

## Supporting Secondary Students with Intensive Needs During the Pandemic: Early Warning Systems

**[Slide 1 – Welcome to Part 1 of our Webinar Series: Supporting Secondary Students with Intensive Needs During the Pandemic]: Caitlyn Majeika:** Hello, everyone. Welcome to our webinar. My name is Caitlyn Majeika with the National Center on Intensive Intervention at the American Institutes for Research. I'd like to start by letting you know if you would prefer to have captions available during the webinar, please follow the link that Eliza will provide in the chat and you can have access to captions there. The National Center on Intensive Intervention and Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support have partnered together to create a webinar supporting students with intensive needs during virtual learning and the return to in-person learning. The intended audience is state and local leaders who support secondary students with intensive needs.

**[Slide 2 – Webinar Series]:** For a little bit more information about our webinar series, our first webinar is focused on check and connect, implementation and adaptation in a virtual environment. Eliza put a link in the chat box. Today we're going to focus on Early Warning Systems and at the end of April, our webinar series will conclude with a webinar focused on intensive intervention, supporting secondary students with intensive behavior needs. This will occur April 30<sup>th</sup> and Eliza will put the link for that webinar in the chat.

**[Slide 3 – Early Warning Systems: Using Data to Plan for the 2020-2021 School Year]:** Today I mentioned we're going to focus on Early Warning Systems and the goal of helping you think about how you can use data to plan for the 2021-2022 school year.

**[Slide 4 – Agenda]:** We'll start by setting the stage for fall of 2021. Then we'll hear from four districts who will provide an overview of Early Warning System use in their schools and districts. At the end, we will conclude with a panel discussion where our members from our four districts will answer questions and allow you time to ask questions, and we'll have a wrap up and closing. If you have questions throughout the webinar, put them in the question box and we'll try our best to answer during the discussion.

**[Slide 5 – Setting the Stage for Fall 2021]:** I'm going to hand it over to my colleague to set the stage for fall of 2021.

**Jenny Scala:** This is Jenny Scala, Principal Researcher at the American Institutes for Research, and I've been doing Early Warning System work here at AIR for over 10 years and am rather happy to have our session today.

**[Slide 6 – Why This Session]:** Before we get into it, as Caitlyn said, I want to set the stage a little bit. Our session today is not necessarily designed to be a primer or an explanation of what Early Warning Systems are or implementing processes for them. We have a few slides at the end

that have links to more resources and you can always feel free to reach out to me if you'd like more information. We know that school leaders and districts and states are starting to plan for the fall and we know planning for this fall is unlike any other fall. There have been a lot of resources and articles talking about learning loss and low attendance, talking about how to support students when they come back, when fall starts again. And we know that Early Warning Systems can be and might be used as part of the solution in many schools and districts across the country.

With that being said, though, we want to not assume that the systems that were in place prior to the pandemic will still work as is. So we wanted to pose questions for about how to think about using and leveraging current Early Warning Systems in efforts of supporting students. We recognize no one has all the answers or even the answers. But you can learn from each other and what we wanted to do today was provide a forum to think through some of those possibilities of what people and districts are thinking about and to that end we're fortunate that we'll be hearing from four districts along with someone from a state education agency in various stages of using Early Warning Systems and hear how they are contemplating when thinking about fall 2021.

**[Slide 7 – Assumptions for Fall 2021]:** With that, on the next slide we have some assumptions in talking with districts and planning for this session. So we wanted to first, as you think about enrollment, we know that there are students who didn't engage with school last year, this year, and that the students may return next year. We didn't plan for that. We want to think about and maybe make assumptions about levels of risk, maybe thinking about whether or not all students will be coming back to school with some level of risk rather than a binary "You're displaying symptoms of risk" or "You're not a student." Maybe some scaffolded approach of a green, yellow, red aspect and it could be that risk is on things beyond attendance, course performance and behavior. In terms of interventions we do, we heard and know people are thinking about having a more robust catalog of available interventions.

Thinking about how to have Tier 1 supports around social emotional learning but then also have Tier 2 and 3 supports that might be focused more on mental health. Those Tier 1 supports we know in a tiered framework approach our goal is to best serve the majority of students with that strong Tier 1 supports and so given the context we're in and maybe some risk level assumptions that we might need different Tier 1 supports, maybe thinking about summer bridge programs for more students because students might need that time period to be explicitly taught how to be a student in school again. So these are some of the assumptions we wanted to make and be clear about as we're having our conversation today. The next slide is a list of our presenter panelists that will be joining today.

