Connecticut State Department of Education Evidence-Based Practice Guide
Supporting Local Education Agencies' (LEA) Use of ESSA Title Funds

Climate and Culture

DRAFT

Under ESSA, there are four tiers, or levels of evidence. Throughout this guide, the level indicator key is used to identify the evidence level at a quick glance.

Tier	Evidence Level	Evidence Descriptor
1	Strong Evidence	Supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented **randomized control experimental** studies.
2	Moderate Evidence	Supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented **quasi-experimental** studies.
3	Promising Evidence	Supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented **correlational** studies.
4	Demonstrates a Rationale	Practices that have a well-defined **logic model** or **theory of action**, are supported by research, and have some effort underway to determine their effectiveness.

Interventions applied under Title I, Section 1003 (School Improvement) are required to have strong, moderate, or promising evidence (Tiers 1-3) to support them. All other programs under Titles I-IV can rely on Tiers 1-4.

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Systems

The Connecticut State Department of Education adheres to research supporting the development, implementation, and sustainability of a tiered system of support for positive school climate, defined as the quality and character of school life. This system of support must address chronic absence, school discipline and interpersonal relationships and must ensure non-academic needs are met so that students are healthy, happy, and ready to learn.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
A strong relationship exists between a students' connectedness to school and positive educational outcomes. *Factors that increase school connectedness include:* • *improving adult supports;* • *increasing student sense of belonging to a positive peer group; and* • *increasing student commitment to education and the school environment.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12 PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: McNeely C. (2003). Connections to school as an indicator of positive development. Paper presented at the Indicators of Positive Development Conference, Washington, DC, March 12-13, 2003. **Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Klem, A.Mm, Connell, J.P. (2004). Relationships matter: linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. Journal of School Health; 74(7): 262–273.
Creating supportive relationships and skill-building to foster resiliency helps children manage stress. *Building resilience requires relationships, not rugged individualism. The skills that underlie resilience can be strengthened at any age. Interventions should target the development of specific skills that are needed for adaptive coping, sound decision-making, and effective self-regulation in children and adults.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2015). Supportive Relationships and Active Skill-Building Strengthen the Foundations of Resilience: Working Paper 13.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Provide for Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs supports students' ability to learn. *Improve outcomes for students by providing access to programs within school that address physiological needs of students; establishing routines in learning environments so students feel safe and in control; encouraging effort; reinforcing positive learner behavior and self-esteem; and building relationships with students to understand their knowledge level and level on Maslow's Hierarchy.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. Psychological Review, 50(4), 370-396. doi: 10.1037/h0054346.
Provide social-emotional training using a sequenced step-by-step approach with explicit learning goals, active forms of learning, and sufficient time for skill development. *Effective leadership and planning teams promote quality program implementation by assuring adequate financial, personnel, and administrative support, as well as providing professional development, and job embedded technical assistance.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D. & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. Child Development, 82(1): 405–432.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Develop a safe, well-managed school environment by creating respectful interactions and relationships among students and adults. *A safe, culturally responsive environment is predicated on developing positive and engaging relationships between adults and children. While schools may not be able to entirely overcome adverse neighborhood influences, the adults in the school building can promote structures and relationships that mediate adverse influences.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 4, Demonstrates a Rationale** Source: Steinberg, M. P., Allensworth, E. M., Johnson, D. W. (2011). Student and Teacher Safety in Chicago Public Schools: The Roles of Community Context and School Social Organization. Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.
Implement Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. *Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) is a universal prevention strategy that reduces students' disruptive behavior problems through application of behavioral, social learning, and organizational behavior principles. SWPBIS improves prosocial behavior and effective emotion regulation. SWPBIS helps staff process and reflect on their behaviors while developing systems and supports to meet children's behavioral needs.*	PreK-3 4-5 PreK-3 4-5	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Bradshaw, C. P., Mitchell, M. M., Leaf, P. J. (2010). Examining the Effects of Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports on Student Outcomes Results From a Randomized Controlled Effectiveness Trial in Elementary Schools. Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 12(3), 133–48. **Tier 1, Strong** Source: Bradshaw, C. P., Waasdorp T. E., Leaf, P J. (2012). Effects of Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports on Child Behavior Problems. Journal of The American Academy of Pediatrics. 2012 Nov; 130(5): e1136–e1145.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Implement school counselor-led portfolio of interventions. *Incentives motivate students individually and at each grade level and individual counseling is used for students who missed five or more days of school.*	6-8	**Tier 3, Promising** Source: Edwards, L. (2013). School Counselors Improving Attendance. Georgia School Counselors Association Journal. 2013 Nov; 20(1).
