



Building Relationships to Support the Transition to High School

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Purpose

Building relationships with students is a critical lever for supporting them in the transition to high school. Structures such as mentoring and Freshman Advisory programs allow students to receive on-time and targeted support through one-on-one, small group, and/or whole group activities. During the initial phases, Success Teams may struggle when deciding what interventions will be the most impactful for their students. Tool Set B provides you with a collection of practical, research-based articles to increase your knowledge of meaningful and targeted student interventions.

How & When to Use

Professional readings provide a common learning experience for your Success Team. Using a text-based protocol with the professional reading allows participants to process new information as well as discuss implications for practice. The Network for College Success finds protocols to be very helpful for structuring an efficient and productive conversation when in teams. Some possible protocols for use with these articles are [the Four A's Text Protocol](#), [The Final Word](#), and [Text-Based Seminar](#).

Connections to Framework

The [Freshman Success Framework](#) is the foundation for effective school practice on On-Track and student success. The Network for College Success has seen the greatest and most sustainable gains for freshmen when schools develop high-functioning educator professional learning communities, which we call Success Teams.

This Tool Set focuses on the below actions of a Success Team stemming from the Freshman Success Framework.

Elements	Success Team
<p>Setting Conditions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With principal and Team Lead, establishes foundational knowledge, sets purpose, and creates freshman success goals for On-Track and student connection
<p>Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains strengths-based and action-oriented communication to support students

This Tool Set also highlights the actions stemming from the Framework for the Principal and Team Lead in support of the Success Team work.

Team Lead

- Setting Conditions: Acquires foundational knowledge on the importance of freshman course performance as well as tools and strategies to lead the Success Team

Principal

- Setting Conditions: Selects, programs, sets purpose, and provides foundational knowledge on freshman success work for core set of grade-level teachers
- Implementation: Provides professional development and training opportunities on the transition to high school, data strategy, and social-emotional learning



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Easing the Transition to High School

An advisory program can be a school's most powerful tool for building relationships with freshmen. This is a chronicle of one suburban high school's journey to shift the culture of support for freshmen through the creation of a Freshman Advisory program focused on building connections and providing academic and social survival skills.

[Click here to read >>](#)



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Relationships Matter

A review of the research on the importance of student-teacher relationships as a lever for student academic achievement. Practical suggestions are also provided.

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Building Relationships to Support the Transition to High School

The Magic of Mentoring

An article on the basics of establishing a school-based mentoring program, including how to structure such a program, the role of a mentor, and supporting ongoing mentoring relationships.

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Mentoring Minority Students

An article describing one high school's approach to increasing minority enrollment in honors courses.

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The Developmental Relationships Framework

This Framework, produced by the Search Institute, has identified five elements—expressed in 20 specific actions—that make relationships powerful in young people’s lives. Educators must build relationships with freshmen so they can successfully navigate the transition to high school. These relationships not only support students in the classroom, but can help them discover who they are in the world.

For more information on how the Search Institute helps educators discover what students need to succeed, [click here >>](#).

The Developmental Relationships Framework

Young people are more likely to grow up successfully when they experience developmental relationships with important people in their lives. Developmental relationships are close connections through which young people discover who they are, cultivate abilities to shape their own lives, and learn how to engage with and contribute to the world around them. Search Institute has identified five elements—expressed in 20 specific actions—that make relationships powerful in young people’s lives.

Elements	Actions	Definitions
<p>1. Express Care</p> <p>Show me that I matter to you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be dependable..... Be someone I can trust. • Listen..... Really pay attention when we are together. • Believe in me Make me feel known and valued. • Be warm..... Show me you enjoy being with me. • Encourage Praise me for my efforts and achievements. 	
<p>2. Challenge Growth</p> <p>Push me to keep getting better.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect my best Expect me to live up to my potential. • Stretch Push me to go further. • Hold me accountable ... Insist I take responsibility for my actions. • Reflect on failures Help me learn from mistakes and setbacks. 	
<p>3. Provide Support</p> <p>Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigate..... Guide me through hard situations and systems. • Empower Build my confidence to take charge of my life. • Advocate Stand up for me when I need it. • Set boundaries Put in place limits that keep me on track. 	
<p>4. Share Power</p> <p>Treat me with respect and give me a say.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect me Take me seriously and treat me fairly. • Include me Involve me in decisions that affect me. • Collaborate Work with me to solve problems and reach goals. • Let me lead Create opportunities for me to take action and lead. 	
<p>5. Expand Possibilities</p> <p>Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspire Inspire me to see possibilities for my future. • Broaden horizons Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places. • Connect..... Introduce me to people who can help me grow. 	

NOTE: Relationships are, by definition, bidirectional, with each person giving and receiving. So each person in a strong relationship both engages in and experiences each of these actions. However, for the purpose of clarity, this framework is expressed from the perspective of one young person.