**[Slide 8 – Ohio Introductions]:** I first want to introduce Amy Szymanski and then she'll introduce everyone else. Amy Szymanski is a statewide secondary transition and workforce development consultant at the State Support Team Region 1 in Toledo, Ohio, where she works for the Department of Education's Office for Exceptional Children and her work focuses on graduation, dropout transition planning students with disabilities ages 14 through 22. Thanks for joining us and please introduce our panelists.

**Amy Szymanski:** Great. Thank you so much, Jenny. Thrilled to be here and to introduce the team. I'll start by introducing Bob Longworth, who is the Superintendent of Lockland Local Schools. It's a very small district near Dayton and Cincinnati. The team was a member of our Ohio Department of Education's On Time Graduation project during the 18-19 and 19-20 school years, excellent team members; we're thrilled they are here to talk to us about the work they've done and continue to do. Dr. Mona Burts-Beatty is a consultant and supported Lockland throughout the process. Region 13 also provides support to other school districts through the area. I also have Tim Seis who is the Principal at North College Hill School District. Tim learned about the great work that was taking place during the On Time Graduation project through another of Dr. Burts-Beatty's colleagues at the state support team Region 13 who then reached out to me and wanted to learn more information about Early Warning Systems and this is going to share some of the great things they are doing at his school. I also have Jennifer Lawless, the college and career readiness executive director at Toledo Public Schools and she's been working with me for, in some capacity, I think ten years. Toledo schools continue to implement to this day. Thank you for joining us and then last, but not least, Pete Dunn, a federal programs director for Western Local Schools in Latham, Ohio, another small district which is in the South Central portion of Ohio. Pete has been the fearless and tireless leader of Western's team in the On Time Graduation project while Latham was a member of the project. So just a great group with some incredible knowledge and experience and I'm excited they will have a chance to share with you. So I am going to pass that back over to Caitlyn.

**[Slide 9 – District Overview of EWS During Pandemic]: Caitlyn Majeika:** Thank you, Amy. We're excited to have you and your colleagues from the state of Ohio here with us today to share more about what's happening in their districts and how they are thinking about Early Warning Systems, especially going into the future school year. I would like to bring our team from the Lockland Local School District first and they will be up to share a little bit more information with you. I appreciate you taking the time to join us today.

**[Slide 10 – Bob Longworth Lockland Local School District]: Bob Longworth:** Thank you for that introduction, Amy. Appreciate that. So as Amy explained, we became a part of the Early Warning Systems work as part of the On Time Graduation pilot in partnership with the Ohio Department of Education. Those efforts have proven to be beneficial this year as we navigate uncharted waters, as we work through this first year under pandemic conditions. So a lot of the experiences that we learned a lot about during the first two years really did serve us and serve our teams well here within the school district. I would say the first major benefit was this was an opportunity for us to really coordinate and align efforts as they pertain to improvement, whether around attendance, student engagement, academic performance and also student behaviors and just creating an environment that's really conducive to teaching and learning. That coordination brought together a lot of our plans that made a lot of sense to people that were part of this plan, but they operated in isolation and silos.

So we started this work looking at what do our systems of supports look like for all kids in our school district, grades K through 12, as relates to attendance and engagement, academic performance and behavioral expectations. By looking at it from that perspective, helped us with our Ohio process frameworks where teams of teachers, building leadership teams and also our

district leadership team begin to really focus in on things that were going to help us make decisions based on concrete data to support all kids and then ultimately smaller groups of students and individual students when our data indicated a need to do that.

Having an Early Warning System in place, attendance and engagement were a huge concern for every school district that I've engaged with this year between remote learning, on site learning, hybrid models. Some schools and districts that were forced to go in and out of those three options based on virus numbers in the community made it even more important for us to keep track of the levels of attendance and engagement for our students.

And the Early Warning Systems approach that we've embraced here builds in 30-day attendance checks for every student within our school district and these are analyzed and evaluated by teacher-based teams. You can put names and faces to the data points up to building-level teams, so we can analyze trends and patterns by grade level and then also our district leadership teams so that we can begin having conversations about what are the implications for our need in the areas of maybe it's student capital, perhaps professional learning opportunities, or more concrete resources that we need to bring into the mix here in our district to better support staff and also students and families.

Additionally, academic achievement was a paramount concern for every district that I've talked about this year. It's really scary when you get away from the norm of coming in every day Monday through Friday and our district was lucky in that we've been able to keep our doors open through the duration of the school year. But we have 35% of students and families still opting for remote learning opportunities and their facilitating, through learning partnerships within the home, what that instruction looks like even today with the pandemic numbers decreasing.

