularly monitoring student performance related to these indicators, we are able to identify which students are veering off-track or are off-track, by indicator. Based on this information, we can provide differentiated types and levels of support to different students and assess the impact of the work being done with each student over time. It is this ongoing process of data-driven progress monitoring that allows us to deliver *the right support to the right students at the right time*.

Our goal is to increase substantially the graduation rate among students served, and there will be clear indicators along the way that will allow us to evaluate the collaborating partners' work. Specifically, every year should see a significant decrease in the number of students with low attendance, poor behavior, limited effort, course failure and grade retention, as well as an increase in the number of students with strong attendance, high engagement, good course grades and earned on-time grade promotion. These indicators allow us to examine the impact of the Diplomas Now model and enable us to evaluate the effectiveness of the individual supports provided.

Getting started

This manual will guide you as you begin implementation of the Diplomas Now model. In the following pages, you will find sample schedules, key program components, sample agendas, guidance regarding scheduling and meeting agendas, and general recommendations.

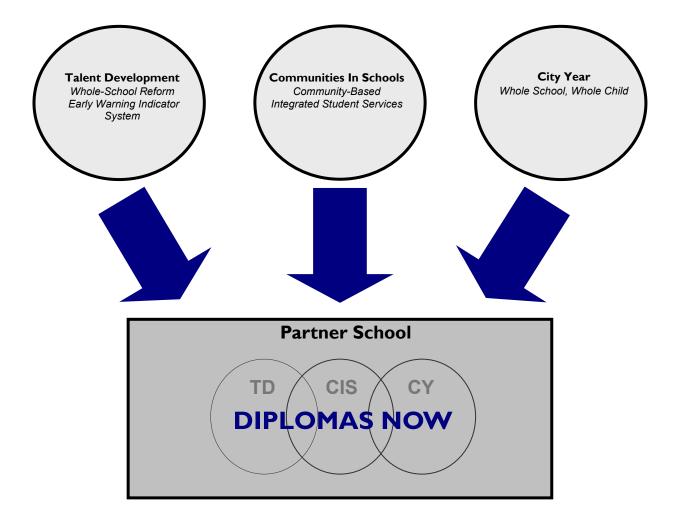
II. Building and Sustaining a Collaborative

The success of Diplomas Now at a school depends upon robust collaboration between the school-based partners (the Collaborative). Working together with students, other external agencies, school personnel, and family members, Diplomas Now can deliver the personalized support each student needs to keep him/her on track to graduation and later success. The potential power of this Collaborative rests on the group's ability to establish and nurture the trust needed to foster the contributions of multiple individuals and organizations in pursuit of a common goal: personalized support for students. To tap into the individual expertise of each partner while nurturing the synergy of the Collaborative, partners must commit to transparent communication and ongoing explicit attention to the structures and routines that guide the group's joint work. Building and sustaining the Diplomas Now Collaborative is an important piece of the work that is discussed in more detail in Tab 2.

Specifically, the Diplomas Now partners integrate their core services to support a holistic model that include effective whole-school and classroom practices, an early warning system that provides timely relevant data to the school's practitioners, and an integrated and responsive student intervention team.

- **Talent Development** provides comprehensive whole-school reform models for schools facing serious problems with student attendance, discipline, achievement scores, and dropout rates.
- **City Year** brings young adult "corps members," aged 17-24, for a year of full-time service in schools, delivering the Whole School, Whole Child program which provides whole-school and targeted supports through activities such as tutoring, mentoring, and climate enrichment.
- Communities In Schools provides site-based staff with social work expertise to work with individual students and families to provide intensive interventions, leverage community and school resources, and work individually with students and families in order to keep students in school.

The Diplomas Now Collaborative



III. Diplomas Now Partners

The **Talent Development Middle Grades and High School** programs are comprehensive whole-school reform models for large middle and high schools facing serious problems with student attendance, discipline, achievement scores, and dropout rates. Developed at the Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University, the TD middle and high school models include organizational and management changes to establish a positive school climate; curricula and instructional innovations to prepare all students for high-level courses in math and English; parent and community involvement to encourage college awareness; and professional development to support the recommended reforms. The TD programs began in 1994 through a partnership of the Johns Hopkins University Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk (CRESPAR) and Patterson High School in Baltimore. They have since expanded to serve 80 high-poverty middle grade and high schools in 40 school districts across twenty states.

City Year is a nonprofit organization that unites young people ages 17-24 of all backgrounds for a demanding year of full-time service, giving them the skills and opportunities to change the world. Each year, over 1,500 City Year "corps members" serve as tutors, mentors, and role models, making a difference in the lives of children and transforming schools and neighborhoods in 20 locations across the country and in Johannesburg, South Africa. City Year is a proud member of the AmeriCorps National Service network.

The centerpiece of City Year's service work is the "Whole School, Whole Child" model, which seeks to support student learning and a sense of connection with their school and broader community. Whole School, Whole Child activities led by City Year include:

- Mentoring, tutoring, and educating school children in partnership with public schools
- Organizing after-school programs and school vacation programs
- Positive school climate initiatives
- Engaging students of all ages in community service and leadership development activities
- Planning and leading physical service projects

City Year is based upon a partnership model. After orientation and training, corps members are placed on a diverse team, which is assigned to a Service Partner school where it will serve for the remainder of the school year. Service Partners are selected through a competitive RFP process, which leads to shared goals and a clear operating model.

Communities In Schools ranks as the nation's largest and leading dropout prevention organization. Founded in 1977, CIS operates in 27 states and the District of Columbia, serving 1.2 million elementary and secondary students in 3,400 schools. CIS focuses on the lowest-performing schools and the students most vulnerable to dropping out. Of the nation's high schools with the highest number of dropouts and lowest promotion records, 80 percent are located in 15 states and CIS is active in all but one of these states.

The mission of Communities In Schools is to champion the connection of needed community resources with schools to help young people learn successfully, stay in school, and prepare for life. The organization was founded on the concept that students can and will achieve academically when resources to address their academic and social service needs are tailored, coordinated and accessible. That premise has evolved into what we now call community-based integrated student services (CBISS)—interventions that improve student achievement by connecting community resources with both the academic and social service needs of students. The cornerstone of the CIS model is the provision of widely accessible prevention services and resources that are available to entire school populations, which are paired with the coordinated, targeted and sustained intervention services and resources for that subset of students who are most at risk of dropping out of school.

By bringing caring adults into the schools to address children's unmet needs, CIS provides the link between educators and the community. The result: Teachers are free to teach, and students – many in jeopardy of dropping out – have the opportunity to focus on learning. Communities In Schools has worked to ensure that every child needs and deserves these "Five Basics":

- A one-on-one relationship with a caring adult
- A safe place to learn and grow
- A healthy start and a healthy future
- A marketable skill to use upon graduation
- A chance to give back to the community
- Planning and leading physical service projects

The mission of the **Philadelphia Education Fund** is to improve the quality of public education for underserved youth throughout the Philadelphia region. Three primary goals guide the work of the Philadelphia Education Fund. Working closely with school districts, schools, businesses, universities, non-profit organizations, community stakeholders and other partners, the Ed Fund aims to:

- Create high-performing secondary schools (grades 6 12) where public school diplomas are synonymous with rigorous and high-quality education that leads to post-secondary success.
- Provide all students with access to post-secondary education opportunities and the assurance that they can complete appropriate and rigorous classes to allow them to succeed in college and career.
- Create strategic alliances to support student success from pre-K through college.

In partnership with Johns Hopkins University, the Ed Fund has been working since 2004 on Early Warning Indicators research and moving the research into practice in middle grades schools. While continuing to oversee expansion of the project in Philadelphia, the Ed Fund will act as a national technical assistance partner to cities that are beginning implementation of Diplomas Now.

Tab 2: Essential Components

Diplomas Now is a comprehensive model built on four key components that, together, provide secondary schools with the tools, techniques, strategies, and capacities needed to ensure that all students stay on the path to high school graduation and adult success. These components are.

- Effective whole-school/classroom practice
- A teacher-friendly Early Warning Indicators system tied to a tiered student support system that gets the *right intervention to the right student at the right time*
 - o User-friendly data for teachers and other staff
- A team of adults tightly integrated into the design and working closely with teachers and administrators to provide targeted and intensive supports at the needed intensity and scale
- Team-based organizational structures that support authentic partnerships between home, school, and outside collaborative members
 - O School-based ownership: the role of co-construction
 - o Student and family engagement
 - O Schedules that support personalization
 - o Structured time to discuss students

Effective whole-school/classroom practice

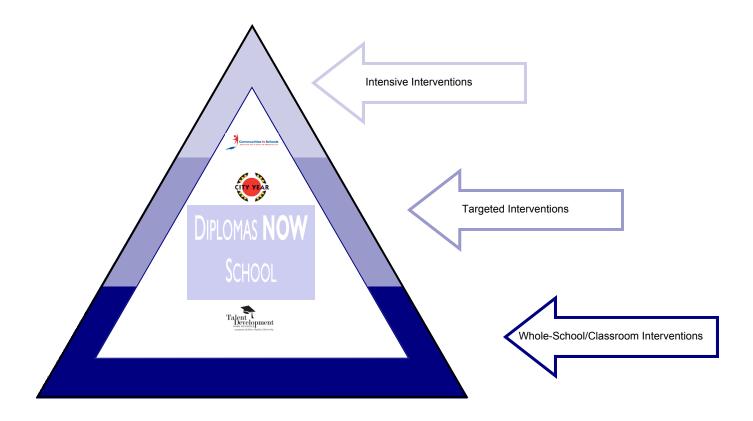
Fundamental to this project is an integrated set of strategies for instruction, teacher and administrator support, professional development, and organization which have proven effective in raising achievement, promotion, and graduation rates in the nation's most challenged high-poverty secondary schools. These reforms include creating a more personalized learning environment for students and teachers by enabling teams of teachers to work with a common set of 80-100 students for one or more years, implementing challenging and coherent research-based school-wide instructional programs in the core subjects and providing extensive professional development supports for teachers and administrators and coordinated extra help courses for students. Fundamental to the overall success of the Diplomas Now model is that the work is anchored in these whole-school and classroom practices.