Monitor progress of all students and intervene early. *Monitor the progress of all students, and proactively intervene when students show early signs of attendance, behavior, or academic problems and provide interventions.*	9-12	**Tier 4, Demonstrates a Rationale** Source: Preventing Dropout in Secondary Schools, Recommendation 1 (NCEE 2017-4028).
Impact of the Early Warning Intervention and Monitoring Systems. *For students at risk of not graduating, use a systematic approach to reliably identify, assign interventions, and monitor progress.*	9-12	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Faria, A.-M., Sorensen, N., Heppen, J., Bowdon, J., Taylor, S., Eisner, R., & Foster, S. (2017). Getting students on track for graduation: Impacts of the Early Warning Intervention and Monitoring System after one year (REL 2017–272). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest.
Implement an interagency effort that encompasses a comprehensive set of strategies to reduce chronic absence. *Elements of effort include data monitoring; "Success Mentors;" principal leadership at school attendance teams; connecting to local community resources; and promoting awareness about chronic absenteeism.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Balfanz, R., Byrnes, V. Meeting the Challenge of Combatting Chronic Absenteeism. Johns Hopkins School of Education, Everyone Graduates Center.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Preparing educators to take action in addressing health-related chronic absence can have a powerful impact on students' academic success. *Prepare educators — particularly district decision-makers — with knowledge and practical guidance to address health-related chronic absenteeism.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 4, Demonstrates a Rationale** Source: Addressing the Health-Related Causes of Chronic Absenteeism, A Tool Kit for Action, Healthy Schools Campaign. Healthy Schools Campaign.
Provide support and resources to address individual factors that contribute to absences. *Individual factors contribute to student absences. Interventions can be provided by a number of local organizations or through collaboration with local organizations.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: What Works for Health. Attendance Interventions for Chronically Absent Students. (2017). University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.
Increase student attendance by improving family and community involvement. *Schools may be able to increase student attendance in elementary school by implementing specific family and community involvement activities.*	PreK-3 4-5	**Tier 1, Strong 1** Source: Epstein, J., Sheldon, S. B. Present and Accounted For: Improving Student Attendance Through Family and Community Involvement, Journal of Educational Research, vol. 95, pp. 308-318, May/June 2002.
Improve student attendance through school, family, and community partnerships. *Schools working to implement school, family, and community partnerships, had student attendance improve whereas in comparison schools, rates of student attendance declined slightly.*	PreK-3 4-5	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Steven B. Sheldon (2010) Improving Student Attendance With School, Family, and Community Partnerships, The Journal of Educational Research, 100:5, 267-275, DOI: 10.3200/JOER.100.5.267-275.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Build adult relationships and mentoring opportunities for students that miss too much school. *Check & Connect is an intervention to reduce dropping out of school. It is based on monitoring of school performance, mentoring, case management, and other supports.*	9-12	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: What Works Clearinghouse Intervention Report Dropout Prevention Check & Connect (Updated May 2015).
Use School Based Health Centers (SBHC) to reduce early dismissal and loss of seat time. *SBHCs have a direct impact on educational outcomes such as attendance.*	9-12	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Van Cura, M. (2010). The Relationship Between School-Based Health Centers, Rates of Early Dismissal From School, and Loss of Seat Time, Journal of School Health, Vol. 80, No.8, August 2010.
Reduce asthma-related absences in schools with School Based Health Centers (SBHC). *Students with asthma enrolled in schools without an SBHC missed more days of school than those enrolled in schools with an SBHC.*	PreK-3 4-5	**Tier 3, Promising** Source: Webber, M.P., Carpiniello, K. E., Oruwariye, T., Lo, Y., Burton W.B., Appel, D. K. (2003). Burden of Asthma in Inner-City Schoolchildren: Do School-Based Health Centers Make a Difference?, Arch Pediatrics Adolescent Medicine Volume 157, February 2003.
Examine the role of school bus-taking on reducing school absences. *Findings suggest that students who took the school bus to kindergarten had fewer absent days over the school year and were less likely to be chronically absent compared with students who commuted to school in any other way.*	PreK-3	**Tier 3, Promising** Source: Gottfried, M. A. (2017) Linking Getting to School with Going to School, Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, American Educational Research Association, April 2017.