So it's really opened up eyes to the fact that families and students were clambering for options that public school districts weren't equipped or ready to deliver. And now we see that that's going to be important moving forward as a district and state and ultimately, as a nation. So we've built in quarterly checks as part of our Early Warning Systems as they related to academic achievement. And for us it's very simple: we look at a distribution analysis beginning grade three and laterally analyze the number of percentage of kids that are earning A's and B's in course, those earning C's and D's in courses and the percentage of the population that may not be passing courses and earning F's at the end of the quarter. So there are never any surprises. Teacher-based teams are looking at this through meetings we're facilitating with administrators and also some academic and data coaches and through state system support team member Dr. Burts-Beatty, who's on our call today.

It's really brought a level of awareness to what's going on as it relates to student success and growth and performance in those two areas. Lastly, behavioral, and our positive behavioral intervention support structures have also really benefitted greatly from an Early Warning Systems approach. And we have, as part of our MTSS process, built in decision rules and school-wide, district-wide expectations and progress monitoring points that kind of trigger when we

know that we need to be more aware of small groups of students or individual students that may be in need of more support.

I will tell you moving into next school year, that continues to be a paramount concern because the social-emotional well-being of everyone, students, staff, families alike, have been placed under a lot of stress over this last year. And we're going to start to see the behaviors manifest as more and more students return to campus. So when we look at not just how we've been able to utilize our Early Warning System supports this year, more importantly it's led to some really fruitful conversations about where do we go from here, what does next year look like, and for us, there have been a number of changes we started working through for this next school year as early as September. We're reevaluating staffing, how we configure grade bands with teachers, how we're allocating responsibility to academic coaches, data coaches, administrators within our districts, some with a heavier focus on on-site learning and support, and others with the stronger focus on some of our virtual learning families. It's been an interesting process and I believe this has given us permission to think outside the box a little bit more freely without being questioned about how we may be deviating from history and tradition. Whether that's within your school, district, or public education, within the state or within the country. So for us, that is resulting in the benefit of a virtual learning academy with a more targeted Tier 1 system of supports in the areas of academics.

Student engagement and attendance, student behavior and behaviors that impact learning, it's also really caused us to focus more on our partnerships within the community and what we're doing to extend learning opportunities beyond our school day. Working with our local municipality and also some non-profits with a faith-based league here in the community to design before and after school programming for kids to really bolster our summer supports and we've started working closely with some for-profits in the area to address some of the technology needs that exist within our community, and to kind of bridge that digital divide.

We're in a very high poverty area so we're working with Cincinnati technologies to provide Wi-Fi access to everyone within the community whether that's students or families that may not even have students with families, whether they're on site learners or remote learners moving into the future. So very, very supportive of the work and the efforts and I truly believe anyone that anyone that embraces this path will probably experience similar benefits.

**Caitlyn Majeika:** Thanks, Bob. Thank you so much for sharing information about Lockland Local School District. And I'm excited to present our next panelist from Toledo Public Schools who will share about what's happening there. Welcome, Jennifer.

**[Slide 11 – Jennifer Lawless: Toledo Public Schools] Jennifer Lawless:** Thank you, and as Bob said, thank you Amy for the fabulous introduction. My name is Jennifer Lawless, and I'm the senior director of college and career readiness for Toledo Public Schools. For those who don't know, Toledo Public is one of the largest urban districts in the state. We have around 23,000 students and 50 plus school buildings. We began our journey with the Early Warning Systems or as we call it, EWIMS in 11-12 with one high school in particular through a school improvement grant. We saw some great success through the use of EWIMS. However, as with

time and initiatives things come and go so we stepped away from EWIMS and its use and reignited the use of EWIMS a few years back when we began taking a careful look at our graduation rates.

I would say that our catalyst for going back to it was really how do we improve our graduation rate and better support our students so we can get them across the finish line at the end. So that reignited our journey with EWIMS. And I would say that some of the things we have learned through the use of EWIMS is that it's a good process getting all stakeholders on board. I like to talk about the power of EWIMS to get adults to care and listen and do root cause analysis on students and what's actually going on in their lives. So that's something we've been able to spread across all of our secondary schools as we utilize EWIMS. With regards to the pandemic, we have still been utilizing EWIMS, but had to pivot a bit as I'm guessing most people have, especially we have been in a scenario at the secondary level where we were remote for a good portion of the year.