A teacher-friendly Early Warning Indicator system tied to a tiered student support system that gets the right intervention, to the right student at the right time

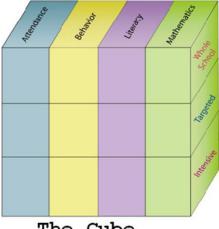
The Early Warning Indicator system is designed to identify students early and to provide the appropriate interventions as quickly as possible. With school staff closely following and using the Early Warning Indicators of attendance, behavior, and core course failure, students are identified as soon as they begin to exhibit warning signs. Starting with a review of student profiles in teacher teams before the school year begins, the Early Warning Indicators anchor school-based work throughout the year. In addition, the system helps to identify the intensity of services needed and to monitor impact. Discussed further in Tab 3, the process for collecting

and disseminating data may vary, but the focus remains the same: early identification of students and timely provision of supports.

The **tiered intervention support system** is designed to use the Early Warning Indicator system to provide the *right resources to the right students at the right time*. The model is built on the recognition that all students need varied levels of supports, whole school, targeted and intensive. *Whole-school/classroom interventions* are designed to support all students and form the base of the model. Some students need *targeted interventions* because they are not able to succeed solely through whole-school/classroom supports. For example, *targeted interventions* can be small group activities or lessons that are designed for specific groups of students. Lastly, fewer students require *intensive supports* in order to succeed. For example, intensive support may include a one-on-one behavior modification plan facilitated by an adult. Diplomas Now is able to provide organizational support at the whole school level and additional supports at the *targeted and intensive levels* so that all staff at the school can provide interventions aligned to their expertise.



With the Diplomas Now model, each site constructs a plan that spells out its tiers of support for off-track students and those who are close to being off-track. For each indicator, a Diplomas Now school determines appropriate whole-school, targeted, and intensive interventions necessary to support all students. It is helpful to think of this as a cube, shown in the diagram to the right. The "Cube" is used during planning to map interventions and is then used as a reference tool. The completed "Cube" provides the menu of interventions and should be used in on-track indicator meetings to help staff teams identify, implement and monitor student interventions.



Students may receive supports from one tier or across the tiered intervention system. For instance, Communities In

The Cube

Schools may provide grief counseling to a student who needs intensive case management support but the student may also need targeted interventions to improve math skills designed and implemented by classroom teachers, City Year corps members, or others. While City Year is primarily focused on targeted interventions and Communities In Schools is primarily focused on intensive interventions, there is substantial crossover and both provide substantial support for whole-school interventions.

A second team of adults tightly integrated into the design and working closely with teachers and administrators to provide targeted and intensive supports at the needed intensity and scale

In many high-needs secondary schools, there simply are not sufficient human resources onsite to provide supports with the intensity, consistency and scale required to match the significant numbers of students who are at risk of not graduating. Diplomas Now brings in a second team of adults to assist the school in providing additional targeted and intensive services, whole-school supports, coordination of activities, and easy-to-use data systems so that targeted and intensive interventions can be carried out at the appropriate scale.

In addition to Communities In Schools and City Year, the Diplomas Now model provides an onsite facilitator, the Talent Development organizational facilitator. This individual becomes the "grease and the glue," interfacing formally and informally with all school staff. The onsite organizational facilitator is a member of the school leadership team, prepares and facilitates the On-Track Indicator meetings, takes the lead in weekly Diplomas Now meetings to ensure coordination of efforts, offers professional development on meeting protocols and record keeping, and continuously integrates with other initiatives and developments driven by the school, region, and central office.

Keys to authentic partnerships between home, school, and collaborative team

For Diplomas Now to succeed, the model must be accompanied by organizational structures and the expansion of the Collaborative that ensures that each individual's job is more manageable. The additional adults brought into the building must be used strategically to build authentic partnerships that benefit students. The following guidelines are essential in beginning this work:

- School-based ownership of the project. The Diplomas Now team seeks every opportunity to co-construct and tailor the model to each site. During the initial planning and the start-up year, all partners need to be involved in planning and decision making.
- Engaging students and their families. Diplomas Now team members join the other adults in the school to build deep relationships with families during the school year. This engagement is essential in improving student performance in each of the indicators.
- Developing the schedule. Essential to this model is the development of a schedule that supports personalization for teachers and students and provides meeting time for school staff in grade groups. In Diplomas Now schools, schedules need to accommodate relatively small groups of cross-content teachers (dyads, triads, quads) teaching relatively small groups of students in common (see further details in box below). Working with common groups of students also pushes against a prevailing norm of teacher isolation that intensifies in middle and high schools. This not only supports teachers in working with students but allows Diplomas Now team members to follow a small group of students throughout the day.
- On-track indicator meetings to discuss students. At least twice each month, time needs to be set aside for teachers and Diplomas Now staff to sit down and do the hands-on work of discussing students and their work, previous practice, and potential supports or interventions. This time should be focused on individual students, with attention paid to patterns that may inform school-wide supports or professional development needs.

Best Practices: Student Schedule

The schedule configuration must allow a subset of teachers (and other key staff) to be scheduled into common planning time (a minimum of twice each month for 45 minutes) to focus on a reasonable number of students they share. For example, a teacher triad could consist of teachers covering math, science, literacy (English) and science classes for approximately 100 students. Teacher triads come to know their students' strengths and weaknesses and can weigh them against the EWIs. This is in contrast to entire grade groups working together, trying to focus on all students in the grade. A key to the success of scheduled grade group meetings is that they are sacred time devoted to finding the right intervention for the right student at the right time.

Tab 3: The Early Warning Indicator System

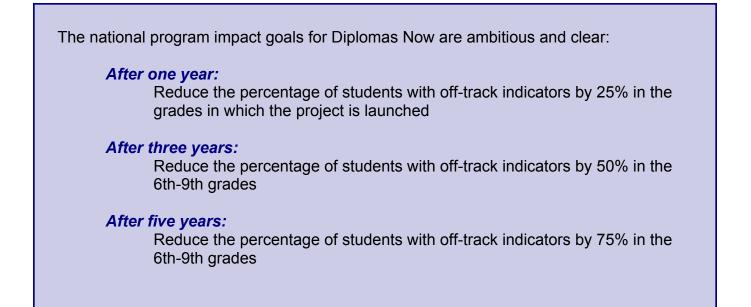
As discussed in the introduction, there is growing consensus on the indicators that are present in future dropouts. These Early Warning Indicators, or A,B,Cs (Attendance, Behavior, and Course performance), can be used to identify the schools that most of the future dropouts attend, the intensity of supports needed, and which students are showing these indicators. The Early Warning Indicator system is a school-based system that brings this research to the school and classroom level in easy-to-use formats and tools.

The goals of the Early Warning Indicator system are:

- 1) To identify students in need of intervention and determine appropriate types and levels of interventions needed
- 2) To monitor the progress of students currently receiving interventions and determine whether additional interventions are needed
- 3) To determine whether additional students are in need of intervention and, if so, what interventions are needed

I. Shared Performance Impact Goals

The leading organizations of Diplomas Now have created a set of national program impact goals to be achieved over the first five years of this project. The success of Diplomas Now and the achievement of these goals rely on the achievement of intermediate goals by each Diplomas Now site. Individual schools' success at keeping students on track, combined with the success of thousands of other Diplomas Now schools across the country, will help achieve these national goals.



City-level goals

All of the partners in each city should construct intermediate and benchmark goals. These goals should lead to the achievement of the national goals indicated above.

School-level goals

At the school level, the Collaborative should revisit progress on these goals throughout the year. The program structures detailed later in this manual provide time for Diplomas Now team members and school staff members to examine current data and evaluate progress toward these goals.

Partner organization goals

The central focus in Diplomas Now should be the goals discussed above. However, each organization will have its own requirements and may have goals not directly focused on the Early Warning Indicators. In the beginning of the year, members of city teams should have a basic understanding of the goals and reporting requirements to be completed by each Diplomas Now partner.

II. Success in the A, B, Cs: The Early Warning Indicator metric

The EWI system is built on a shared definition of success and student performance standards for *A*ttendance, *B*ehavior and *C*ourse performance: among all Diplomas Now partners. The common definitions for "on-track" and "off-track" students will be the foundation as each Diplomas Now site reduces the number of students who are dropping out of high school.

Early Warning Indicator metric

In 2004-05, research completed by the Philadelphia Education Fund and Johns Hopkins University identified four Early Warning Indicators visible as early as the 6th grade. The four indicators most predictive of future dropouts were:

- Attendance (measured by average daily attendance rates)
- Behavior
- **C**ourse Performance (math and literacy)

These same indicators, although with different thresholds, were found in other cities in 6th - 9th grade students as key indicators of future dropouts. In Philadelphia, Diplomas Now was built using the threshold for each indicator from this groundbreaking research. The following metrics were used as the framework for the Early Warning Indicator system.

