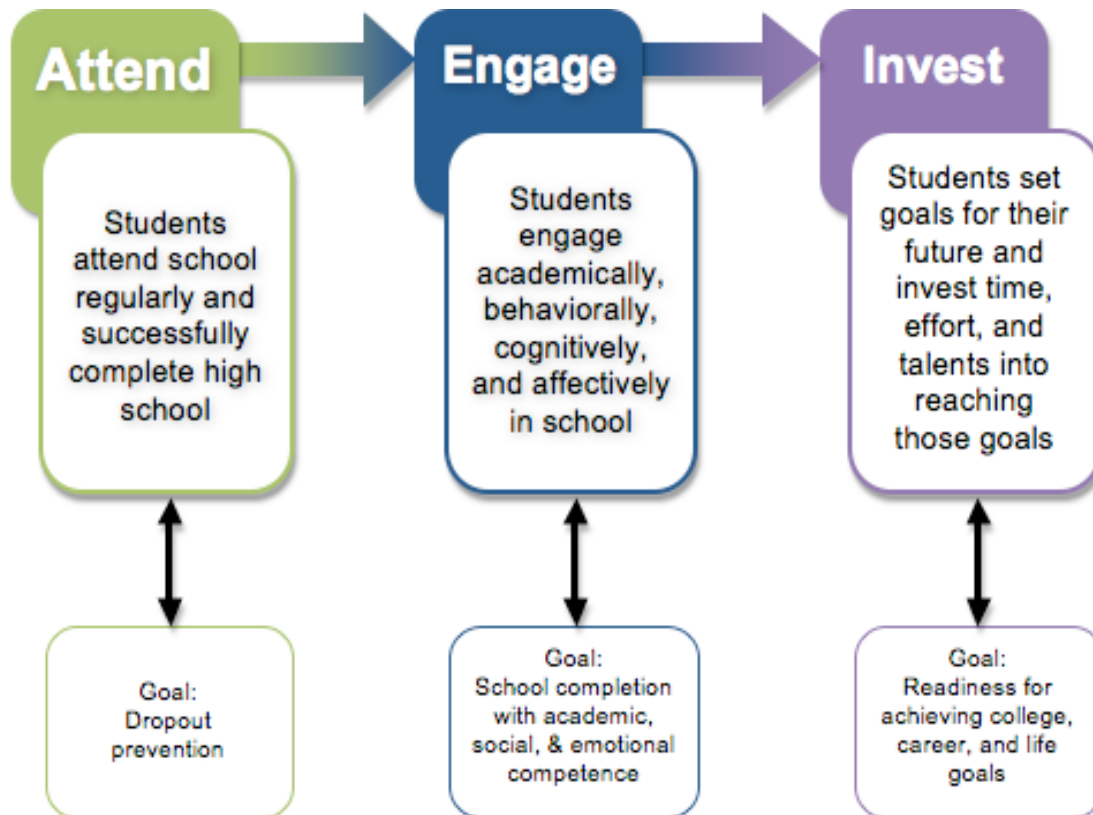# Beyond Dropout Prevention: Attend-Engage-Invest

Check & Connect goes beyond preventing dropout and promotes school completion, defined as graduation from high school with sufficient academic and social skills to partake in postsecondary options and/or the world of work. We offer a conceptual framework for moving students toward successful school completion along the continuum of Attend, Engage, and Invest.

Disengaged students are at very different places along the continuum. Interventionists must set different goals for intervention based on where the student is along the continuum. The goals of each intervention are included in the diagram below.

Attend

Students attend school regularly and successfully complete high school

Goal: Dropout prevention

Engage

Students engage academically, behaviorally, cognitively, and affectively in school

Goal: School completion with academic, social, & emotional competence

Invest

Students set goals for their future and invest time, effort, and talents into reaching those goals

Goal: Readiness for achieving college, career, and life goals

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Intervention Examples

ATTEND - Pick up student for school, provide an alarm clock, problem solve about how to get to school, problem solve with student and parents about attendance, establish a between-classes routine for getting to class on time, etc.

ENGAGE - Set goals, self-monitor progress, self-reflect on progress, students select rewards and consequences for achieving/not achieving their goals, help students get involved in extracurricular activities, teach self-regulated learning strategies and strategies to persist, discuss attributions for success and failure, etc.