We just came back in hybrid starting February 22<sup>nd</sup> and so we had to pivot our work and how to support our students in that virtual learning environment versus in-person or hybrid model. So what we did was take our lessons that we learned through use of the EWIMS model to build out a different support method for our students. And it really is based upon the same model that is EWIMS, identifying students that are at-risk, assigning interventions or specific supports for students and monitoring their progress. And so we have been doing that through something called the Student Support Teams at our secondary sites.

Moving forward as we start looking at what the future holds for us, especially with regard to EWIMS, we're slowly bringing it back on board, especially as we have students back in in-person learning. We know we need to look at all three data points simultaneously and EWIMS has led to a bigger investment using data to drive decision making at all our secondary sites. We have all 11 of our secondary sites using EWIMS to some level of implementation. We will also be continuing, obviously I would be remiss if I didn't honestly say we'll have to do a little bit of rebooting when it comes to EWIMS implementation in the fall, but the good news is we have such a strong foundation built with the EWIMS process, an investment in the EWIMS process that I don't think restarting or rebooting will be that difficult or challenging at all.

In Toledo, we've seen some real progress with regards to adults engagement with the data and with the student stories, as I like to say, that come to light through EWIMS. Also, we have seen positive improvements in our graduation rate and that is something I think is very telling due to a lot of different factors, it's not just EWIMS, but EWIMS is one of the key pieces. And getting adults to the table, to have those data-driven conversations about students and identifying them early for those who might be at risk. Trying to jump in and help and provide supports to those students. So that is EWIMS in Toledo Public Schools. Caitlyn?

**Caitlyn Majeika:** Thank you so much, Jennifer, for sharing. Next up we have Tim from North College Hill City School District. Welcome, Tim.

**[Slide 12 – Tim Seis: North College Hill City School District]:** Tim Seis: Good afternoon. Thank you for having me. So again, my name is Tim Sies, just as Bob and Jennifer said, thank you, Amy for the introduction and also for being so flexible. Whereas the last two districts who presented Early Warning Systems for multiple years, this was brand new to us last year. Dr. Linda Demarco often was our SST13 Rep through Hamilton county, a huge partner for us in North College Hill, Linda brought this up to me, reached out to Amy and Amy jumped onto a video call with us and walked me through it and I began writing our Early Warning Systems a little more than halfway through last year. So I'm going to focus more on what we're doing, what we've done this year, and what we're doing moving forward with Early Warning Systems. Whereas first, integration. We have been utilizing Early Warning Systems and leveraging those systems this year through our PBIS incentives for course performance, behavior, and attendance through the RTI process. It worked flawlessly and seamlessly as integrated with our MTSS process.

We've worked hard the last three years building our multi-tiered systems of support here in North College Hill, and ramped up efforts this year particularly due to the pandemic with some extra umph with home visits. We have been hybrid all year but brought our seniors back full day, every day to kind of hammer a little extra hard with them because our Early Warning Systems were showing that it was an issue to need for graduation purposes. Initial considerations moving on, we all know research shows that the summer slide, though it impacts math most dramatically, which is no surprise, but the summer slide does impact all content areas.

In addition, if COVID taught us nothing else of value, it's certainly magnified and intensified the need for social-emotional learning and development with our scholars. So we're going to begin immediately, as soon as school ends we're going to move into summer programming. Our middle school, we will do in-person learning with the goal of rebuilding school to family and creating positive relationships. We're going to do two, four-week sessions. Session 1 will be two groups, one enrichment and the other more a summer school—traditional summer school. And the summer school portion will be mandatory for those with failing course performance. Session 2 will be enrichment, and that session 2 will end two weeks before we begin the new year. We've planned programming through the entire summer for middle school kids.

I neglected to say what I do for North College Hill. I'm the secondary campus principal, so I'm the principal for our middle school, which is grades 5–8, and high school, grades 9–12. So parents and guardians will be able to choose three options: an 8:00–10:00 option, 10:00–12:00 option, and they can choose all, the combined 8:00–12:00 for that eight week summer programming. And every other Friday during that programming, we will do a fun family activity where we invite families to come in because that partnership with the community is so huge. For high school, our summer program will be a little different. It will run a five to six week summer school with two goals in mind: recovery, clearly, and then enrichment and tutoring type of programming. We don't have this completely hashed out yet. We're exploring some options with virtual and remote courses for first credit, such as VHS or even staff teaching live, possible even some in-person, like, PE courses for credits. And then we'd like to do a five-day jump start or bridge program that would be the week before our scholars come back to school. So that would



be the week before we would do team building activities, a lot of social-emotional, and then a little boot camp, but kind of reprogramming and teaching them how to be a scholar again.

