

# Engaging Families in High School Success: A Continuous Improvement Approach

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**SEATTLE  
PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS**



**JOHNS HOPKINS**  
SCHOOL of EDUCATION



# Are you too busy to improve?



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/551268810610926516/>

# The Goal

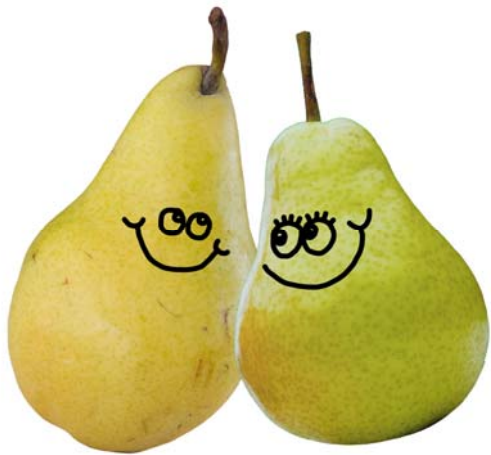
How can we improve our work in family engagement so that more students enjoy success?

# Goal of Session

Participants will:

- Experience the process of applying a continuous improvement framework to a problem of practice in family engagement
- Be able to begin applying this framework to their own work in their own professional context

## Pair-Share Question for Table Discussion



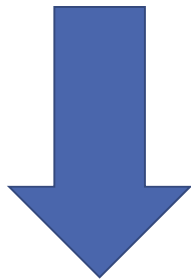
What is one new thing you have learned over the past year about how you can be more effective in engaging families of high school students?

# Thinking about Continuous Improvement

- What is the problem we want to address?
- What are some causes (drivers) of that problem?
- What is a specific change/intervention we could make to address problem?
- What happens when we introduce this intervention?
- What do we learn from what we observe after trying out a specific change idea?
- What conclusions do we draw about what to do next?

# Problem of Practice

High rates of  
chronic absenteeism and course  
failure in 9<sup>th</sup> grade



Negative impact on graduation rates  
and postsecondary success



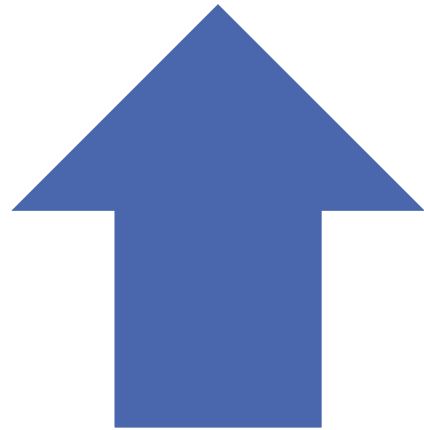


"This is the year that will set the stage for whether high school students will graduate and whether they will be ready for college."

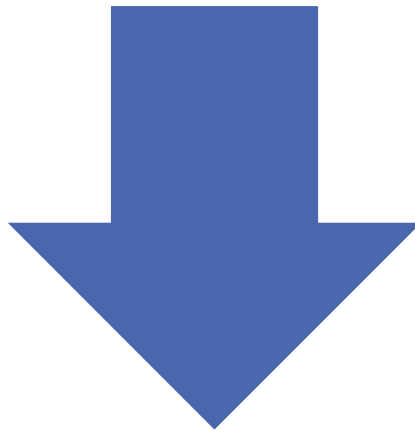
Chicago Consortium on  
School Research, 2007



**Family  
Engagement  
Goes Down  
Right at the  
Critical  
Juncture for  
Students**



But research  
shows that at this  
critical transition  
to high school



School efforts to  
engage families  
tend to go down

# The Question

Can increased family engagement during the transition to high school help to prevent at least some of the attendance and course failure problems common in 9<sup>th</sup> grade?



# Family Engagement Logic Model

PD will equip school teams for more effective family engagement planning and implementation

Improved family engagement practices will equip families to provide improved support to their students

Improved family support will lead to higher attendance and course passing

Higher attendance and course passing will yield improved student outcomes

# Partnership for Continuous Improvement in Family Engagement Efforts During the Transition to HS

## Seattle Public Schools

- Had already organized district Family School Partnership work around NNPS and Dual-Capacity Building principles
- Family Engagement a key component of district strategic plan