INVEST - Set long-term goals, create a plan for reaching long-term goals, discuss the connection between school work and meeting long-term goals, foster lifelong learning by helping students enjoy learning, discuss habits, knowledge, and skills needed for college, engage in career planning, etc.

Attend Intervention Example

Goal: Student will understand the consequences of missing school/class and will improve attendance.

Intervention:
1. Brainstorm
   a. Mentor divides a piece of paper into three columns and labels the columns "reasons/excuses", "consequences for self" and "consequences for others".
   b. Mentor and student brainstorm together reasons/excuses for missing school, then possible consequences for the person missing school, and then possible consequences for others (how does a student missing school affect other people?).
2. Share
   a. Inform the student about the consequences at your school and in your city and state of not attending school.
3. Discuss
   a. Which excuses are acceptable for missing school? How do you know if the reason is acceptable?
   a. How do the consequences differ based on reason/excuse?
   b. What should you do if you need to miss school for an "acceptable" reason?
   b. How can you prevent negative consequences from occurring?
   c. What are the positive consequences of attending school? For you? For others?
4. Problem Solve
   a. What is keeping you from attending school on a regular basis?
   b. What are some ideas you have that will help you get to school regularly?
5. Plan
   a. Develop a plan with the student for improving his/her attendance.
   b. List the valid reasons he/she may have to miss school.
   c. List the negative consequences he/she will face if missing school for invalid reasons.
   d. Set a goal for attendance together.
   e. Establish an incentive/positive consequence for meeting the attendance goal.
   f. Discuss progress monitoring:
      i. Student Self-Monitoring
         1. Give the student the calendar page/monitoring sheet
         2. Instruct the student to keep the sheet somewhere where it won't be lost and is readily accessible (e.g., front of notebook or folder, hanging in locker, certain pocket of book bag, or in assignment book/agenda)
         3. Direct the student to place a star or check on days he/she attends school
      ii. Mentor Monitoring
         1. Check student attendance at least weekly
            a. Check student's monitoring sheet/calendar
            b. Check online attendance/student information system

Engage Intervention Example

Goal: Student will improve academic achievement by a specific amount during short-term intervals, based on goals he/she sets with his/her mentor.

Intervention:
1. The mentor will work with the student to graph his/her own progress toward meeting an achievement goal. The student and mentor work together to decide on a long-term goal based on grade-level benchmarks. They then determine the level of progress that should be made at a given short-term interval (e.g., weekly) in order to meet the long-term goal.
2. Short-term goals will be stated in specific, measurable terms: for example, "(Student) will increase her oral reading fluency by 3 words per minute each week until the end of the school year." At each session, the teacher or mentor will provide the student with the data (e.g., oral reading fluency score) and the student will graph it. The mentor will then discuss the results with the student, including her progress relative to the last session and whether she is on track to meeting the long-term goal.
3. Student should be trained how to use a graph; either paper-and-pencil or computerized graphing can be used, depending on teacher or student preference and availability of technology. Bar graphs or line graphs may be used with either method.
4. Mentor and student reflect on progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies employed to achieve the short-term goals. Problem solve to choose new strategies if needed.

Invest Intervention Example

Goal: Student will plot a timeline of his/her past, present, and future and define his/her dreams.

Intervention:

1. The mentor and student work together to create a timeline for the student's past, present, and future.
2. Draw a line vertically down a piece of paper and label the line with ages from 0-100. Instruct the student to begin with the past events on the left side of the timeline and fill in important events or events that impacted his/her life somehow. Then the student moves on to the present events and adds these to the left side of the timeline as well.
   a. If the student struggles, the mentor should prompt student thinking through questions or through providing personal examples of what they would write.
3. When the student completes the past and present events, he/she should write future events, or things he/she wants to happen in the future, on the right side of the timeline. The student may get stuck, so provide personal examples or prompt thinking using questions such as:
   a. *What do you enjoy doing? What don't you enjoy doing?*
   b. *What are your talents and skills?*
   c. *What do you daydream about most often?*
   d. *Describe three people you admire. What do they do that you think is great? What makes them special?*
   e. *What matters to you more than anything else?*
   f. *If you could be anything, what would it be? Why?*
4. After the "Future Events" are completed, instruct students to circle three future events that are most important to them now and then set long-term goals for those dreams.