Just a crazy year, about 30% of our kids have been fully remote. They chose virtual. And the rest have been in a hybrid program for the first three quarters of a year. They only came to school twice a week. So that clearly has put us behind in some regards. The Power of Habit by Charles D is a book I really like and enjoy. In that book it says good leaders seize crisis to remake organizational habits. In fact, crises are valuable opportunities that a wise leader often prolongs a sense of emergency on purpose. So what we're doing is we're going to do a restart, redesign. My superintendent and assistant superintendent are two of the most supportive bosses I've ever had. They kind of gave me free reign and let me redesign the district calendar, grading system, modes of delivery, we're going to—let me back up a minute.

Survey of our teachers this year showed in their professional opinion 88% of our course failures are attributed to not doing or not learning on remote days. That's for hybrid kids. So our restart redesign, this will be addressed through increased instructional time; go from seven bells to six, which will also increase seat time in each of the courses, bolster Tier 1 and enhance Tiers 2 and 3, switch to a modified trimester schedule, there will be increased opportunities for course and credits and for remediation and enrichment in second school courses, streamline and solidify curriculum flow and speed continuum, and really hammer out our decision rules. Because of this new system, we really need to make sure we get correct placement for all the courses. Benefits of this increased passage rates.

We're going from seven to six bells, that's less courses a student has to take. If we're struggling with failures, why do we make them take seven courses when they could take six and focus on those better. They will be able to focus on fewer classes at a time, increase support in all tiers and across all spheres. Those who fail the first two trimesters can recover. We're doing a modified one: the first two are longer with a short third. We're hoping this decreases teacher burnout and less bells for them to teach, more plan time within which to work, because the social-emotional piece of this pandemic hasn't just affected our students, it's affected our teachers as well. There are a lot more benefits in how we're doing it, information.

I'm out of time. Some additional considerations, though, that directly relate to Early Warning Systems are diagnostics, utilizing current research and more. Restart readiness assessments through the state of Ohio, universal screeners, all this stuff that Early Warning Systems help us identify. Those will be huge in our additional considerations in identifying academic needs and social-emotional needs. Thank you. I'll stop talking now.

**Caitlyn Majeika:** You'll have more time during the panel discussion to share more. We appreciate you giving insight on what's happening in your district and I'm going to hand it over to our final panelist today; Pete is going to share about the Western Local School District. Pete, I think you're muted.

**[Slide 13 – Pete Dunn: Western Local School District] Pete Dunn:** Alright, thanks again. I apologize for that. Obviously, last March caught us by surprise. We were not prepared, as were



many of you, for what hit us. Western is very rural, isolated. We try to provide wraparound services for our community because they cannot reach those resources themselves. We partnered with Southern Ohio Medical Center and we now have a clinic that's part of our school. We use one of our old classrooms and converted it to a medical clinic so that our students and community can get the supported needs there. Our community's widespread. Transportation is an issue. Even though we're a small district with just over 700 students, we have 13 busses and every bus travels over two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening to transport kids home, so kids are on the bus a long time.

We're high poverty, over 90% free and reduced. There's no connectivity in most places. We've got an Amish community there, so not only is there not Wi-Fi or internet, there's no cell phone service in most places and some of our families don't even have electricity, so March hit us hard. Virtual and remote learning are not an option for us, especially when you take into account the social-emotional cost to our students. Many of them come from families and homes that lack structure.

So we've been fortunate this year, we've been able to attend in-person every day, all year with minimal cases. We've had four staff members test positive this year, but it was isolated and contained and only two student events and again, with very limited contact. So we've been in-person every day, all year long, and that's been important for our district. Knowing the academic and social impact, we had to focus first on attendance. As you look at the Early Warning Systems, we had to get our kids in school. We offered the blended and the hybrid options for those families. But we were honest about the research and about the data for our community, and so we let them know, student learning is much better when it's done in person from a qualified staff member who can assess and monitor student learning on a daily basis. And so our targeted message was now more than ever: students need to be in school, they need to be learning. And we just kept using that phrase, now more than ever. And we're going to continue to use that as we begin next year and we try to make up for lost learning.

