



*Building Bright Futures Through High School Redesign.*

# Student Success Ladder



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# Student Success Ladder

## Overview

The Ladder depicted on the next two pages provides a picture of how specific systemic and student-centered learning practices interrelate in the process of enabling students to become college and career ready by the time they graduate from high school. Each rung of the Ladder encapsulates a specific set of practices that are different from those on the other rungs, with all being essential ingredients in the recipe that leads to student success.

It is important to note that every rung of the ladder is dependent upon the rungs below it. For example, student-centered learning practices are unlikely to be implemented at peak efficiency and effectiveness if the practices associated with the eight rungs below it have not been established and sustained. Systemic implementation requires that all the ingredients be employed in the right measure and at the right time. In this case, it all starts with Leadership (Rung #1).

The first rung, Leadership, is often overlooked or is not as strong as it needs to be to provide the solid foundation required of transformational change. The chances of sustained systemic change are very, very low if the leadership practices described are not adopted and implemented with fidelity, as leadership is the master enabler of all that follows, i.e., the rest of the rungs. Leadership ensures that goals and energy are focused on what is most important for stakeholder success. With that in mind, policies (Rung #2) can be crafted that support goals and the development of the right management (Rung #3) processes and structures systems, rules, and overall infrastructure that provides the platform for other practices to be implemented with fidelity and sustainability.

The first Ladder on the next page provides a simple explanation of each of the rungs. The second Ladder on page 3 highlights the practices (presented in alphabetical order) that are associated with each rung. In some cases, a practice will appear on more than one rung when aspects of the practice address more than one rung. Rungs #1 through #5 are primarily systems related, and Rungs #6 through #9 are primarily focused on student-centered practices.

## Ladder Audit

- In your district or school, which of the rungs of the Ladder are strong or weak?
- Which practices are executed well, which need strengthening, and which are missing?
- Are you employing practices that have not been proven to be high yield? If so, why?
- Are rungs #1, #2, and #3 strong enough to support the rest of the Ladder?

# Student Success Ladder - P<sup>9</sup>

## The Power of Possibilities

**COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS**  
Core • 21st Century • Social-Emotional • Civic



**POSSIBILITIES**

**STEP  
09**

### **PERSONALIZATION - STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING**

Formal guidelines that facilitate the adoption and implementation of SCL practices.

**STEP  
08**

### **PERSONAL VOICE & AGENCY FOR STUDENTS**

Formal guidelines that facilitate the adoption and implementation of SCL practices.

**STEP  
07**

### **PARENT/FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT**

Focusing, directing, and motivating around what is most important to student success.

**STEP  
06**

### **POSITIVE SUPPORT – FOR WHOLE CHILD/STUDENT DEVELOPMENT**

Formal guidelines that facilitate the adoption and implementation of SCL practices.

**STEP  
05**

### **PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING, SUPPORT & DEMAND**

Focusing, directing, and motivating around what is most important to student success.

**STEP  
04**

### **PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

Formal guidelines that facilitate the adoption and implementation of SCL practices.

**STEP  
03**

### **PROCESS & STRUCTURES - MANAGEMENT**

Focusing, directing, and motivating around what is most important to student success.

**STEP  
02**

### **POLICY**

Formal guidelines that facilitate the adoption and implementation of SCL practices.

**STEP  
01**

### **PEOPLE - LEADERSHIP**

Focusing, directing, and motivating around what is most important to student success.

# Student Success Ladder - P<sup>9</sup>

## The Power of Possibilities



**STEP  
09**

### PERSONALIZATION - STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING

Access to Technology • Advisories • Alternative Learning Plans • Anytime, Any Place, Any Pace Learning • Blended Learning  
Collaborative Project-Based Learning • Competency-Based Curriculum Design • Competency-Based Learning • Community  
Service • Curriculum Articulation & Alignment • De-tracking • Differentiated Instruction • Dual Enrollment • Exhibitions  
Extended Learning Opportunities • Flexible Schedules • Internships • Inquiry-Based Learning • Learning Studios

**STEP  
08**

### PERSONAL VOICE & AGENCY FOR STUDENTS

Athletic and Club Membership & Leadership • Climate & Culture Team • Justice Committee  
Personal Learning Plans • Restorative Justice • School Team Membership & Leadership (adult teams)  
Student Council • Teacher Evaluation by Students • Student Led Conferences • Student Led Site Council

**STEP  
07**

### PARENT/FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Family Education Programs • PTA/PTO • Personalized Parental Outreach • School Improvement Teams  
Student Led Conferences • Transition Programs

**STEP  
06**

### POSITIVE SUPPORT – FOR WHOLE CHILD/STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Academic & Social-Emotional Support Services • Access to Technology • Advisories • Career & College Planning  
Clubs • Co-Teaching • Community Services • Diversity • Higher Education Partnerships • Mentoring • PBIS  
Restorative Justice • RtI • Co-curricular Teams • Transition Programs • Work Study Skills (21st Century Skills)

**STEP  
05**

### PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING, SUPPORT & DEMAND

Business & Philanthropic Partnerships • Communications Plan • Community Advisory Teams • Community Forums  
Community Resources for ELOs • Community Education Programs • Community Partnerships • Mentorships  
Planning Teams • Relationships with Institutes of Higher Learning • Site Council • Volunteer Activities

**STEP  
04**

### PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

21st Century Skills • Curriculum Articulation • Gateways and Senior Exhibitions • Learning Exhibitions  
Learning Progressions • Performance Assessment for Competency Education (PACE) • PreK-12 Alignment  
Rigor • Standardized Assessment • Standards Designed to Depth of Knowledge – Based on Essential Standards

**STEP  
03**

### PROCESS & STRUCTURES - MANAGEMENT

Administrator Evaluation System • Administrator PD • Budgeting • Capacity Assessment • Compliance (Rules,  
Regulations, and Laws) • Continuous Improvement • Data Management & Team • Fidelity of Implementation  
Finance • Hiring • HR • Meeting Management • Needs Assessment • Operations • Organization Structure

**STEP  
02**

### POLICY

Competencies • Equity • Flexible Schedules • Heterogeneous Grouping • Multiple Pathways • Student Decision  
Making Opportunities

**STEP  
01**

### PEOPLE - LEADERSHIP

Board Development • Capacity Assessment & Building • Critical Friends Groups • Common Planning Time Teams  
Communication • Culture Change/Change Leadership • Culture & Climate Management • Distributive Leadership  
High Performing Organization • High Performing Teams • Initiative Mapping • Internal Coaching • Leader Development  
Learning Communities • Needs Assessment • Performance Management • Possibilities Analysis • Strategic Goals &  
Plans • Supervision • TA Provider Coaching of Teachers & Administrators • Teacher Leadership Opportunities  
Values/Vision/Mission/Guiding Principles