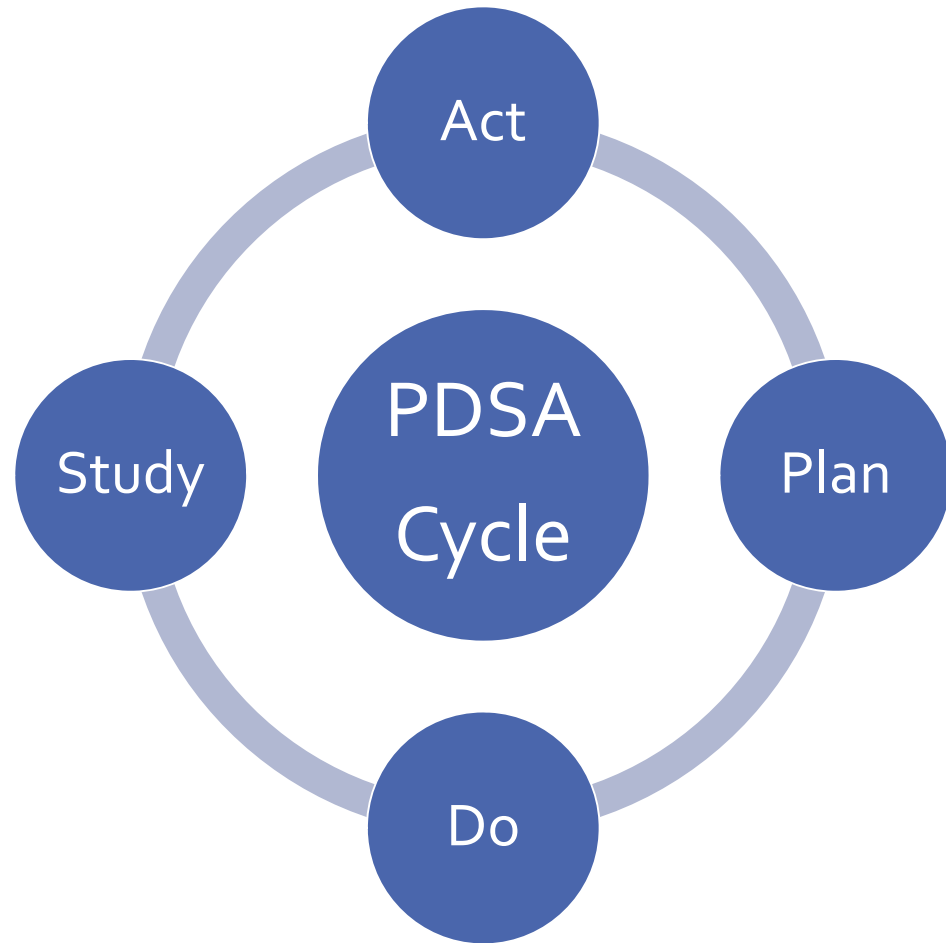
## National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University

- Eager to address challenges in expanding family engagement work to high schools
- Linking work to improve 9<sup>th</sup> grade indicators of college-ready high school graduation

## The Intervention

- Professional development for school teams to encourage increased efforts in engaging 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade families during the critical transition to HS
- Regular coaching to school teams in planning, implementing and evaluating their family engagement efforts, reflecting on data and connecting this work to other school efforts aimed at promoting 9<sup>th</sup> grade success
- Bring schools together in a networked community to learn from each other in this process

# Cycle of Inquiry





# Example from the Field: The Cycle of Inquiry Process at Cleveland High School



**Cleveland STEM High School**  
Real world preparation for real world success  
in personalized, relevant and rigorous small  
learning communities.



- Catherine Brown – Assistant Principal
- Francesca Castaneda-Barajas – Attendance Specialist
- Seattle Public Schools



**SAVE THE DATE!**

**CLEVELAND STEM HIGH SCHOOL**



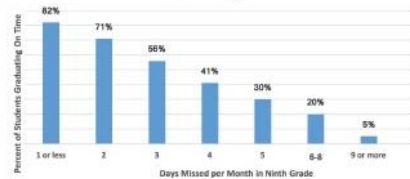
# **BRIDGE NIGHT**

**FOR INCOMING FRESHMEN & FAMILIES**

**Thursday, May 18, 2017**

## The Big Three: How Families and School Can Work Together for College Readiness

Each Day That You Miss School Hurts Your Chances  
of Graduating On-Time!



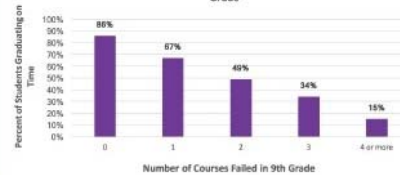
© Machler, D. & Epstein, J. 2017. Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS). Seattle Transitions Project Series. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University.

### CONTACT

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To Graduate On Time, You Want to Pass ALL of Your Courses in 9<sup>th</sup>  
Grade

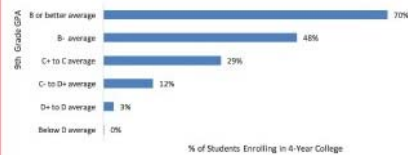


Note: These data are from a city in the eastern U.S. Data from other cities show the same trends.

### CONTACT

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9<sup>th</sup> Grade Academic  
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If You Want to Go to College, Your GPA in 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Really  
Matters!