Instructional Practice

The Connecticut State Department of Education adheres to research that supports the explicit strategies and interventions to improve school climate that support student growth and development by enhancing their ability to learn and to create innovative teaching and learning environments. Practices are grounded in prevention and early intervention strategies to promote a safe and positive school culture and to identify vulnerable students and differentiating supports and interventions

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Implement strategies and practices to connect all students to school life. *To improve outcomes for students, the following strategies have proven effective:* • *create decision-making processes that facilitate student, family, and community engagement as well as academic achievement and staff empowerment;* • *provide education and opportunities to enable families to be actively involved in their children's academic and school life;* • *provide students with the academic, emotional, and social skills necessary to be actively engaged in school;* • *use effective classroom management and teaching methods to foster a positive learning environment;* • *provide professional learning and support for teachers and other school staff to enable them to meet the diverse cognitive, emotional, and social needs of children and adolescents; and* • *create trusting and caring relationships that promote open communication among administrators, teachers, staff, students, families, and communities.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12 PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Blum, R. (2005). School Connectedness: Improving Students' Lives. Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, Maryland. **Tier 1, Strong** Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. School Connectedness: Strategies for Increasing Protective Factors Among Youth. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2009.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Implement strategies to foster resiliency so that children manage daily stress and severe stress. *To improve outcomes for students, the following strategies have proven effective:* • *ensure at least one stable, caring, and supportive relationship exists between a child and important adults;* • *help children build a sense of mastery over life circumstances;* • *help children build strong executive functioning and self-regulation skills; and* • *provide support in the context of affirming faith or cultural traditions.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2015). Supportive Relationships and Active Skill-Building Strengthen the Foundations of Resilience: Working Paper 13.
Integrate lessons and tools focused on developing abilities to recognize, understand, label, express, and regulate emotions. *Programs like RULER, developed by the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, improve the setting of the classroom, improve youth outcomes, including academic engagement and achievement, as well as relationships with peers and adults.*	4-5 6-8 4-5 6-8	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Rivers, S. E., Brackett, M. A., Reyes, M. R., Elbertson, N. A, Salovey, P. (2012). Improving the Social and Emotional Climate of Classrooms: A Clustered Randomized Controlled Trial Testing The RULER Approach. doi 10.1007/s11121-012-0305-2. **Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Brackett, M.A., Rivers, S. E., Reyes, M. R., Salovey, P. (2010). Enhancing academic performance and social and emotional competence with RULER feeling words curriculum. Elsevier Inc. doi:10.1016/j.lindif.2010.10.002