We had a community meeting where we addressed this; we made a video advertisement that stressed the importance of being in school. That was the first indicator of the Early Warning Systems that we really focused on as a result of this pandemic. We sent out attendance postcards, had pep rallies and incentives, and then probably midyear, we started to take a look at all the other factors. Going through the on-time graduation project with Amy, one of the tools we became familiar with was the risk calculator. We took that template, created our own spreadsheet, and it has student demographics, like IEP, mobility, family supports. It has student discipline as factors, classroom grades, IT standardized test scores, extracurricular participation if they're involved in after-school learning programs, parent engagement, social-emotional components, we gave them a life skill score.

We took into account their ACE's survey, attendance, hobbies, and interests. There's nearly 40 data points for each student. Some of those factors add risk points and some of those factors reduce risk points depending on whether it's positive or negative. And so each student there in that risk score has a final score, and we can sort that by that number. The highest scores we addressed first, some directly, we had to bring in some intervention counseling services. And

some just through TBT discussions, mentorship programs, that we could do in-house, but that risk calculator after we got past the attendance issue and could focus on other things that risk calculator really helped us identify what our issues were and who those students were that we needed to target.

As we look towards summer and fall, a couple things we want to do. We want to celebrate that we've been in school, the hard work teachers and students have put in. So that's got to be a turning point that we're looking forward as we move forward. Tier 1 is not going to be that effective for most of our families, but for some of our families, we want to make it available. It's an online parent and student library for academic resources and online parent and student library for SEL resources. We know most of our families do not have connectivity. But those supports will be here in the school, so that a student, maybe in their fifth grade learning fractions, but they need a remedial lesson. They will be able to search fractions and all of our teachers are building this complete database of lessons, some they teach and video themselves, some they borrow from, like an academy that's online. But a student could type in fractions and find lessons not just from fifth or sixth grade but back to fourth or third grade introduction to fractions. All those resources will be searchable and put on this by the teachers in this database, and also will include SEL resources.

We partner with a program called School Connect, and it has a lot of self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and addresses a lot of those social-emotional needs, emotional issues, anger control. So we're going to have those resources available, as well, online. That's not going to hit most of our kids when they're not here. So Tier 2 will be summer connections. Through reaching out to them, we have an app called Kimbo where we can reach out and connect with parents and students. A five week camp in July and August. We'll provide transportation because they won't get here, we provide meals. And then there's going to be academic and SEL sessions for each of those summer schools. And then the final tier is, we're calling it "essential bridgings," for every grade level we're identifying those essential skills students need in order to be successful in that grade level and class.

Those essential skills we're going to provide bridging for students to take and as soon as they master those essential skills, they can move into the regular classroom and don't need that extra tutoring or bridging class. But it's going to provide bridging for students to take and as soon as they master those essential skills, they can move into the regular classroom and don't need that extra tutoring or bridging class. But it's going to be based on student diagnostics of their skills and the goal is to bridge them to be on track. And we'll use a lot of that information from our risk calculator to identify those students. It's a three-year plan. We're gonna use CARES funding to help support and add some additional intervention staff to help get this going. Our teachers are going to be working in school to help develop the plans to identify students to look at the data and we're using some of the carry over funds from last year where things were shut down early to work on those things after school, using PD stipends for teachers to work on that. A lot of things going on, but we're excited about where we're headed. Thank you.

**[Slide 14 – Panel Discussion]: Caitlyn Majeika:** Thank you, Pete. And we are now going to move to the panel discussion. We'll ask all our panelists if they would like to come back on

camera and the audience has been asking some questions throughout. So we'll try to get through as many as we can. We got, to what extent are you thinking of approaching the next school year with assumptions about who needs support? For example, if all students have an increased level of risk and need some support, what are you thinking about in terms of approaching the next school year?

**Bob Longworth:** I'll jump in first, Caitlyn, and tell you from our perspective, our assumption is that all of our students are in need of additional support. We've been a district with students on site all year, but the impacts of the disruptions have been very real for everyone, and we know that. We're looking at some different models that will maybe be more flexible and cater more specifically to family needs, but also more importantly, I think the interests and the desires of our students in a way that we've not embraced in the past. We're going to add a vocational lab setting on our campus specifically focused on middle school kids, grades seven, eight, nine.

Historically that's always been a 10–12 conversation in our school district, but we're starting to realize now, that's probably too late. The build of a more robust K12 virtual learning academy experience that we believe will not only support families that are interested in those options, but can also support our on site learners outside the confines of the school day. That's another opportunity for us to hopefully get in front of kids, engage with families and support them as we work through a lot of the challenges that I know we all face.