**Avery Manning**  
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**Napsiyah Sallee**  
Counselor SoED Pathway  
(206) 252-7812



## Bridge Night 2017-2018 Agenda Thursday May 18<sup>th</sup>

- 6:00-6:30 Dinner/Sign-In/ Information Pick Up
- 6:30-6:35 LinkCrew takes all incoming Cleveland students to the gym
- 6:35-6:40 Principal Breland Welcomes families
- 6:40-7:00 PBL Activity Pratt/Shaw—Marshmallow challenge
- 7:00-7:35 Introduction of key staff
- 7:35-7:45 Closing—Admin Team
- 7:45-8:00 Parent feedback (lanyards), mingling, continued tabling,



## Bridge Night Feedback 2016-2017

(Please complete at the end of the evening and receive a pathway lanyard)

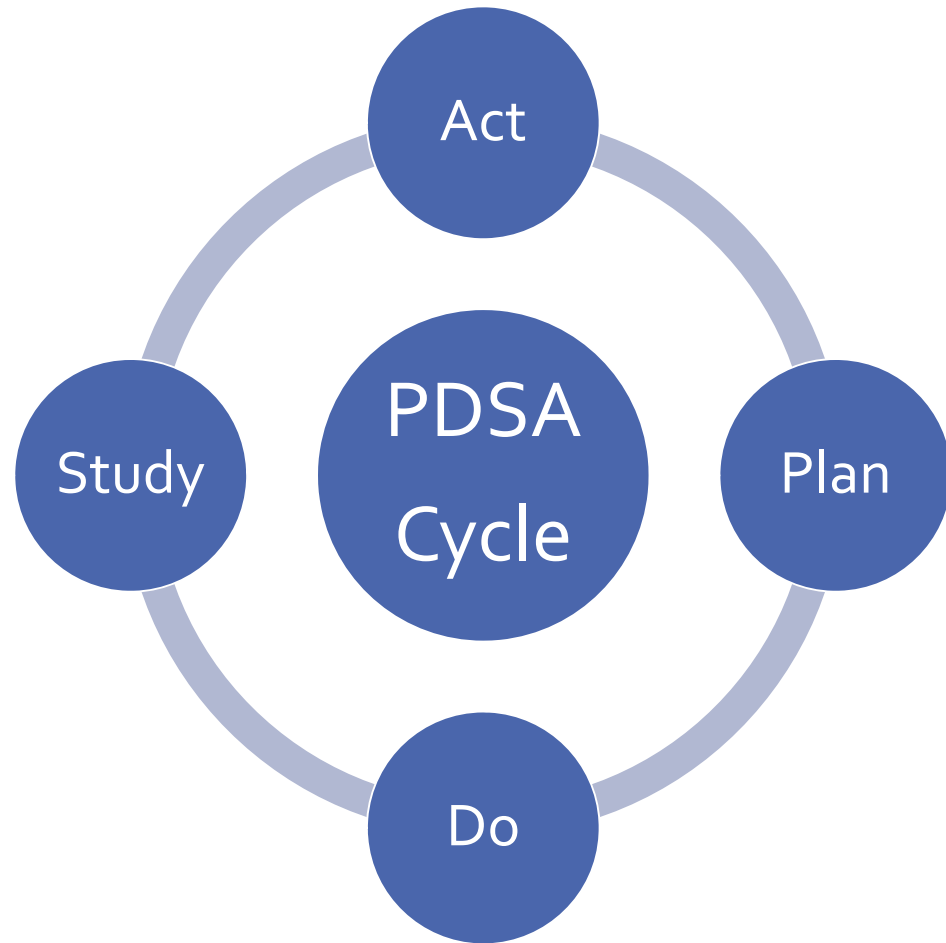
- 1) After going to this event I know where/who to go to when I have questions:  
☐ Yes ☐ Sort of ☐ No
- 2) What was helpful about tonight?
- 3) What could be improved?
- 4) I better understand what Project Based Learning (PBL) is:  
☐ Yes ☐ Sort of ☐ No  
Some things I learned about PBL:  
  
Some questions I still have:
- 5) What are some ways my student's middle school served my family well?
- 6) What are some ways Cleveland could best serve your student?
- 7) For future family events, important topics to my family are....

Thank you!!

## Bridge Night – Cleveland High School – Seattle Public Schools



# Cycle of Inquiry



## Practicing the PDSA Process

Think of a recent family engagement initiative or activity in which you were involved.

If you are together with colleagues who also were involved, please reflect as a group.

# PLAN

What did you plan?

What was the goal?

DO

What did you observe?



# STUDY

What did you learn?  
Did you meet your goal?

ACT

What did you conclude that will influence your planning in next cycle?

**What is  
missing from  
this process?**



We need a  
team to  
reflect well  
and hear all  
the important  
voices!



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# Team Members Needed for Regular (Monthly) Meetings

- Parents
- HS Students
- Teachers
- Administrators
- Counselors
- Other School Staff



Family Engagement Team  
From Denny Middle School,  
Seattle, Circa 2012

How can I apply this process in my professional setting?

## Next Steps

- Who are the team members who will be part of this process (or how can I recruit them)?
- What is the specific problem of practice we want to address?
- What are the barriers to doing this, and how will we address them?
- What help do we need, and where will we seek it?



Stay  
Tuned for  
Findings  
Over Time





# The Goal: Closing the Graduation Gap!