	Attendance ADA: Average Daily Attendance	Behavior	C ourse Performance		
Off-Track	< 80% ADA	3 or more neg. behavior comments	Report Card grade of F		
Sliding	80 to 90% ADA	1-2 neg. behavior comments	Report card grade of D		
On-Track	> 90% ADA	0 neg. behavior comments	Report card grade of A, B, C		
Sample Indicator Thresholds from Philadelphia Diplomas Now Pilot					

The metric for course performance should hold true for each new site with the inclusion of other courses at the high school level. Attendance and behavior thresholds may change depending on the city and how your particular school/district partner reports behavior data.

Determining attendance levels

In Philadelphia, the Ed Fund/Johns Hopkins research showed that students who came to school less than 80% of the time were much more likely to drop out of school than to be promoted on time and eventually graduate. Other cities have replicated this research, and the off-track threshold varies by city. In almost every city except Philadelphia, a 90% threshold has been significant. As you start out, you will need to select an attendance rate appropriate to your student population in order to maintain consistency. Barring undertaking a rigorous look at longitudinal data to determine your exact threshold, our experience with various cities suggests that 90% be used as the default threshold for on-track, 86-90% sliding, and 85% or below,

off-track. A common threshold should be used for all Diplomas Now schools within a given city or district.

Determining behavior levels

In Philadelphia, the Ed Fund/Johns Hopkins research found that students earning a final negative behavior mark were much more likely to drop out than to be promoted on time and eventually graduate. In 2004, Philadelphia changed the way teachers complete report cards to include behavior comments as opposed to a behavior grade. With teacher input, we established 3 behavior comments as the threshold for poor behavior. We recommend using metrics that represent mild, sustained behavior (e.g., behavior comments or a poor behavior mark), rather than suspensions or pink slips, which are more episodic. If your partner school does not collect behavior comments or marks. other indicators may be possible. In Philadelphia, suspensions were not as predictive of dropping out as were behavior marks.

The Collaborative in Action

In early March of 2009, members of the Diplomas Now collaborative at the Feltonville School of Arts and Sciences in Philadelphia partnered to host a "Family Night" event at the school.

The Family Night was designed to engage students and their families in an evening of math and literacy fun. Communities In Schools, Talent Development/Philadelphia Ed Fund, City Year, and the teachers and administrators came together with the school community to share learning games, prizes, and a light supper.

Teachers and City Year team members decorated tables to simulate game booths, like those found at carnivals or fairs. At each "booth," corps members and teachers had different math or literacy activities that students and their families could complete together. Students and their families worked with tangrams, modeling clay, and microscopes as they enjoyed the connections with math and literacy across the curriculum.

Each family also received a gift bag with pencils, erasers, school bracelets and a novel for their home library. The Ed Fund and Communities In Schools supplied the gifts and Student Council stuffed the bags. Communities In Schools and staff members successfully collected donations from local sports teams and food vendors for the evenings' refreshments and door prize raffle.

III. From student reports to student intervention

Data collection and dissemination is key to making the Early Warning Indicator system work. Timely turnaround and appropriate times to discuss and examine the data ensure that students who can be identified, are, and that staff are working to determine the appropriate supports for them.

Data collection

Data collection is an ongoing process so that student-level information is updated in a timely fashion and is available to all school-based collaborative members. Access to student-level data ensures that students in need of support receive appropriate interventions and that the data is used in daily decision-making. Most student outcome data will be collected at the close of each marking period, but attendance is collected daily and more intensive structures and plans should make attendance data visible and accessible.

The ideal situation for collecting data is for the district to house a system that compiles all of the Early Warning Indicators in an easy-to-use format for teachers and staff who work directly with students. If possible, this system should be able to compile classroom-, grade- and school-level data into student profiles. A sample report from Philadelphia is below. This tool may take time to construct, as these different pieces of data are often housed in different places, or even different databases within a district's data warehouse. In initial years, an abbreviated system may be needed so that this important information is used in On-track Indicators meetings and in other decision-making. Most beneficial is the ease of accessibility of this information. Student report cards, transcripts, folders or "pockets" all hold certain pieces of this information, but it is cumbersome to compile. Early on, begin conversations around the important data elements, outline the format for student-level reporting, and continue to work on the development of a larger system as the project progresses.

Student Name	2007-2008:	2008-2009:	Negative Behavior	Math Grade	Math Grade	Literacy Grade	Literacy Grade	Reading	PSSA 2008	PSSA 2008
Student Name	Days Absent	Days Absent	Comments	3/1/2008	6/1/2008	3/1/2008	6/1/2008	Level 6/1/08	Math	Reading
Student A	5	1	0	В	В	С	В	5	Proficient	Basic
Student B	12	3	3	С	D	D	F	3	Below Basic	Below Basic
Student C	24	1	1	С	В	С	С	5.5	Below Basic	Basic
Student D	16	0	4	В	D	С	С	5.5	Basic	Below Basic

Early Warning Indicator Tool: Sample from Philadelphia

Each site should collect attendance, behavior, literacy, and math grades in an easy to use format that can be accessed by all Collaborative and school staff. If possible, each student's data should be in one place to provide a full profile, and students should be grouped together so that classrooms can be viewed together. For example, a staff member should be able to look at all of the students in the first section of grade 8 as a group and be able to look at that section's progress in each of the indicators.

Attendance

An attendance program should be developed that tracks daily attendance at the student, classroom, and school-wide levels. Most schools and districts have some way to collect attendance data, but in Diplomas Now schools adjustments might be made to ensure that the data are accessible and are monitored regularly. With daily updates, a well-structured system of collecting and organizing attendance data will assist in providing timely and appropriate interventions.

Behavior

In Philadelphia, the behavior indicator was built using negative behavior comments from report cards. At the pilot site, this information is compiled by the District's Office of Accountability and Assessment and is posted on SchoolNet (see below). This information, which appears on student report cards, must be collected at least every marking period. If pink slips, office referrals, or other measures that indicate continuing or chronic behavioral issues are used in a particular school or district, this information should be collected at least at the close of each marking period.

Philadelphia's Story

The data collection process for each school and city will be unique. Here's how this has developed in Philadelphia:

Early stages

In the first two years of this project, data were received by the local partner, the Ed Fund, in the form of hard copies of student report cards. The information was manually entered onto an Excel spreadsheet, section by section, so that teachers could view class-level information on the EWIs. As the project developed, the Ed Fund worked with the School District of Philadelphia to enable access to student data via its information management system (SchoolNet). This relationship proved to be important for timely information gathering and interpretation.

SchoolNet

A critical development during the second year of this project was the Ed Fund's partnership with the district's information technology office to create the EWI report online so that it was available to all teachers and staff at Diplomas Now schools. Every teacher and administrator in the School District of Philadelphia has access to SchoolNet. SchoolNet acts as an information hub; staff can sign up for professional development, check student records, and find class comparison lists. The EWI report is updated after every marking period and displays all of the EWIs as well as reading levels and standardized test scores.

Course performance: Math and literacy grades

Math and literacy grades are available in teacher grade books, in "student pockets" or folders, on their report cards, and often on a centralized school and/or district database. Course grades should be easily accessible for On-Track Indicator meetings. In many cases, compiling this data by section or classroom will be cumbersome, but is also essential, as it will inform mid-marking period decisions about targeted and whole-school interventions.

Intervention surveys

In addition to the early indicator data, surveys detailing the nature and duration of interventions should be collected from CIS and City Year on a weekly basis. (See sample survey below.) These surveys will be matched with student records and be used for program improvement and overall project evaluation. Talent Development will collect and analyze the surveys and match them with EWI outcomes data.

Sample CIS Survey

Date	Name	Grade	Duration	Indicator of Focus	Area of discussion	Narrative	Referral
12/15/2008	Student A	8th	10 Minutes	Attendance	Н	Conferenced with principal regarding students attendance.	Ν
12/15/2008	Student B	8th	30 MInutes	Behavior	Н	Conferenced with student about their behavior in math class.	Y

Using the data: formal monitoring and program structures

Data collected is used to monitor student progress relative to Early Warning Indicators, to identify additional students in need of support, and to determine the effectiveness of the Diplomas Now program.

Formal monitoring of student, classroom, and whole-school progress

The following meetings should occur after every marking period so that all partners may examine new student data.

• Principal and leadership team

This meeting should focus on section-by-section and grade-by-grade data to find any inconsistencies in the data, as well as areas of intense need. The goal is to examine collectively the Early Warning Indicators, decide on necessary changes, and identify additional questions that the data suggest.

• Full on-site collaborative team

All Diplomas Now staff members at the site should meet after each marking period to discuss the most recent data. Each staff member should examine data specific to his/her students.

On-Track Indicator meetings

After each marking period, an updated EWI data tool with student data should be brought to this meeting.

Program Structures

Early Warning Indicator data are woven through each component of the Diplomas Now model. The use of the Early Warning Indicators begins with the examination of a student's previous year's data. Knowing which students are struggling and when, especially at key transition grades or schools, is essential to shape the selection and design of new interventions. The data should be used for the following meetings:

• Summer Planning (Before the school year begins)

EWI outcomes data from the final marking period of the previous school year should be used in planning meetings to look at the needs of the incoming class and to identify appropriate interventions at the whole-school/classroom, targeted, and intensive levels.