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Replace zero-tolerance policies with alternative strategies for effective school discipline approaches that include a range of responses, such as targeted behavioral supports, character education programs, or positive behavioral interventions and supports. *School discipline alternatives to suspensions emphasize social, behavioral, and cognitive skill-building as well as character education and include targeted behavioral supports for students who are at risk for violent or illegal behavior.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Skiba, R., Reynolds, C. R., Graham, S., Sheras, P., Conoley, J. C., Garcia-Vazquez, E. (2006). Are Zero Tolerance Policies Effective in the Schools? An Evidentiary Review and Recommendations. American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force report.
To find the best intervention, first identify the specifics and conditions that prompt and reinforce a problem behavior. *The success of a behavioral intervention hinges on identifying the specific conditions that prompt and reinforce the problem behavior. Teachers carefully observe the conditions in which the problem behavior is likely to occur and not occur and use the information to tailor effective intervention strategies that respond to the needs of the individual student.*	PreK-3 4-5 PreK-3 6-8	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom, (NCEE 2008-012) **Tier 4, Demonstrates a Rationale** Source: Hansen, B. D., Wills, H. P., Kamps, D. M., Greenwood, C. R. (2013). The Effects of Function-Based Self-Management Interventions on Student Behavior. Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders. July 2013. DOI: 10.1177/1063426613476345.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Modify the classroom learning environment to decrease problem behaviors. *Teachers can reduce the occurrence of inappropriate behavior by revisiting and reinforcing classroom behavioral expectations; rearranging the classroom environment, sequencing learning activities to meet students' needs; and/or individually adapting instruction to promote high rates of student engagement and on-task behavior.*	PreK-3 4-5 PreK-3 4-5	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: [Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom, (NCEE 2008-012).](#) **Tier 1, Strong** Source: [Sugai. S., Horner, R. (2008) The Evolution of Discipline Practices: School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports, Child & Family Behavior Therapy, 24:1-2, 23-50,](#) DOI: [10.1300/J019v24n01_03](#).
Teach and reinforce new skills to increase appropriate behavior and preserve a positive classroom climate. *Teachers should actively teach students socially and behaviorally appropriate skills to replace problem behaviors using strategies focused on both individual students and the whole class. In this way, students can learn how, when, and where to use these new skills; increase the opportunities that students have to exhibit appropriate behaviors; preserve a positive classroom climate; and manage consequences to reinforce students' display of positive "replacement" behaviors and adaptive skills.*	4-5	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: [Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom, (NCEE 2008-012).](#)

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Draw on relationships with professional colleagues and students' families for continued guidance and support. *Teachers should draw upon relationships with professional colleagues and students' families in finding ways to address the behavior problems of individual students and should consider parents, school personnel, and behavioral experts as allies who can provide new insights, strategies and support.*	PreK-3 4-5 PreK-3 4-5	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: [Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom, (NCEE 2008-012).](#) **Tier 2, Moderate** Source: [Treating Children With Early-Onset Conduct Problems: Intervention Outcomes for Parent, Child, and Teacher Training: Adolescent Psychology, American Psychological Association, Division 53. 33. 105-24. 10.1207/S15374424JCCP3301_11.](#)
Assess whether schoolwide behavior problems warrant adopting schoolwide strategies or programs that reduce negative and foster positive interactions. *Classroom teachers can benefit from adopting a schoolwide approach to preventing problem behaviors and increasing positive social interactions among students and with school staff. A systemic approach requires a shared responsibility on the part of all school personnel, particularly the administrators who establish and support consistent schoolwide practices and the teachers who implement these practices both in their individual classrooms and beyond.*	PreK-3 4-5 PreK-3 4-5	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: [Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom, (NCEE 2008-012).](#) **Tier 1, Strong** Source: [A Randomized Controlled Trial of the First Step to Success Early Intervention Demonstration of Program Efficacy Outcomes in a Diverse, Urban School District: Walker, Hill & R. Seeley, John & Small, Jason & Severson, Herb & A. Graham, Bethany & Feil, Edward & Serna, Loretta & Golly, Annemieke & R. Forness, Steven. (2009). Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders. 17. 197-212.](#)

