



The School District of Philadelphia
Re-Engagement Center
■ **Project Overview**

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Goals and Guiding Principles

- Connect individuals 16 and older who are out of school or in school and struggling, to a high school diploma, GED, or academic skills program
- Support a successful transition back to education by connecting students to social services and other resources as needed (e.g., childcare)
- Serve students in an environment that empowers them to reach their goals of returning to school



A True Cross-Systems Collaboration

- Seed funding from the Project U-Turn Expansion collaborative (PYN & Wm Penn Fdn)
- Commitment from district for space, personnel and operating funds
- Commitment from the city for staffing support
- Regular engagement of all partners in design, implementation, and ongoing operation

Staff Overview

POSITION <i>Agency</i>	KEY FUNCTIONS
Data Specialist <i>The School District of Philadelphia</i>	Provides administrative support, conducts youth intake, manages hotline and data system, reviews credit history, makes referrals, supervises interns, administers academic assessment.
Youth Peer Support Specialists (4) <i>The School District of Philadelphia</i>	Provide peer support and mentoring, assist Data Specialist and other staff, research new programs to expand provider network, conduct intake.

Staff Overview, continued

<p>POSITION</p> <p><i>Agency</i></p>	<p>KEY FUNCTIONS</p>
<p>Program Manager</p> <p><i>The School District of Philadelphia</i></p>	<p>Manages REC day-to-day operations, provides reports, develops and facilitates partnerships, represents REC at external meetings, evaluates program services and institutes service plans accordingly.</p>
<p>REC Advisor</p> <p><i>City of Philadelphia Office of Mental Health</i></p>	<p>Reviews report of the self assessment, meets with youth and conducts a clinical interview, makes appropriate behavioral health referrals, and follows up with behavioral health referrals.</p>

Staff Overview, continued

POSITION <i>Agency</i>	KEY FUNCTIONS
Re-engagement Specialists (2) <i>City of Philadelphia Department of Human Services</i>	Work directly with youth, review credit history, devise graduation plans, make referrals, follow up with youth and partner agencies, and where appropriate provide therapeutic services.

Re-Engagement Center Services

Step 1: Welcome and Intake

Peer Support Specialist:

- Greets student and determines reason for visit
- Gives an overview of the REC experience
- Requests sign-in and completion of intake form
- Prints education profiles from SCN
- Sends student to computer lab for ASEBA
- Assigns youth to a Re-engagement Specialist

Re-Engagement Center Services

Step 2: ASEBA

- Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessments
- Self report for youth and adults
- Uncovers maladaptive functioning using DSM-oriented scales: affective, anxiety, somatic, attention deficit/hyperactivity, conduct, and oppositional defiance problems
- Used to make referrals for a clinical interview with REC Advisor

Re-Engagement Center Services

Step 3: Student Meets with a Re-engagement Specialist

Re-engagement Specialist:

- Conducts interview and reviews intake form
- Reviews ASEBA results and makes referral to REC Advisor as needed
- Schedules student for TABE testing
- Assesses education needs using interview responses, education history, age, etc., and matches with a program of best fit
- Assesses needs unrelated to school and connects to resources
- Develops a written action plan to enroll in education program and to connect to other resources

Re-Engagement Center Services

Step 4: Student Meets with a REC Advisor

REC Advisor:

- Assesses behavioral health needs
- Conducts a clinical interview
- Pairs with REC Specialist during initial interview
- Makes an appointment for treatment services

Re-Engagement Center Services

Step 5: TABE Testing

- All students encouraged to test
- Used to determine best fit for programs
- All programs conduct pre-testing; most use TABE
- Testing sessions held twice per week
- Use Online Assessment System

Re-Engagement Center Services

Hotline

- Referrals available over the telephone
- Enter contact information, referral type, etc., directly into database
- Callers encouraged to come in for comprehensive services
- Appointments taken; reminder calls made the day before appointments



Re-Engagement Center Services Follow-Up Contacts

Education Referrals:

- REC staff contacts student weekly until connected to a program
- Once connected, REC staff contacts student and program of enrollment monthly for 4 months

Behavioral Health Referrals:

- REC Advisor follows-up with student before and after scheduled appointments

Coordination with School District Offices

- Outreach to educate on REC services (e.g., training, info sessions)
- Coordinated efforts with other departments to better serve students
- Most frequent contact with Discipline, Student Placement, and Specialized Instructional Services
- Point-person established in departments with most frequent contact



Coordination with Education Programs and Community-based Service Providers

- REC staff have current knowledge of eligibility requirements, school culture, and slot availability
- Point person established at each school
- Cross-referrals to retain students in the system
- Working on a system to share enrollment and follow-up data between REC and all programs

Operational Challenges

- Serving very high volumes of callers and walk-ins during peak months
- Reconstructing the data tracking system to align with service delivery plan; adjusting the service delivery plan to meet data needs
- Not enough slots available in accelerated programs
- Accessing Individual Education Plans (IEP) for inactive special education students
- Expanding the space to create more room for interviews and testing
- Successfully re-connecting with students for follow-up due to disconnected telephone numbers and address changes

Successes

- Established a cross-systems collaboration to operate center
- Provided more than 2,100 students with direct referrals to education programs within 12 months of operation
- Completed a second-round revision to data system for increased tracking abilities
- Attracted media coverage through grand opening, spiking requests for re-enrollments
- Improving coordination among education programs for out of school and struggling students
- Building partnerships with community-based services to provide staff in the center
- Expansion to one satellite site for FY10 (includes additional staff)

Goals for Project Enhancement

Short-term:

- Offer on-site credit recovery while students wait for program enrollment
- Convene quarterly meetings with “REC programs” (accelerated high schools, adult diploma, GED, and skill building programs) to discuss student outcomes, wait-list management, etc.

Long-term:

- Expand into regional sites
- Create a referral mechanism within the current data system for use by all programs

Re-Engagement Center Tools

- School Computer Network (SCN)
 - School District education history, including grades, attendance history, suspensions, enrollments/transfers, etc.
- Shared network drive for service documents, updated program information, etc.
- Web-based calendar to schedule appointments and testing
- PYRAMID data tracking system (Efforts to Outcomes)

REC Planning Checklist

- Establish partnerships
- Construct facilities
- Select academic assessments
- Select behavioral assessment
- Create a process map for service delivery
- Hire and train staff
- Develop a system to track and analyze data
- Compile a directory of education programs and social service resources
- Have a system for ongoing re-tooling of the process



Contact

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