- **Principal and leadership team** (during the school year, weekly, or bi-weekly) The goal should be to include Early Warning Indicator data as a part of the leadership team's conversations. Individual and aggregate (section by section and grade by grade) data should be available for discussions.
- Early Warning Indicator meetings(weekly or bi-weekly) These meetings are the primary place where student level EWI data are used.
- Diplomas Now Collaborative meetings (weekly or bi-weekly)

All Diplomas Now staff members at the site should meet after each marking period to discuss the most recent data. Each staff member should examine data specific to their students.

Focus lists of students in need of intervention

Focus lists should be developed for each City Year corps member and each Communities In Schools team member.

Communities In Schools

At the beginning of the school year, CIS staff include the EWI data in conversations with school leadership to inform their initial caseload and to monitor and inform interventions throughout the year. An initial CIS focus list is developed in the beginning of the school year. As the year progresses, additional students will be placed on the list. In the Diplomas Now model, the CIS team will identify students with any one of the following:

- Multiple EWI risk factors
- Less than 80% attendance at end of last year
- 6+ absences during the marking period
- 5+ negative behavior marks at end of last year

City Year

An initial focus list will also be developed with each City Year corps member. Students on City Year's focus lists are usually targeted because of one specific indicator, but students with multiple indicators may be selected as well. The corps members and City Year staff also use the data to monitor student progress. While the school year should start with a knowledge of which students are likely to be on corps members' focus lists (from the previous school year's Early Warning Indicator data), the initial list should not be finalized until after a few weeks of instruction have passed. This allows corps members to build relationships with the entire section of students while Diplomas Now leadership assesses which students are still exhibiting the need for interventions and which are most likely to benefit from corps members' support mechanisms. We find it best to assign only 5-7 students to a corps member's focus list at the start, allowing for the identification of additional students in the first 4-6 weeks of school as corps members become accustomed to their schedules, and as discussions with teachers and school administrators progress. While development and updating of corps members' focus lists is a nuanced process, generally speaking, students assigned to City Year will exhibit one or two of the indicators below:

- 80% 90% attendance at the end of the previous year
- 2-4 negative behavior marks at the end of the previous year
- Final grade of F in math or English at end of the previous year
- 0-5 absences during any marking period

Project evaluation

During the course of the year, Diplomas Now will conduct both formative and third party summative evaluations. The Center for Social Organization of Schools (CSOS) at Johns Hopkins University will conduct the formative evaluation to inform refinement of the model. An independent third party research organization will conduct the summative evaluation to determine the impact of the model.

Sharing data

In addition to the Early Warning Indicator data specific to Diplomas Now, each individual organization will collect data to fulfill organizational goals, funding reporting requirements, and other needs. With the large amount of data to be collected, sharing data sources among partners will help manage paperwork, use time efficiently, and ensure that DN partners maintain a sharp focus on keeping students on track to graduation.

A clear schedule indicating when data will become available and when it can be shared at Diplomas Now meetings should be completed at the beginning of the year.

Potential Data Challenges

The Early Warning Indicator data system should not contradict or duplicate data that fuels school and district planning. Given the national focus on achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), determined largely by state standardized tests, it is necessary to be aware of and work with these dynamics.

- Following student success in the A,B,Cs supports the improvements that schools and districts need to make in order to meet state standards. The on-site organization facilitator should ensure that Diplomas Now data work is coordinated with and supportive of other district and school-mandated systems.
- Transferring focus from tracking standardized tests to following grades, behavior, and attendance can be a major ideology shift. There is a large body of research underlining the importance of the Early Warning Indicators. Research from Philadelphia, Chicago, New York, and elsewhere has shown repeatedly that failing course grades and failed courses are primary factors in falling behind and dropping out of school. We urge our partner schools to make best use of the available supports to improve in these indicators.
- New district and school mandates arise constantly during the school year. The goal of DN staff should be to develop a deep partnership among all school -based staff about how the EWI model can help support mandates as they are introduced.

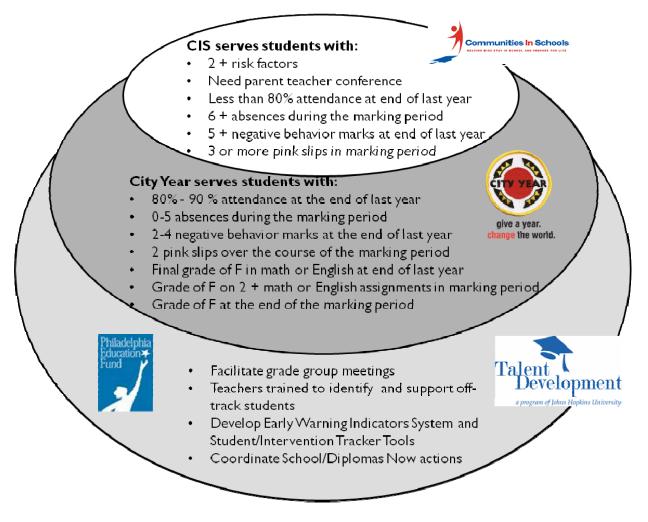
Tab 4: In Schools with Diplomas Now

Table of Contents

- I. Building a Collaboration
- II. Partner Roles and Responsibilities
- III. Key Structures and Tools

I. Building a Collaboration

Diplomas Now harnesses the talents and assets of multiple organizations that, *together with the school*, create a comprehensive, interwoven array of student interventions at the wholeschool/classroom, targeted and intensive levels. Each partner has specific responsibilities that it undertakes to support this model. The three main organizations replicating this work across the country bring decades of experience working with high-need communities and schools and expertise in a variety of fields, while school partners have the expertise and deep community ties necessary for the initiative to succeed.



In addition to the national partners, some Diplomas Now locations will engage additional partners at the local level. These may include a local Education Fund, other organizations that provide services within the school, or specialized community groups.

Some of the areas that will require ongoing attention are:

- Common beliefs and multiple perspectives
 - o Respect
 - o Collaborative reflection
 - O Teaching & learning
 - o Empowerment

• Embracing the power of diversity

- o Building cultural proficiency
- o Honoring multiple perspectives
- o Fostering varied contributions & expertise
- O Acknowledging leadership and learning styles

Communications

- O Documenting our learning
- o Giving and receiving feedback
- o Mid-course adjustments

BEST PRACTICES ACTIVITY—BUILDING A STRONG DIPLOMAS NOW COLLABORATIVE

Below are two quotes about collaboration. As you read them, think about your past experiences working in groups.

- What do you believe about collaboration?
- When have you experienced success working with others?
- When have you found working with others unproductive or painful?

It is strongly suggested that all local Diplomas Now partners reflect on these quotes, and then coordinate a shared discussion. By exploring these foundational beliefs and practices early in the partnership, challenges that are common to collaborative efforts may be avoided, resulting ultimately in a more effective program and improved impact upon students.

Use the worksheet on the next page to begin the process.

Collaboration can't be a synonym for cooperation. Cooperation describes a protocol that allows you not to get in each other's way... Collaboration for Pixar means amplification, the amplification you get by connecting up a bunch of human beings, who are listening to each other, interested in each other, bring separate depth to the problem, bring breadth that makes them interested in the entire solution, and allows them to communicate on a number of different levels, verbally, in writing, in feeling, in acting, in pictures and in all of those ways finding the most articulate way to get a high fidelity notion across to a broad range of people so they can each pull the right lever.

- Randy Nelson, Dean, Pixar University

The term community often conjures images of a culture of consensus, shared values, and social cohesion. Yet, in practice, when teachers collaborate, they run headlong into enormous conflicts over professional beliefs and practices. In their optimism about caring and supportive communities, advocates often underplay the role of diversity, dissent, and disagreement in community life, leaving practitioners ill-prepared, and conceptions of collaboration under-explored.

 "Conflict Amid Community: The Micropolitics of Teacher Collaboration." Betty Achinstein. *Teachers College Record*, Vol. 104, #3, 2002, pp. 421-455.

BUILDING A STRONG DIPLOMAS NOW COLLABORATIVE - FURTHER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
How would you define collaboration now? Use the space below to write your definition.
Share your definition with a partner. Do you agree about the key components of collaboration? Share with another pair before sharing in the larger group.
How does collaboration operate differently for different members of the collaborative? Think about all the differences we represent: administrators, teachers, family members, students, outside partners, others. How do our differences affect our power and contribution within the collaborative?
 Tools that foster collaboration Meetings Shared texts Reports, minutes, written records Discussion protocols Retreats
Electronic tools - email, blogs, video conferencing, web chats
What tools do you have and what tools will you need to foster rich conversation among all Diplomas Now partners about what really matters for students?
How will you create a safe space to hold difficult conversations that lead to a break with the status quo of blaming students and their families when teaching and learning are unsuccessful?

Too many meetings?

Meetings are great when they are well organized, efficient, and consistent. However, as we all know, too many disorganized meetings will lead to a failure to reach our goals. We recommend the following:

- Determine time of school leadership meetings
- Develop effective means to communicate logistics
- Establish norms and expectations for meetings

School Based Collaborative

Each Diplomas Now partner organization brings to this collaboration an organizational structure and guidelines that focus the work that it does. Staff members working on this project must balance the requirements of Diplomas Now with those of their home headquarters. The school-based Collaborative includes school staff, City Year, Talent Development, Communities In Schools, and possibly a local partner. It is essential that decisions are shared across organizations. With Diplomas Now, a new cohort of individuals will be joining a school community. Including individuals who are already working at the school will make the project move forward.