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Reduce students' use of drugs and involvement in other problem behaviors by providing a supportive and responsive culture. *Comprehensive school reform programs, like the Child Development Project, help elementary schools become caring communities of learners-environments characterized by supportive interpersonal relationships, shared goals, responsiveness to students' developmental and sociocultural needs, and an emphasis on prosocial values of personal responsibility, concern for others, and fairness, as well as a commitment to learning. The programs include classroom, schoolwide, and family involvement activities that, working synergistically, are expected to foster students' positive development and resilience to risk when confronted with stressful life events and circumstances.*	PreK-3 4-5	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Battistich, V., Schaps, E., Watson, M., Solomon, D., Lewis, C. Effects of the Child Development Project on students' drug use and other problem behaviors. Journal of Primary Prevention.
Develop a system to address interventions for behavior problems in early grades, including screening, school intervention and parent training. *Selected interventions, like First Step, for students in grades 1 through 3 with externalizing behavior problems, address prevention goals and objectives. First Step consists of three modular components (screening, school intervention, parent training); lasts approximately three months; and is initially set up, delivered, and coordinated by a behavioral coach (e.g., school counselor, behavior specialist, social worker).*	1-3	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: A Randomized Controlled Trial of the First Step to Success Early Intervention: Demonstration of Program Efficacy Outcomes in a Diverse, Urban School District. Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 17(4), 197–212.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Provide social skill instruction in early childhood education for students with disabilities, including communication, problem solving, decision making, self-management and peer relations. *The review of social skills training in the social-emotional development and behavior domain showed statistically positive effects. A variety of social skills training approaches and curricula are available. For example, teachers may use a structured approach to explain to students how to enact a desired behavior by providing examples and reinforcing targeted behaviors through questions, answers, and other feedback. An example of a more nuanced approach (often referred to as "incidental teaching") is when teachers respond to student-generated utterances, interactions, and behavior to encourage the desired social skills (such as rewarding positive play).*	PreK-3	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: [What Works Clearinghouse Intervention Report, Early Childhood Education Interventions for Children with Disabilities (2013)](#)
Provide restorative interventions to students who are disproportionately suspended (race and ethnicity). *Disciplined students are at greater risk than other students to experience a host of academic and psychosocial problems across the lifespan. Findings indicate that student racial background and school racial composition are enduring risks across key decision points of the school discipline process. Conversely, participation in restorative interventions and in-school suspensions protects students from out-of-school suspensions.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: [Anyon, Y., Jenson, J. M., Altschul, I., Farrar, J., McQueen, J., Greer, E., Downing, B., Simmons, J. (2014). The persistent effect of race and the promise of alternatives to suspension in school discipline outcomes. Elseiver. DOI: 10.1016/j.childyouth.2014.06.025.](#)

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Facilitate communication between teachers and parents about good attendance. *Teachers can take a lead role in intervening with students when attendance problems emerge and reduce the prevalence of absenteeism without excessively burdening teachers.*	PreK-3	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Cook, P., Dodge, K., Gifford, E.J. and Schulting, A. (2017). Early Truancy Prevention Program, Duke University, Study appears in the journal Children and Youth Services Review, "A new program to prevent primary school absenteeism: Results of pilot study in five schools," Children and Youth Services Review, 2017.
Improve attendance and school performance during later grades with HIPPY preschool program. *HIPPY partners with and empowers parents of preschool children to prepare their children for success in school. Post hoc longitudinal data demonstrates that students in this program were retained less often, had fewer repeat discipline referrals; scored higher, and had higher pass rates on the reading and math state assessments across time than matching children not enrolled in this program.*	PreK-3	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Brown, A., & Lee, J. (2014). School performance in elementary, middle, and high school: A comparison of children based on HIPPY participation during the preschool years. School Community Journal, 24(2), 83–106.
Implement early identification and intervention system. *By combining effective whole-school reforms with attendance, behavioral, and extra-help interventions, graduation rates can be substantially increased.*	6-8	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Balfanz, Robert; Herzog, Liza; Iver, Douglas J. Mac. (2007). Preventing Student Disengagement and Keeping Students on the Graduation Path in Urban Middle-Grades Schools: Early Identification and Effective Interventions. Educational Psychologist, v42 n4 p223-235 Nov 2007.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Provide transition strategies from elementary to high school. *This report details the relationship between students' performance in the middle grades (grades 5 through 8) and their subsequent performance in high school and college among students in a large city public school district. Middle school attendance is much more predictive of passing high school classes than test scores.*	6-8 9-12	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Allensworth, E. M., Gwynne, J. A., Moore, P., de la Torre, M. (2014). Looking Forward to High School and College: Middle Grade Indicators of Readiness in Chicago Public Schools, University of Chicago, Consortium on Chicago School Research.
Assign an advocate to provide intensive, individualized support to students. *Secondary schools can prevent dropout by providing intensive, individualized support to students. Assign a primary advocate, develop a menu of support options, and support advocates with ongoing professional learning and tools for tracking their work.*	6-8 9-12	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Preventing Dropout in Secondary Schools, Recommendation 2, (NCEE 2017-4028).
Use freshman-year indicators to predict high school graduation. *Attendance is crucial for passing classes.*	8-12	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Allensworth, E. M., Easton, J. Q. (2007). What Matters for Staying On-track and Graduating in Chicago Public High Schools: A Close Look at Course Grades, Failures, and Attendance in the Freshman Year, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Develop systems that monitor student attendance and engagement. *Improve ninth-grade attendance with systems that monitor attendance and engagement and strategies that respond to student withdrawal. These systems and strategies can help reverse the decline in course grades during the transition to high school.*	9-12	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Rosenkranz, T., de la Torre, M., Stevens, W. D., Allensworth, E. M. (2014). Free to Fail or On-Track to College: Why Grades Drop When Students Enter High School and What Adults Can Do About It, University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research, April 2014.
Provide data and tools to improve attendance and academic achievement. *Research shows the critical importance of grades and attendance, engaging instruction, support and monitoring for students, and making decisions for greater college access.*	6-8 9-12	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: The Research Behind To & Through, UChicago Consortium on School Research.
Implement Career Academies to improve attendance and student engagement. *Career Academies have been found to have potentially positive effects on completing school.*	9-12	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Preventing Dropout in Secondary Schools, Institute of Education Sciences, Recommendation 4. (NCEE-2017-4028).
Create small, personalized communities to facilitate monitoring and support. *In small, personalized communities, staff can check in with students more frequently, pay closer attention to their needs, form stronger and more meaningful relationships with them, and keep track of what troubles and motivates them.*	9-12	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Preventing Dropout in Secondary Schools, Institute of Education Sciences, Recommendation 4. (NCEE-2017-4028).

