

STUDENT SUCCESS

PLAN

A Student Success Plan is a relationship-based roadmap designed to help a student feel safe, connected, and successful—at school, at home, and in the community. Unlike traditional Behavior Intervention Plans that focus on compliance or correction, this plan centers the student’s voice, honors their lived experiences, and is created with them—not for them.

The plan is co-created by the student and a team of people who care deeply about their success: family, teachers, support staff, friends, and school leaders. It’s grounded in compassion, collaboration, and the belief that students thrive when we focus on strengths, not just challenges.

THE GOALS OF A STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN

- To support the student in a loving, strengths-based, and solution-focused way
- To increase the student’s success across school, home, and community
- To design strategies *with* the student, centered on their insights, not assumptions

WHAT GUIDES THIS PROCESS

- Students do well if they can. If they can’t, they need support—not punishment.
- This work takes time, trust, and consistency.
- Our goal is to help the student feel **safe, seen, soothed, and secure**.
- We cannot understand behavior unless we are willing to listen to the student’s story.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The **Student Success Plan** unfolds over **six steps**. Each one builds on the last, moving from listening and understanding to action and follow-through.

1. **What's Working?** – What lights the student up?
2. **What's Not Working?** – What are their strengths?
3. **Select a Problem to Solve** – Narrow the focus and guide the brainstorming.
4. **Brainstorm** – Generate compassionate, creative solutions without judgment.
5. **Evaluate** – Choose what to try based on what the team values most.
6. **Create the Plan** – Turn ideas into clear action steps, with roles and measures for success.

This is not about perfection—it's about progress. And it starts with one conversation rooted in empathy, curiosity, and the belief that every student deserves to feel like they belong.

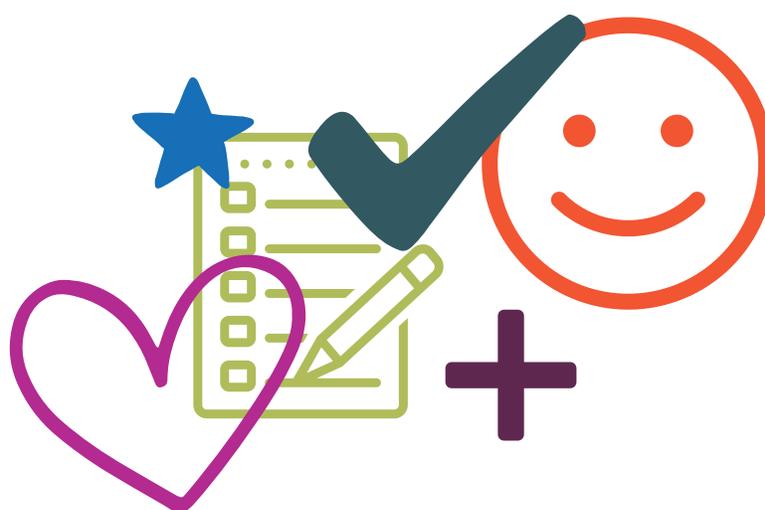
[See the Student Success Plan Facilitation Guide for additional tips and tools](#)

[See the Student Success Plan for Michael as an example](#)

STEP 1: WHAT'S WORKING? (10 MINUTES)

For example, ask:

- What part of your day makes you feel most proud?
- Who do you enjoy spending time with at school, and why?
- When do you feel like learning comes easiest for you?
- What activities or classes do you look forward to the most?
- When do you notice yourself smiling or laughing during the day?
- Which adults at school make you feel supported or understood?
- What routines at home or school feel smooth and comfortable?
- What recent accomplishment made you feel good about yourself?
- Where in the school do you feel most comfortable or safe?
- What do you wish could happen more often because it helps you succeed?



STEP 2: WHAT'S NOT WORKING? (5-10 MINUTES)

In this step, you'll gently explore what's not working by using neutral, curious language to uncover the student's perspective on their challenges—without judgment or correction. Select only one challenge.

When addressing the student, keep prompts as neutral and factual as humanly possible. Each prompt includes something you have noticed and an invitation to share their experience.

Examples:

- I've noticed that reading time is not working well. What's up?
- I've been wondering how ___ is going for you. Can you share about that?
- It looks like ___ time has been tricky. What would you want us to know about that?
- I've noticed this past week, you have yelled out in class. Tell us more about that.
- I've noticed that when you are working in groups, you have left the classroom on 3 different occasions. Can you share more about what is going on?

Listen with empathy and kindness.

Jot down everything the student says. Keep it positive and helpful.

Try to express the challenge using their own words:

If the student says, "I f#@king hate school!," write that or you can adapt slightly, but still capture the meaning (e.g., restated "You HATE school!").

Check for accuracy.

At the end, repeat back what you heard to check for accuracy. Edit or change anything the student desires.

*So... you never get a chance to... and it doesn't feel fair or right.
Other students get to... and you don't agree with this.*

PRO TIP: Whether working with the student or meeting about the student, always use **language that lifts**. Language that lifts means choosing words that affirm a student's strengths, potential, and humanity rather than focusing on deficits or limitations.

STEP 3: SELECT A PROBLEM TO SOLVE (5 MINUTES)

Now it's time to get specific. Choose **one powerful, solvable question** to focus your team's brainstorming and problem-solving efforts.

- In what ways can we....?
 - How can we help...?
 - What can we do to make things better?
 - What can we try to solve... ?
 - How could we fix.... ?
 - What steps can we take to help... ?
 - How can we make... easier?
 - What could we do differently?
 - How might we work together to make... better?
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STEP 4: BRAINSTORM (15 MINUTES)

Now it's time to think big. Invite the group to come up with as many creative solutions to the **solvable question** as possible (aim for 10-20 per person)—without judging or narrowing them yet. Every person should have a space to write their own ideas down.

Capture every idea, no matter how wild or unrealistic it seems. The goal is to get creative ideas flowing. Use the **20 Wild Ideas Generator Questions** to spark new thinking. You'll sort, refine, and prioritize later—right now, just let the ideas fly.

STEP 5: EVALUATE (10 MINUTES)

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In this step, you'll review the brainstormed ideas, prioritize what feels most supportive—especially to the student—and choose one or two actionable steps to put into motion.

Start by running the brainstormed ideas through this set of questions:

- **Which of these ideas do we like?** (circle them)
- **Which of these ideas do we not like?** (cross them out)
- **Of the ideas we like, which will increase belonging and connection?** (checkmark them)
- **Which ideas does the student like best?** (star those and give them more weight if possible)



Compare final solution(s) to these **5 questions** to ensure the solution(s) promote **inclusive educational opportunities**:

1. Does this solution make the student feel good and align with their preferences?
2. Does this solution support learning without segregating or isolating the student?
3. Does this solution reflect our commitment to inclusion, belonging, and access to general education?
4. Does this solution help build and maintain positive peer relationships?
5. Does this solution seem logistically feasible to implement?

Next, create a plan and put the solution(s) into practice (see Step 6).

STEP 6: CREATE THE PLAN (10 MINUTES)

After choosing 1–3 ideas, get specific by turning each idea into a clear, step-by-step plan.

The Action Plan Should Include:

- What actions will be taken
- Who is responsible
- When it will be done
- How success will be measured

Action Step	Who is doing it?	By When?	How will we know if we are successful?