The school-based Diplomas Now team members participate in a number of team activities and, of course, have individual schedules. At a minimum, each Diplomas Now site will have:

- Talent Development EWI organizational facilitator or a local partner site director
- Talent Development curriculum coaches
- CIS site director
- City Year team

Larger sites may have larger City Year teams, additional CIS staff, and additional Talent Development content coaches, e.g. climate, math lab, or reading lab coaches.

Activities in which all collaborative members participate

Each individual will have specific duties in a Diplomas Now school. The following activities will involve all partners:

- Collaborative meetings
- Principal and school leadership team meetings
- On-Track Indicator meetings

Collaborative meetings

At least every other week, all Collaborative members (school leadership, site director, CIS site coordinator, CY service leaders, and local partner) should have a meeting to revisit program goals, discuss upcoming events, coordinate efforts, discuss important data, and address other issues that arise. After each marking period, an entire meeting is usually devoted to examining updated student data. Possible agenda topics include:

- Staff that need additional support
- Grades or sections of students that need additional supports
- Inconsistencies in the data or particular areas for further analysis
- Upcoming events and program changes

Principal and school leadership team meetings

Representative leaders of Diplomas Now should be included in school leadership team meetings. This expectation should be discussed with the principal and leadership team in the early stages of planning. The goal is to have members of Diplomas Now staff on this team so that the additional supports can be fully utilized and partners can share in decision making. Each Diplomas Now site should work closely with the principal and leadership team throughout the year, sharing EWI data with the principal and leadership team and using the data to make decisions on staffing, staffing support, and school activities. A formal analysis should be reviewed and discussed after every marking period. The importance of this relationship cannot be emphasized enough.

Ideas for Your Site!

- City Year corps members conferencing with students after each report card
- CIS-led trips for middle school students and potential mentors from the neighborhood high school
- Guidance sessions co-facilitated by City Year corps members
- Academically-oriented Family Fun nights

On-Track Indicator meetings

These meetings are for staff to monitor student progress, identify students in need of intervention, assign supports, and examine current interventions. Each member of the Collaborative will participate in these meetings. On-track Indicator meetings provide time during the school day for staff to do the hands-on work necessary to drive the project. At the beginning of the year, while examining data from the end of the previous year, teams of teachers and Collaborative members should select a group of students to be on their focus list. In these meetings, teachers often bring additional information about students, including most recent benchmark scores, quiz scores, or samples of student work. More details on these meetings are included in the next section.

Communications Protocol

A well articulated communications protocol, developed by members of each local Diplomas Now Collaborative during summer planning time, is essential to the coordination of efforts of multiple organizations.

Basic expectations for locally-developed communications protocols include:

Transparency

Members of the team should keep their organizations informed at all levels, but more importantly, they need to share their decisions with other project partners. New initiatives and decisions, large and small, must be shared and discussed openly in order to involve all partners.

Common Vision

All organizations entering into this project must support the common vision of Diplomas Now. However, discussions must occur at the local and school level on specifics of this vision and what it means for day-to-day practice. Addressing these concerns in summer planning sessions or early in the year creates a more unified collaborative that will be able to deal with challenges and changes throughout the year.

Common Expectations

Common expectations are important to establish among Diplomas Now partners. It is also important that faculty and other school staff share an understanding of the Diplomas Now initiative and who the players are. If teachers and school staff are informed and brought on board, the project has a much greater likelihood of success.

At the beginning of the collaboration timeline, the identity and specific roles of the different Diplomas Now partners in the school should be shared school-wide and with families of students. This information should include:

- Who the partners are and their basic organizational mission and history
- Typical weekly schedules of Diplomas Now partners
- Goals, specific role, and standard activities for each partner
- How resources will be distributed (which classrooms/ students will receive the resources and why)
- Where to find more information and who to see with questions

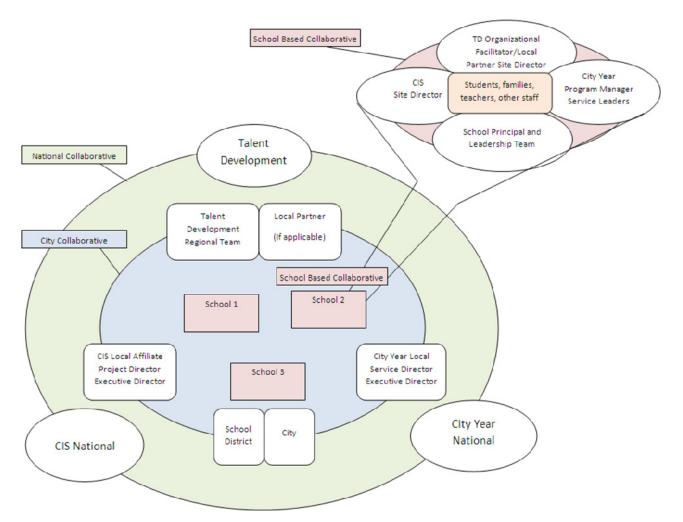
Best Practices

A monthly newsletter for teachers and families about Diplomas Now successes and upcoming activities.

Ground rules

During summer planning, local - and school - level leaders should set ground rules for communication during the course of the project. These may vary depending on the school and if additional partners are involved. At a very basic level, we recommend the following:

- All decisions are made with the health of the overall Diplomas Now initiative and all its partners in mind, and with the intention of timely communication to all partners.
- Clear and regular communication systems are established and utilized fully (i.e. absolute prioritization of regular meetings amongst local Diplomas Now partner leadership staff, weekly email updates, etc.).
- Decisions made by the central office/national headquarters staff of any one organization that impact the local partners will be shared in a timely fashion, following a clear communication protocol agreeable to all partners.
- The EWI organizational facilitator will be the contact for all Diplomas Now activities and events occurring at the school and will coordinate communication of related details to all other partners
- All decisions made by the local Diplomas Now team are cleared through the school principal, preferably during regular meetings of the leadership staff from all partner agencies.
- A calendar and process will be established for visits to the school from members of any organization's central office or outside agencies, even if focused on one group. The site visit process will be agreed upon and followed by all partners.



This graphic provides a high-level overview of the complexities of the Diplomas Now model. The key point here is that at each level, communication must travel consistently around each circle so that true collaboration is occurring at each level of Diplomas Now

• The outer circle represents the central office or national headquarters of each of the primary Diplomas Now partners.

Local city leadership staff for each of the partner organizations have reporting and operational relationships directly with their central headquarters, and the headquarters-level team members also communicate with one another and with nationwide funders/supporters. As Diplomas Now decisions are made on the outside circle, they will be shared with the inner circle.

• The inner circle represents the city collaborative leadership team, consisting of director-level staff at the local level who manage all Diplomas Now schools in that city.

As new decisions, events, or changes are passed to the city level, each organization must share with their city counterparts and also share with the school teams.

• Inside the inner circle is the school-based collaborative team, consisting of the field staff working in the school. They supervise additional people who implement elements of the model (i.e. the team of City Year corps members, a CIS social worker, etc.). As they learn of new activities, they must share with each other.

II. Partner Roles and Responsibilities

The role of each partner at a Diplomas Now school may be slightly different from that partner's role at other schools where they work. The following sections describe the areas of focus and staffing structures for each organization involved in Diplomas Now.

Talent Development in the Diplomas Now Model



Talent Development's coaches and facilitators work closely with school administrators and teachers to organize the school in such a way as to allow the Diplomas Now interventions to take place. Through specific whole-school reform efforts, the provision of specialized training for educators, and management of Early Warning Indicator systems, Talent Development oversees the vital foundational elements of Diplomas Now.

Talent Development constructs effective strategies which help faculty, staff, and school partners acquire a shared vision around a new mission. These strategies, which help all students stay on the path to high school graduation, include:

- Establishing an Early Warning Indicator system
- Providing data and structures
- Supporting the school's leadership team from the planning process through successful implementation
- Enhancing the quality of relationships and overall school climate
- Raising levels of energy, morale, engagement and attendance among all students by displaying student work, sharing attendance updates, providing certificates for attendance and achievement, and conducting report card conferences
- Encouraging distributive leadership and teaming practices, including optimal use of common planning time
- Facilitating teacher meetings and professional development

Talent Development staffing

The primary point of contact for Talent Development in a Diplomas Now school will be the Early Warning Indicators (EWI) **organizational facilitator**, whose role it is to help ensure that the teacher teams have the training, support, and assistance needed to effectively implement program components, particularly the early warning and tiered intervention system. He/she helps build consensus, mediate conflicts, and shepherd collective problem solving processes among teacher teams, site-based administrators, school partners, and district staff.

In addition, a **climate coach** may assist the site in creating and implementing a school-wide plan for supporting attendance and positive behavior and responding to problem behavior. Curriculum coaches from Talent Development provide teachers (and City Year corps members) with classroom-embedded support in the implementation of the specific evidence-based curriculum and instructional programs.

Talent Development also engages **curriculum coaches** who support the implementation of Diplomas Now. Curriculum coaches work with administrations, teachers, City Year corps members, and other support staff to improve student achievement, attendance, and behavior. The coaches also provide educators with instructional strategies that engage students and help develop critical and abstract reasoning skills.