I would say the last one, I know this is really specific to secondary, but I can't emphasize enough, we're now seeing more clearly than ever, the need for us to continue to build out our K-3 literacy model within our district because the conversations that we're having around literacy up through our middle school and high school are alarming. And I think that lots of folks can probably relate to that and it's very much so a high school initiative in our district in that it's going to help bridge some divides we're experiencing as a district with students. The end result is down the road, but it's a focal point for us

**Jennifer Lawless:** So I would jump in and say that we obviously know that we're going to have a large amount of struggling students but because of our size, we have to start somewhere. And so we will utilize as we have in the past, our Early Warning Systems data points to, at the secondary level, use those as our jumping off place for addressing our students that are in need.

**Pete Dunn:** We're taking the rest of this year to identify those essential skills we think students are lacking because of the lost learning and create those data points for students. We're going to spend this year finding out where students are and that bridging concept going to next year. That's not just K-1 bridging, we're going to have bridge being at every grade level and supposed to be shortened term. As soon as a student meets those standards, skills that are necessary, then they don't have to go to that bridging class anymore. But we're going to spend this year identifying those students.

**Caitlyn Majeika:** Thinking about, those are some great ways to think about identifying students at risk. There were a couple questions that came in in terms of supports for students. If you've identified students at risk, what supports are you providing? A question came in if anybody

knows of any sort of national repository that includes strategies or programs that may help move students towards graduation on time or close to on time.

**Jenny Scala:** I can start with that. In many ways that is the golden unicorn. So traditionally, part of the challenge in secondary schools is we have a dearth of research around different interventions. I do know in terms of on the social-emotional side, the Collaborative for Academic Social-Emotional Learning (CASEL) released a secondary school, kind of, What Works Clearinghouse inventory of different SEL programs that's geared toward secondary schools. As you start to look through you'll find in terms of looking at SEL programs, there are a few, there was a recent dropout prevention practice guide that IES put out that has different strategies and they are continuing to add to the What Works Clearinghouse research that's been done on different interventions focused on different areas, and you can search by different outcomes of interest or areas of interest.

That's another place. There's some intervention done there, but we really want the kind of evidence-based, that's something we don't have a lot of and we're not going to have a lot of that by the time we get to the fall and as we're planning now. So one of the things in my conversations, I encourage people to think about or not, kind of capital I interventions, also think about strategies and things that we know are in multiple programs that have a research base around and implementing those strategies rather than thinking about that packaged intervention.

**Dr. Mona Burts-Beatty:** I will add to that, there are some others that have implementation strategies on how are you implementing different strategies based off your data. How are you making data-based decisions, aligning that? So it's really setting up the environment and then talking through what are some of those structures that need to be in place as opposed to here is a program. Because we know that one program is not going to meet everyone's needs, so understanding those environmental structures and PBIS has a lot of that classroom and environmental structures and supports that can also help as people are trying to develop their own systems.

**Bob Longworth:** To Jenny's point IES practice guides in the Clearinghouse, if that's not a resource you're familiar with, I would definitely make note of that IES.ed.gov. When we developed our local literacy plan K-12, that was our starting point. When we looked at algebra intervention in high school and middle school, that was our starting point. When we looked at PBIS structures K-12, that was our starting point. If you look at the way those documents are organized, they're easy to navigate, and it's a good starting point. It takes you away from the conversation of programs, like Mona said, and that's something we were very guilty of here in our district is that we were looking for the next program when we should be looking for evidence-based strategies and resources that are aligned to those. So it's definitely worth your time to check those out if you haven't already.

**Caitlyn Majeika:** Thank you. We have another question asking if any of you all work with students who may be in an alternate setting, so any sort of treatment program, maybe a correctional site. If so, do you apply similar strategies to data collection or data analysis, thinking about working towards on time graduation with that population of students?

**Dr. Mona Burts-Beatty:** I can take that one. As a state support team consultant, I've worked in juvenile detention centers and separate facilities. You're right, we should take that same approach and be anchoring with the home school districts because those students are still connected to school districts so you will be using the same approach to how are we looking at credit recovery and meeting the needs of students particularly on IEPs, who may not have had those IEPs implemented with fidelity in a while and regroup credit hours, not only in this separate facility, but the plan to reintegrate them back into their home schools. So yes, you do apply a lot of the same systems. They look a little different but you definitely apply some of the same work there.

**Caitlyn Majeika:** And speaking of the role of the state, can we hear about what the role of those entities have been in support of what's happening at the local district or the local centers?