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Use postcards as messaging tool to "nudge" parents/guardians. *A single postcard encouraging guardians to improve their student's attendance reduced absences by roughly 2.4 percent.*	6-8	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Rogers, T., Duncan, T., Wolford, T., Ternovski, J., Subramanyam, S., & Reitano, A. (2017). A randomized experiment using absenteeism information to "nudge" attendance (REL 2017– 252). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Mid-Atlantic.
Use influential third parties as information messengers about good attendance with parents. *Encourage influential third parties — parents — to affect targeted individuals' behavior. Encourage parents to change their attitude about missing school and reduce their student's absenteeism.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Rogers, T., Feller, A. (2017), Intervening through Influential Third Parties: Reducing Student Absences at Scale via Parents, Todd Rogers, Harvard University and Avi Feller, University of California, Berkeley.
Use public transportation passes for transporting high school students to school. *Students using the public transportation system designed for students missed less school.*	9-12	**Tier 3. Promising** Source: Das, K. V., Fan, Y. (2015). Assessing the Impacts of Student Transportation on Public Transit, University of Minnesota, Metro Transit, Minneapolis Public Schools.
Coordinate care through nurse case management and home visits to decrease amount of school missed. *Enhanced care including nurse case management and home visits by local health providers decreases the number of days of school missed.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Woods, E. R. et al. (2012). Community Asthma Initiative: Evaluation of a Quality Improvement Program for Comprehensive Asthma Care. American Academy of Pediatrics, v129, n3, March 2012. doi: 10.1542/peds.2010-3472.

Professional Learning

The Connecticut State Department of Education supports the following evidence-based models of teacher professional learning that ensures equitable access to relevant individual learning opportunities and enhance practices for school climate, chronic absences, and discipline.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Foster team teaching. *Teams of teachers collaborate to address student learning and behavior problems. Teacher teams meet periodically with parents.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Blum, R. (2005). School Connectedness: Improving Students' Lives. Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, Maryland.
Provide professional learning focused on school staff meeting the cognitive, emotional, and social needs of all students. *Provide teachers with professional learning on strategies such as:* • *organize and structure the classroom to promote a positive environment;* • *use developmentally appropriate discipline strategies that emphasize positive behaviors and values;* • *develop a coaching and mentoring program for teachers,* • *enable teachers to learn from each other through professional learning teams;* • *educate school staff on strategies to involve parents in school life; and* • *employ teachers who demonstrate effective student-centered pedagogy.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 1, Strong** Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. School Connectedness: Strategies for Increasing Protective Factors Among Youth. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2009