The Collaborative in Action

David was what some teachers might call shy. He sat in the back, participated little, and avoided situations where he'd be in the spotlight. At the end of the first marking period, he was failing math and reading. David came to the attention of his teachers and other staff at an 8th grade team meeting shortly after winter break. As a result of the team meeting, his teacher team placed him firmly on their radar. In addition, he began meeting with a City Year 'near-peer' mentor. David was already receiving full case management services which continued through June 2009 from an experienced Communities In Schools Social Services Coordinator. His relationship with this committed, highly effective professional provided an increasingly strong foundation for David that enabled him to accept his City Year mentor's help. His mentor came to know that David faced many hurdles at home, in his neighborhood and with his own emotional health. Every day, David's mentor reached out to him before and during school hours and in an afterschool program. Slowly David came to deeply trust his mentor. He shared a poem he had written. On the page, expressed beautifully, were his frustrations laid bare. Encouraged by his mentor to continue to "share his words with the world." David became more confident. In the spring, he presented his work at school-wide poetry slams and helped lead an afterschool art program. Equipped with newfound public speaking and writing skills and a much more positive outlook toward school, David began to attend school regularly, and put more effort into his coursework. His teachers and Communities in Schools Social Service Coordinator continued their support. In March, he earned Cs in math and reading, up from Fs the previous marking period. His attendance improved significantly. In late spring, David's City Year mentor asked David if he would be the designated student speaker at a presentation to the city and school district about Diplomas Now. Together, they wrote and rehearsed. David told his transformative story to the guests. He was clearly moving back on track to high school graduation.

The goal of Diplomas Now collaborative is to support David and others who are already showing warning signs in the 6th - 9th grades.

Talent Development Diplomas Now service model

EWI organizational facilitators establish and maintain regular communication with all members of the local Diplomas Now team, including school district officials, families, and local partners, to ensure the effective delivery of the instructional program and workings of the organizational components. EWI organizational facilitators lead meetings of the partners to identify and solve problems in implementation. Solutions may include training, troubleshooting, and identifying needs for on-going assistance.

The EWI organizational facilitator spearheads data collection efforts at schools and, through coordination and leadership of On-Track Indicator meetings, facilitates the ongoing use of data by teachers and Diplomas Now partners to monitor student achievement. The EWI organizational facilitator coordinates the creation of a shared progress report each marking period so that all Diplomas Now partners can assess progress and identify areas for improvement.

The EWI organizational facilitator works with coaches and school leaders to assess training needs and provide on-going professional development in areas such as:

- Teaching in the extended class period
- Teacher teaming
- Teacher and student conferencing
- Scheduling
- School climate and culture
- Cooperative learning
- Literacy across the curriculum
- Classroom management
- Curriculum-specific and module-specific training in core subject areas

As a part of ongoing professional development of partner team members, the EWI organizational facilitator also manages a system for self-reflection, growth, and improvement for team leaders and administrators.

The EWI organizational facilitator is also the link between the local Diplomas Now team and the Talent Development/Johns Hopkins University central office team and other Talent Development programs nationally. The EWI Organizational Facilitator monitors implementation progress, discusses support strategies, and reports findings to division and regional managers.

Curriculum coaches provide the support needed to successfully implement curricula that promote student engagement: learning activities designed to close skill gaps and develop mature thinking and overall improve achievement so that students can be successful in post-secondary experiences. Curriculum coaches in non-evaluative roles sustain implementation of the Diplomas Now model, addressing the professional needs of educators and the instructional needs of students. They work with school partners to develop, refine, and sustain positive school climate and high quality classroom management systems.

Specific duties of the curriculum coach include:

- Assisting teachers in planning and implementing successful lessons
- Modeling classroom management strategies and lessons
- Co-teaching lessons with classroom teachers
- Observing and providing feedback to educators on implementation
- Coordinating professional development with the EWI organizational facilitator

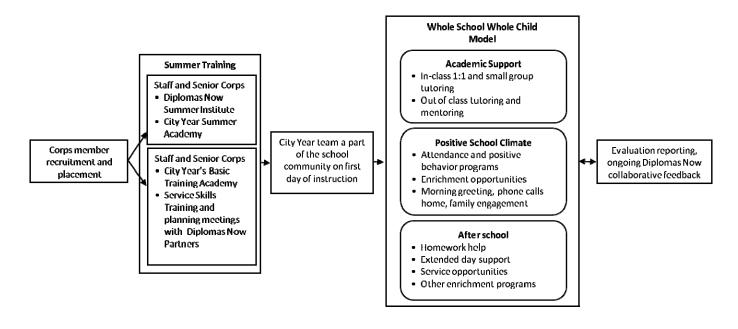
City Year in the Diplomas Now Model



City Year delivers the Whole School, Whole Child model in the Diplomas Now schools, and will use the programmatic developments from this model to inform the development of the WSWC network's practices for middle schools. Corps members are deployed to classrooms and students are assigned to City Year whole school climate activities and targeted interventions based on the presence of the EWI's.

City Year's primary focus is to provide supports to students who require **targeted** interventions but to do this from within a whole class support approach so students can be fluidly assigned to small groups without negative associations. The CY team also offers school-wide support for whole-school activities often intended to improve overall school climate.

The organizational structure/cycle for City Year is generally as follows:



City Year's Diplomas Now staffing

City Year typically deploys one team of 8-12 corps members to a school, serving all day Monday-Thursday. One or two members of that team are likely to be **senior corps members** – corps members who have completed a year of service previously and/or who have exceptional experience. Senior corps members serve as "team leaders," providing on-site leadership on a day-to-day basis. While their primary role is to lead and support corps members, the senior corps members also, like the rest of the team, provide direct service to youth, though on a more limited basis. Senior corps members bridge the gap between City Year staff and corps members, provide ongoing guidance and oversight, and serve as peer role models for their teammates.

BEST PRACTICE—PROGRAM MANAGER SCHEDULING

Ideally, a Diplomas Now PM will be present at the school in a supervisory and/or partnership administration capacity for several hours, three days per week, for a total of approximately 18-22 hours.

Again, because specifics will vary from site to site and school to school, it is crucial that local partners discuss the schedule of the PM and SCMs early in the partnership development process. That way, all partners will build shared expectations and a clear understanding of management protocol when it comes to the City Year team.

While senior corps members provide a great deal of leadership, each City Year team also has a **program manager** who serves as its supervisor. For Diplomas Now, the program manager is not only the day-to-day supervisor of the team but also plays a key role in collaboration and communication with staff from the other partner organizations. Along with director-level City Year site staff, the program manager will work closely with partner staff to develop strategies, monitor progress, address challenges, and support the overall health and success of the project.

Due to administrative and other duties, the program manager will not necessarily be on-site at all times when the City Year team of corps members and senior corps members are on-site, especially if that program manager is also managing a second team at a different school.

When the program manager is not at the school, senior corps members provide leadership and serve as points of contact for the team. Prior to the team's start in the school, the local Diplomas Now partners should develop a clear and shared understanding of how much time the program manager will spend on-site, and when.

Program managers report directly to a director-level staff member at the site – usually a **program director** and/or **service director**. The program/service director will be a member of the local Diplomas Now leadership team and, while not present at the school on a day-to-day basis, provides higher-level leadership for the initiative. All City Year sites have at least one **executive director**, responsible for the overall impact and long-term success of the entire local organization.

CY's Diplomas Now service model

City Year corps members are assigned to a homeroom of students and interact with that class throughout the school day and in afterschool programs. (See corps members' typical activities below.) Within the homeroom, corps members are assigned a "focus list" of students, selected because they are exhibiting one or more early warning indicators.

While the primary focus of the City Year team will be literacy, math, attendance and behavior interventions with students on the focus list, the team also provides a variety of "whole-school" preventive interventions. These are to be determined via partnership discussions but will likely include things such as support of school-wide positive behavior incentives, school climate improvements, parent/community engagement, and student community service/service learning projects.

CY's Diplomas Now corps members' typical activities:

While details regarding specific activities of the corps members are determined by the local Diplomas Now team and the partner school, the role of City Year will generally focus upon the following activities and responsibilities

• In-class academic support of students on the core member's focus list

Via a variety of support strategies including in-class or pull-out tutoring of individuals and small groups, corps members provide extra support to focus list students, with an emphasis on numeracy and literacy skills. The corps members at times will float across the whole classroom to support students not on their focus list. The corps members will also at times provide whole class programming or work in small groups which are a mix of students from their focus list and students who are not on the list.

• Morning greeting

The entire team greets students outside the school/homerooms at the start of each school day in a way that sets a positive and structured tone. This includes a variety of welcome activities such as games, greetings, and personal check-ins with individual focus list students.

Morning attendance check

During the first period of the day, corps members note if their focus list students are present and provide positive reinforcement for those who are. Corps members also end the day with their homeroom group in order to close the school day with an encouraging tone.

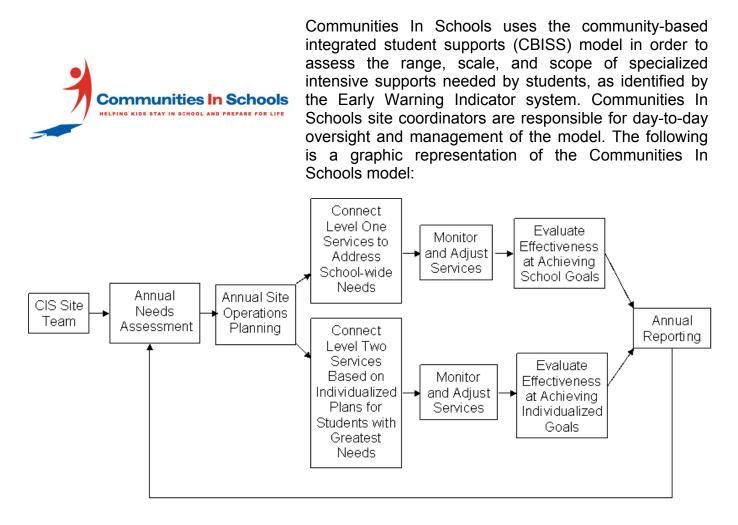
• Phone calls home

City Year will make phone calls to the homes of those focus list students still absent at the conclusion of homeroom, in order to encourage them to come to school.