**Amy Szymanski:** Sure. I can jump in with that. We mentioned the On-Time Graduation Project, that was something that I was very fortunate to be able to work on through the Ohio Department of Education. And I think one of the great ways, and everyone can say yes or no to this, but I think one of the things that I was able to do because of the work I was doing at the state level was just see how all of the initiatives and requirements the school districts have on them in our state can be integrated so that when we talk about an Early Warning System, we're not making it one more thing. We're looking at how it meets the research and does what it's intended to do to identify students but support current structures in place. I think that was one of the great things I was able to do as a state level representative is help them see the connections and make those dots line up.

**Dr. Mona Burts-Beatty:** I would agree. Yes, that's the answer. And I also think you brought in additional resources like dropout recovery, different ways of how do you take data and analyze it, so some of the materials and trainings were helpful in helping people look at their data in different ways they didn't look at before. I think having those meetings with you regularly holding us accountable to those data and collecting and having those conversations is, definitely for Lockland, helped make that something they do more regularly. It's definitely a piece of the permanent data analysis and how are we triangulating that data.

**Tim Seis:** I'll just piggyback on what both Dr. Mona and Amy were saying, the whole reason our district got into Early Warning Systems utilizing Early Warning Systems was because our SST Rep Dr. Demarco brought that up to me and hooked us up with Amy. And Amy was happy to do whatever we needed, and provided the training. I would, when it comes to the original question, I would reach out to your local SST or local EST. We're in Southwest Ohio, so our—we're in Hamilton County and they are just huge, huge, huge partners. I don't know how we would do work without them. Even the reps that work with us, it was Dr. Demarco for a long time and a couple new reps now, they're just part of our district. They're part of our family. Even though they're from our local ESC, you develop the right relationships with them, it just works seamlessly. It's not like you're working with an outside entity. But yeah, we wouldn't be involved in this work without them.

**Jennifer Lawless:** I would add real quick from a district perspective, so we too began our journey working the state support team and that was extremely valuable. But from a district perspective, I think it's imperative especially if you're from a district in Toledo, because we have multiple buildings and have to do the same support for all the buildings. I think district level buy in is imperative and I would say that one of the things that has made this work so successful in Toledo has been that district buy in. Even if it's from a financial lens, helping compensate by getting substitutes for team meetings, for instance, would be one example. Investing in the human capital, allowing me to have the time to work with the school-based teams and allowing us to connect that work, thinking outside the box. Bob mentioned that. So allowing us to think outside the box when it comes to helping our students at the secondary level has been imperative from the district level. We would not be this far, also with the supports and interventions we provide to our students. We need cohesiveness at the district level, that lens as well. I think SST is super important, so is that internal buy-in.

**Caitlyn Majeika:** Great. I'm going to turn it over now to Jenny. We appreciate all your questions and thank to the panelists for sharing information about your districts and being able to engage in a dialogue with us. Jenny will go over some resources for the audience and then I will wrap us up.

**[Slide 15 – Ohio Department of Education Statewide Longitudinal Data System Grant Project]: Jenny Scala:** Thanks, Caitlyn. On this slide, and you'll receive copies of the slides so you can access these easier. We wanted to include a slide that had information about Ohio's statewide data system grant project, which is including the Early Warning Indicators Systems. There's information here and if you've got specific questions about that I would encourage you to reach out to Amy and she can help make sure if she can't answer, she'll help put you in connection with the right person. Then the next slide has some additional links to other resources.

**[Slide 16 – Early Warning Systems Resources]:** So in 2016, which feels like a lifetime ago, IES through regional education laboratories did a series of resources related to Early Warning Systems all on that landing page. We have a website specifically around our work in Early Warning Systems that has implementation guides and other free resources. We specifically called out our updated 2020 implementation guide as the final point on this slide. With that, I want to thank the panelists and I'll hand it back to Caitlyn.

**[Slide 17 – Disclaimer]: Caitlyn Majeika:** I want to take this opportunity to thank the panelists, our audience members. This was a collaboration between the National Center on Intensive Intervention and Center on PBIS, two federally funded technical assistance centers. And we just want to let you know that this webinar does not reflect any views of anybody at the Office of Education or an endorsement of any specific program that we presented today.

**[Slide 18 – Thank you]:** If you have questions or are interested in learning more, thinking past the data collection and also in addition to providing the supports for those students, please feel free to check out our website and we are providing one more webinar in the series focused on

students with intensive behavior needs. And registration for that is now available and it we be on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

So thank you all for your attendance. We enjoyed our time with you today. And I hope you enjoy the rest of your day.

**[End of File: March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 NCII Webinar]**