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Strengthen educator capacity to build collaboration between teachers and families. *The Family Engagement Partnership (FEP) is an intensive, capacity-building intervention designed to support student success by transforming the ways in which teachers and families collaborate with one another.*	PreK-3 4-5	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Sheldon S. B., Jung, S. B. (2015) The Family Engagement Partnership Student Outcome Evaluation. John Hopkins School of Education.
Provide ongoing job-embedded professional learning for administrators, teachers, and other staff in the social-emotional skills needed to change the school culture. *A review of Conscious Discipline, an early childhood social emotional learning (SEL) program, revealed the importance of providing teachers with ongoing, job-embedded professional learning in order to effectively implement the multiyear, multicomponent, school-based intervention. Professional learning must aim to modify teacher and child behavior in order to create classrooms based on safety, connection, and problem solving instead of external rewards and punishments and must include discipline strategies and self-regulation skills for children, parents, and other adults.*	PreK-3	**Tier 3, Promising** Source: NREPP SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices Conscious Discipline (2015).
Train teachers and staff in how to deal with conflict and how to engage with families in constructive ways. *Promoting positive interactions between students and adults requires concerted attention to the ways in which the school environment is structured, including training teachers and staff on how to deal with conflict in constructive ways and in finding ways school personnel can engage with families in constructive and supportive ways.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Steinberg, M. P., Allensworth, E., Johnson, D. W. (2011). Student and Teacher Safety in Chicago Public Schools: The Roles of Community Context and School Social Organization (2011) Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Extended Learning

The Connecticut State Department of Education supports evidenced-based models of extended learning that are supported by practices to improve school climate, chronic absence and school discipline and to engage families and community members through enhanced communication with two-way relationship building.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Maximize student attendance and participation. *Student participation is affected by issues of access and convenience, as well as by the adequacy and attractiveness of the services, and features provided in the program. Minimize the barriers to participation, especially for the students most in need of program services and most likely to benefit from them.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 4, Demonstrates a Rationale** Source: Structuring Out-of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement (NCEE 2009-012).
Adapt instruction to individual and small group needs. *Supplement learning from the school day and provide targeted assistance to students whose needs extend beyond what they can receive in the classroom instruction must be focused and targeted. Closely aligning the content and pacing of instruction with student needs will result in improved student performance. Determining the right level of difficulty, pace, and the most appropriate skills to teach is critical to effectively individualizing instruction.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: Structuring Out-of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement (NCEE 2009-012).
Provide engaging learning experiences. *Activities should be interactive, hands on, learner directed, and related to the real world, while remaining grounded in academic learning goals.*	PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	**Tier 4, Demonstrates a Rationale** Source: Structuring Out-of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement (NCEE 2009-012).

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
Use program assessment to improve quality. *Both formative and summative evaluations are instrumental in any program improvement effort. Programs should have internal mechanisms to monitor staff performance, collect data related to program implementation, and conduct independent evaluations of program implementation and student impact.*	**PreK-3** **4-5** **6-8** **9-12**	**Tier 4, Demonstrates a rationale** Source: [Structuring Out-of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement (NCEE 2009-012).](#)
Align out-of-school time program academics with the school day. *Maximize communication between program coordinators and school personnel, designating school staff personnel to support program staff, connecting program instruction to school instruction by identifying school goals and learning objectives, and coordinating with the school to identify staff for the program.*	**4-5** **6-8**	**Tier 4, Demonstrates a Rationale** Source: [Structuring Out-of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement (NCEE 2009-012).](#)
Provide individualized attention to students with school staff and monitor school performance, mentoring, and case management. *Check & Connect is an intervention to reduce dropping out of school. Students are assigned a "monitor" who regularly reviews information on attendance, behavior, or academic problems and intervenes when problems are identified.*	**6-8** **9-12**	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: [What Works Clearinghouse Works Intervention Report Dropout Prevention Check and Connect (2015).](#)
Connect middle school students to mentors. *The LISTEN mentoring program is for at-risk students in grades 6 through 8. The study found that GPAs and attendance rates went up for participants and discipline referrals went down.*	**6-8**	**Tier 2, Moderate** Source: [Johnson, K. C., Lampley, J. H. (2010). Mentoring at-risk middle school students. SRATE Journal, v19, n2, Summer 2010.](#)