• Positive behavior incentives

Working closely with school and Diplomas Now partner staff, City Year supports and enhances the school's system for positive behavior incentives and programs. During summer planning, the school's system for positive behavior supports should be discussed and a specific role for City Year determined.

Communities In Schools in the Diplomas Now Model



Communities In Schools staffing - site team

The Communities In Schools site team is led by a **site coordinator**, responsible for planning and managing all Communities In Schools operations at the site. The Site Coordinator oversees implementation of the CBISS model in close coordination with all Diplomas Now partners in this effort.

Communities In Schools primarily provides and coordinates intensive student supports but does substantial work to implement and support targeted and whole school activities. The site coordinator serves on the school's leadership team. For example, in Philadelphia, the Site Coordinator's participation on the leadership team allowed Communities In Schools to manage, coordinate, and implement most of the social service initiatives within the school. This position helps build strong relationships with other school leaders in order to serve students and families. These relationships eliminated duplication of services through case management, provided targeted interventions such as sexual harassment workshops, and resulted in whole-school activities like family night and community involvement (PTA).

In addition to the site coordinator, members of the site team may include combinations of additional Communities In Schools staff, reassigned or repositioned staff, and/or partners and volunteers - each with defined roles and responsibilities based on Communities In Schools site operations plans.

Communities In Schools service model

Needs assessment

Each year, Communities In Schools identifies needs based on multiple sources of data. These may include data collected by school districts and schools as part of overall school improvement initiatives, surveys and discussions with staff, parents and students, and evaluation results from the previous year. Needs are prioritized in consultation with school administrators and Diplomas Now partners and are used as the foundation for site operations planning.

Finally, all students who are referred to Communities In Schools have individual student/family needs assessments performed. The site coordinator then makes appropriate referrals to address family needs.

Site operations planning

Each year, the Communities In Schools site team develops a comprehensive site operations plan to address identified needs. The plan includes measurable objectives, as well as procedures for delivering Levels One and Two services (see below), monitoring and adjusting services, and evaluating and reporting effectiveness.

As stated earlier, the site coordinator works with school administrators and Diplomas Now partners to identify needed services in the school. Ideally, each Diplomas Now school will have an effective case management team that determines who delivers Level One and Level Two services and who evaluates the services and results consistently throughout the year.

BEST PRACTICE – NEEDS ASSESSMENT

At Feltonville School of Arts and Sciences in Philadelphia, Communities In Schools staff met several times with school administrators to discuss current services being implemented at the school, as well as what was needed. We called this the "wish list." The Site Coordinator networked with other outside agencies and community groups (ATTIC – gay youth advocacy group, CADE- drugs and alcohol, Carson Valley– Mental Health) to plan for the upcoming year.

These services are evaluated yearly by the Site Coordinator to ensure effectiveness.

Student data regarding attendance, behavior, and math and reading grades are generated from the School District of Philadelphia data base. Communities In Schools is responsible for monitoring the behavior and

BEST PRACTICE – MONITORING AND ADJUSTING SERVICES

In the early days of Diplomas Now at the Feltonville School of Arts and Sciences, the Communities in Schools Site Coordinator met with and formed partnerships with several mental health facilities within the community.

As the school year went on, referrals were made and targeted families received services from those facilities.

Two months into the project, several families expressed their displeasure with the services they were receiving from a particular agency. After countless inter-agency meetings to address the situation, the Site Coordinator---along with school partners-- worked to remove the agency from the referral list and found alternatives so that the families' needs could be met.

Delivery of evidence-based services

According to the site operations plan, widely accessible Level One services are provided to help address identified school-wide needs or to build and reinforce student assets.

Targeted and sustained Level Two services are provided for specific students who are identified as having the greatest risk of eventually dropping out of school. Level Two services are provided based on individualized assessments and plans. Communities In Schools Total Quality System standards define the frequency and saturation levels of services required for full implementation of the Communities In Schools model.

Monitoring and adjusting services

In collaboration with all Diplomas Now partners, the Communities In Schools site team regularly monitors and adjusts services as needed to maximize effectiveness and impact. The team also provides regular progress reports to school and affiliate leadership.

Evaluating the effectiveness of services

According to the site operations plan and the affiliate's uniform data collection system, the Communities In Schools site team implements a systematic data collection plan to evaluate the effectiveness of services in achieving school-wide goals and addressing the needs of individual students.

By combining information from Communities In Schools' data management tool (CISDM) and the Early Warning Indicator data from Talent Development, the site coordinator can collaborate with Diplomas Now partners to learn what specific interventions were useful in addressing barriers to learning.

Reporting

The Communities In Schools site team provides annual end-of-year reports to school and affiliate leadership. These reports are instrumental in planning site services for the following year, as well as contributing to affiliate level reports for partners, the state office (if appropriate) and the national office.

Communities In Schools' Diplomas Now service model

At Diplomas Now schools, Communities In Schools site coordinators are responsible for implementing the plan outlined above.

In order to meet organizational goals, the Site Coordinator:

Implements the Communities In Schools and school site partnership agreement.

Communities In Schools' Total Quality System standards require that a written agreement with the school be completed annually, in addition to the written Diplomas Now agreement. Typically, a written agreement has been developed with Communities In Schools and the school site as well as the school district before the Communities In Schools site coordinator takes on his responsibilities at the site. Sometimes, the site coordinator or the supervisor at the local affiliate office may be a part of these negotiations. Once an agreement is in place, the site coordinator is the primary person responsible for ensuring that this agreement is executed.

Communicates to the school, the community, and service providers the vision and mission of Communities In Schools. Site coordinators spend much of their time sharing the organizational vision and mission with the school, partners and other key stakeholders. This is done formally through meetings, presentations and teacher in-services, and informally through day-to-day conversations, chance encounters, and one-on-one interactions.

Knows the assets, needs and issues of the school, staff, families and community.

Site coordinators must educate themselves about their school sites, including student demographics, community characteristics, along with the more anecdotal "feel for the school." A site coordinator typically will assess the strengths and assets of the school community in terms of people, resources and supports.

Facilitates needs assessment at the site level, followed by decisions about service delivery and recipients. Using baseline data, the site coordinator works with the school to bring into focus the priority needs at the school site. The students are typically chosen by DN partners prior to the opening of the school year. Selection can occur through meetings, orientations, and surveys of school staff, parents and others to determine the specific services needed and the particular students/families that will receive the services.

Facilitates, supports, participates in and/or coordinates a multi-disciplinary team approach at the school site. A critical part of the site coordinator's work is to connect, foster and support a "multi-disciplinary" team approach among school staff, Diplomas Now and other key partners in the school. In so doing, the site coordinator helps to eliminate duplication of services and efforts, and begins to create an integrated delivery system. **Co-creates procedures to ensure services are connected to young people**. Once needed services are determined, the site coordinator should work with all Diplomas Now partners to create systems and procedures to ensure services reach identified youth. This includes creating a teacher and parent referral system; a calendar of services and dates; agreed-upon times of service delivery; and assigned space for service provision.

Coordinates, brokers and manages services at the site level. In addition to the procedures above, the Site Coordinator is responsible for collaborating to identify appropriate providers to deliver the services, and managing and working with the school to bring these services to the school in an organized manner.

Manages data and documentation of the work at the site level. Collaborating with Diplomas Now partners to implement a plan for documentation and data management at the site is critical to the determination if interventions are having the intended impact. Documentation can include types of services, number of partners and services, and tracking progress against the Early Warning Indicators. The "CISnet Data Management Tools", a web-based data management system available for use by all Communities In Schools affiliates, is an excellent tool for collecting and reporting this type of data.

Local Partner (where applicable)

A local partner with expertise in school reform and strong connections with local districts and schools can partner in delivering the Diplomas Now model. It is anticipated that each Diplomas Now city that has a need for a local partner to join the Diplomas Now collaboration will define its role to fill specific needs to support the three primary partners. The paragraph below describes how the role of a local partner has played out in Philadelphia.

The Philadelphia Education Fund (the Ed Fund) conducted the early indicator research with Talent Development in 2005 and co-developed the model from 2006 to the present. The Ed Fund provided intensive technical assistance to the start-up Diplomas Now middle school in 2008-09 by being the link between the Diplomas Now Partners' local leadership and the onsite Diplomas Now collaboration, as well as by successfully seeking funds to support the work.

The Ed Fund provides the following staff to support the Diplomas Now model in Philadelphia:

- A senior program director oversees the work in partnership with the regional superintendent and is the liaison with the local leadership of City Year and Communities In Schools.
- A senior researcher who co-developed the Early Warning Indicator tool with the School District of Philadelphia supports Diplomas Now by providing data for onsite team meetings, collecting data from the Diplomas Now partners (Communities In Schools and City Year), analyzing and disseminating these data to determine trends regarding the impact of their interventions on students. In addition, the senior researcher collects, analyzes and disseminates Early Warning Indicator student data at the beginning of the school year and after each report card period to track student movement on the Early Warning Indicator continuum: on track, sliding and off track.
- A program associate supports both the senior program director and senior researcher in every aspect of the work.
- Perhaps most important, an onsite Diplomas Now project manager serves as the Talent Development EWI organizational facilitator and offers professional development to the staff and City Year corps members.

