

A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE TO IMPLEMENTING EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

MAPPING APPROPRIATE INTERVENTIONS TO INDIVIDUAL STUDENT NEEDS (CORE COMPONENT #4 OF 5)

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Early warning systems (EWS) use individual student data to generate indicators of on-track status for graduation, including attendance, behavior, and course performance. States and districts across the nation use these systems to identify off-track students in middle and high school and to design and assess interventions to keep students on track to graduate. Despite the popularity of EWS, research on their implementation is sparse. The REL Northwest report *A practitioner's guide to implementing early warning systems* summarizes what is known about EWS implementation and describes how states, districts, and schools can draw on the research. This summary series describes the five core components of implementing an EWS. The fourth of those five components is described here.



1. Surveying available interventions: EWS teams should first consider adapting the initiatives and interventions in which they have already invested. Districts may find it more productive to first catalog all the interventions—the programs and policies currently in place to help students succeed in school—before adopting new strategies.

2. Mapping interventions to indicators to assess gaps in intervention supports: The next step for EWS teams is to review which indicator(s) each available intervention can best address (e.g., after school tutoring may benefit students with low course grades) and review the results of the mapping for potential gaps in available supports.

3. Assigning interventions to students: The EWS team may investigate a student's needs by talking to the student directly and conferring with the student's family and other school staff to determine appropriate interventions. The three-tiered response-to-intervention model (from p. 10 of the guide) can provide EWS teams with a useful framework for conceptualizing and managing their interventions.

TYPE OF INTERVENTION	FOCUS AND EXAMPLES OF INTERVENTIONS		
	ATTENDANCE	BEHAVIOR	COURSE PERFORMANCE
SCHOOLWIDE (all students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to every absence Create a culture that encourages attendance Positive social incentives for good attendance Data tracking by teacher teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach, model, and expect good behavior Positive social incentives and recognition for good behavior Data tracking by teacher teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research-based instructional programs In-classroom support to enable active and engaging teaching Data tracking by teacher teams
TARGETED (15–20 percent of students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief daily check by adult after two or more unexcused absences in a month Investigation and problem solving by attendance team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve behavior team following two or more office referrals Simple behavior checklist student takes from class to class, checked each day by an adult Mentor assigned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elective extra-help courses—tightly linked to core curriculum—that preview upcoming lessons and fill in knowledge gaps Targeted, reduced class size for students whose failure is rooted in social or emotional issues
INTENSIVE (5–10 percent of students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustained one-on-one attention and problem solving Appropriate social service or community support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth behavioral assessment Behavior contracts with family involvement Appropriate social service or community supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-on-one tutoring

Source: Mac Iver & Mac Iver, 2009 (as cited in the guide).



The information in this summary can be found in the full report: Frazelle, S. & Nagel, A. (2015). *A practitioner's guide to implementing early warning systems* (REL 2015–056). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?ProjectID=396>.