III. Key Structures and Tools

On-Track Indicator Meetings

As stated earlier, On-Track Indicator meetings, which should be held at least bi-weekly, provide the essential time for teachers to do the hands-on work necessary to drive Diplomas Now. Teacher teams select students with Early Warning Indicators and identify appropriate interventions inside and outside the classroom. At subsequent meetings, teachers revisit students being served to evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions and determine next steps.

The goal of these meetings is for groups of teachers and team members to identify and develop interventions and supports for individual students who they teach in common. Conversations should be structured so as to keep the focus on students and the necessary supports. Initial conversations should be framed around the following steps:

- Examine student early indicator profile(s) and other data
- Identify indicator of focus/concern
- Discuss potential interventions/ previous interventions
- Identify appropriate responder and intervention

Early on in subsequent meetings, members should discuss the extent to which decisions made previously were acted upon.

Attendees

The individuals that are a part of this meeting should be the staff members who work with a specific group of individual students. This includes homeroom teachers, CY corps members, literacy/math leaders, CIS social workers, parent liaisons, and others. Below is a sample group for a meeting to discuss the 6th grade students in sections 601 and 602:

- Homeroom Teacher 601
- Homeroom Teacher 602
- Special Ed teacher 6th grade
- Counselor
- Math lead $-6^{\text{th}}-8^{\text{th}}$ grade
- City Year corps member 601
- City Year corps member 602
- CIS social worker 6th grade
- TD EWI organizational facilitator

On-Track Indicator meeting ideas

- Have quarterly meetings to assess interventions overall.
- Share student work, lesson plans.

Setting the Agenda

Members of the Collaborative should reach consensus on an agenda format, which may be modified as needed.

The following guidelines are recommended for planning these meetings:

- Teams should be aware of the upcoming agendas.
- Time should be allowed for brief announcements at the beginning and should move into teacher team discussions within ~ 5 minutes.
- Though the focus of these meetings is the identification of problems and interventions, time should also be set aside for sharing of student successes.
- Agendas and meeting minutes should be communicated to all participants.

Documenting student progress

Recording the intervention history for every EWI focus student is the only way that the Collaborative will learn, over time, what works, when, and for whom. This documentation is used to inform ongoing practice and longer term analysis to determine interventions that are effective in improving student performance across marking periods.

Focus of the Meeting

The goal is to focus the energy of the On-Track indicator meetings on students that are in high need and to provide sustained supports for those students. Each group of teachers should identify students at the beginning of the school year that have one or more early indicators. It is recommended that this list should be no larger than 15 students at any one time and should be revisited at least every marking period.

Suggested Timeline – "Countdown to Diplomas Now"

TIME FRAME	KEY ACTION STEPS		
Spring	Determine local DN Collaborative leadership team members from all four local partners (and additional partners, if applicable) Identify city collaborative leadership team, consisting of leadership staff (one team per city)		
	Hold initial planning meetings monthly		
Summer	Determine on-site school DN Collaborative team members who will represent all partners Identify school-based collaborative teams consisting of field staff (one team per school)		
	Hold detailed planning meetings twice monthly or more to:		
	Discuss shared vision for collaboration		
	 Determine communications protocol Within city collaborative leadership team Within school-based collaborative teams Between teams at school-wide and city levels Between local partner agencies and the Diplomas Now national leadership team 		
	Set calendar for key meetings (see below) and any special events		
	• Establish weekly/daily schedule for school-based staff and City Year corps members/CIS social workers		
	Share individual organizational goals		
	Determine shared local Diplomas Now goals		
	Determine metrics for on- and off-track students		
	 Determine shared and individual activities to address the EWIs Detail interventions to address attendance, behavior, course performance O Plan for family engagement 		
	 Determine data collection and dissemination plan (including plan for scheduling/identifying students with EWIs from previous school year) Ongoing, for tracking student progress in Early Warning Indicator meetings Cumulative, for tracking overall progress 		
	Plan for local fundraising and strategic communications		
	High-level strategic integration (discuss district/city-level relationships, sharing Board lists, determining unique opportunities, etc.)		
School Year	Adhere to agreed-upon meeting schedule, including		
School fear	 City collaborative leadership team meetings – twice monthly 		
	 School-based collaborative team – twice monthly 		
	 Early Warning Indicator meetings – twice monthly Introduction of Diplomas Now to school faculty/staff – prior to start of school 		
	 Teacher planning meetings – CY corps members meet with partner teachers for partnership planning prior to start of school 		
	 Introduction of Diplomas Now to school community – to students and families, first week of school 		
	 End-of-marking-period performance review – city- and school-based teams meet to review progress data and discuss strategy moving forward 		
	 Year-end performance review – same as above, establishing a strategy for the next year 		
	• Additional meetings as needed Give special consideration to how you will manage requests for site visits from funders, staff from potential new sites/national offices, and other interested parties.		

Sample Schedules

In addition to individual calendars that each staff member should hold, each Diplomas Now site should develop a master calendar to help keep all members of the school informed about Diplomas Now activities.

The following schedules are samples of each Diplomas Now staff member. (See job descriptions under Partner Roles and Responsibilities.)

Talent Development EWI Organizational Facilitator

т	Talent Development EWI Organizational Facilitator/Local Partner Site Director Sample Day in a Middle School		
7:45 - 8:15 8:15 - 9:15 9:30 - 10:30 11:30 - 12:00 12:00 - 12:30 12:30 - 1:30 1:30 - 2:00 2:00 - 2:30 2:30 - 3:00	Morning greeting with students Plan for professional development with assistant principal Work with City Year corps member to develop guidance period activity Meet with 7 th grade team to discuss upcoming event Lunch Facilitate grade group meeting for 6 th grade Meet with principal Meet with guidance counselor to plan for 7 th and 8 th grade group meetings Support CY preparation for after school activities		
3:00 - 4:00	Assist with dismissal and check in with school staff		

Talent Development On-site EWI Organizational Facilitator
Sample Day in a High School

7:45 - 8:15 Join academy principal or principal in morning greeting

8:15 - 9:30	Meet with teacher teams and relevant CY corps member(s) Plan for professional development with Arts and Humanities Academy principal, academy
	teachers, and other support staff
9:30 - 10:30	Work in collaborative with City Year CMs and CIS staff to develop shared agenda
10:30 - 11:30	Meet with 9 th Grade Academy team(s), CMs and CIS personnel
11:30 - 12:00	Meet with 10 th grade team to discuss upcoming event
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch
12:45 - 1:30	Facilitate EWI 9 th Grade B team meeting
1:30 - 2:00	Meet with principal
2:00 - 3:00	Meet with Business Academy principal to plan for Family Back to School Night-Diplomas Now
	Awareness grade group meetings
3:00 - 3:30	Support CY preparation for after school activities
3:30 - 4:00	Assist with dismissal and check in with school staff
4:00 - 5:00	Available for after school work with teachers, administrators, CY Corps Members

City Year Corps Member

CITY YEAR CORPS MEMBER - Sample Day		
7:45-8:00 8:00-8:20 8:20-8:40 8:40-10:00 8:40-12:00 12:00-12:30	First Circle – CY team gathers to center communication and prepare for the day Morning greeting Homeroom – attendance check Phone calls home - as time permits Focus list student support - follow assigned grade group Lunch	
12:30-1:30 1:30-3:00 3:00-5:00	Prep period with teacher One day a week – grade group meeting Focus list student support – continues through end of school day After school programming – mix of academic and general youth development	
5:00-5:15	Final Circle	

Sample City Year Weekly Schedule				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning greeting	Morning greeting	Morning greeting	Morning greeting	
Focus List student sup- port/phone calls home	Focus List student support/phone calls home	Focus List student support/phone calls home	Focus List student support/phone calls home	
Math training with TD math coach	Reading training with TD reading coach	Focus List student support	Focus List student support	CITY YEAR
City Year team meet- ing	EWI/grade group meeting	Lunch support or tutoring	Lunch support or tutoring	TRAINING
Focus List student support	Focus List student support	Focus List student support	Focus List student support	
After school programs	After school pro- grams	After school pro- grams	After school programs	

Communities In Schools

CIS Focus Lists

In a similar manner to City Year, CIS staff have a caseload (focus list) of students that they see on a daily and/or weekly basis. A large number of students are identified at the beginning of the year based on the EWIs and new students are identified by teachers and administrators throughout the year. The CIS staff serves in this role as both a monitor of student progress and a support for students. By having students on their daily caseload, they monitor progress and are able to provide immediate intervention and support to students.

Communities In Schools Site Coordinator Sample Day		Communities In Schools Social Worker Sample Day	
8:00-8:30 8:30-9:30	Morning greeting Parent meetings or administration consult, regional meetings	8:00-8:35 8:35-9:20 9:20-10:05	Morning greeting with focus students Breakfast for focus student Focus List student support- <i>home visits if</i>
9:30-11:00	Focus List student support (home visits, individual session, teacher consult)		possible Prep/complete paperwork Attend grade group meeting
11:00-12:00 12:00-2:00 2:00-3:20	Attend grade group meeting Small groups Focus List student support (home		Lunch groups Prep/complete paperwork Focus List student support – <i>small group</i>
	visits, individual session, teacher consult)	1:50-2:35	Focus List student support – one-on-one meetings with students/conflict resolution Focus List student support – one on one
		2.33-3.20	meetings with students