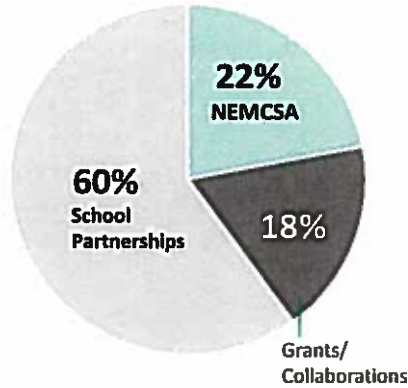


School Success Program Expansion Efforts

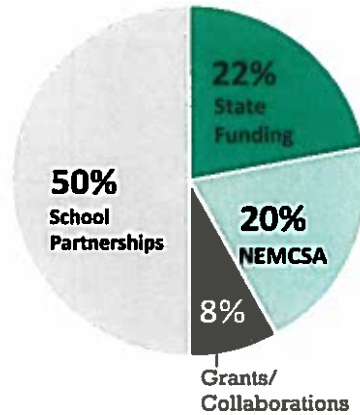
Performance Objectives

1. Increase School Attendance
2. Improve Academic Performance (Math & Reading)
3. Increase Parental Involvement
4. Identify Barriers & Connect Families with Resources

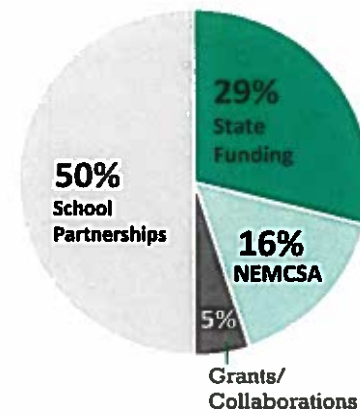
1991-2013



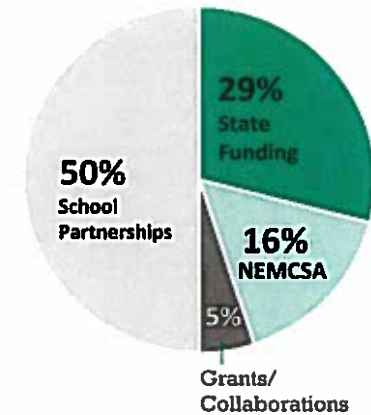
2014-2015



2015-2016



2016-2017



1991-2013

No State Funding

Operating in 4 Counties

- Alpena
- Cheboygan
- Montmorency
- Otsego

•4 Counties, 7 School Districts, 19 Locations, 20 Employees

UofM Evaluation 2009-2011

Improved
Academics
81.5%
overall

13,089
Contacts

2013 Total Budget
\$886,000

2014-2015

\$300,000 State Funding

Expanded to 4 New
Counties

- Alcona
- Iosco
- Oscoda
- Presque Isle

•8 Counties, 12 School Districts, 23 Locations, 26 Employees

UofM Evaluation 2014-2015

Improved Math
Grade from
33% to 57%

Improved
Reading Grade
from 34% to
62%

98.5% Truancy
Reduction
Rate

28,499
Contacts

2014-2015 Total Budget
\$1.3 Million

2015-2016

\$450,000 State Funding

Expanded to 3 New
Counties

- Crawford
- Ogemaw
- Roscommon

•11 Counties, 16 School
Districts, 28 Locations, 33
Employees

School Success State Report
September-December 2015

50% Improved
Math Grades

42% Improved
Reading
Grades

98% Truancy
Reduction
Rate

18,153
Contacts

2015-2016 Total Budget
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2016-2017

\$450,000 State Funding

Continue to
Enhance & Support
Existing
Programming in
Prosperity Region 3

To Be
Reported
January
2017

To Be
Reported
June
2017

2016-2017 Total Budget
\$1.5 Million



School Success Partnership Program

a division of

NEMICSA

Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency, Inc.



School Success Partnership Program

a division of

NEMCSA

Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency, Inc.

Dorothy Pintar

School Success Program Director

pintard@nemcsa.org

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School Success Partnership Program

a division of

NEMCSA

Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency, Inc.



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Tel: 989-358-4600 – Fax: 989-354-5909
Toll free: 866-484-7077

About Michigan Nightlight

Michigan Nightlight is an online source of solutions, news and inspiration for those who are working to positively impact the lives of Michigan kids. Spotighting what's working to improve outcomes for vulnerable children, Michigan Nightlight will also share the visions and viewpoints of our state's most effective nonprofit leaders. Led by Issue Media Group, Michigan Nightlight is made possible through funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.



Dorothy Pintar

Dorothy Pintar, director of the School Success Partnership at Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency in Alpena, works to make sure all kids have the opportunity and possibility to succeed in school and live out their dreams.

Michigan Nightlight: What does being a leader mean to you?

School Success Partnership of Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency, Inc. (NEMCSA) Director Dorothy Pintar: A leader to me is somebody who never gives up and really believes in what they're doing and can influence others to reach the goal.



School Success Partnership Program

"Any attempt to help young people succeed in life is best accomplished when parents, teachers, and community agencies collaborate. The School Success Partnership in northeast Michigan has proven that collaboration really works, as measured by better grades, attendance, and behavior."

- Dorothy Pintar

Michigan Nightlight: In your view, what makes your program innovative, effective or remarkable?

School Success Partnership of Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency, Inc. (NEMCSA) Director Dorothy Pintar: The most innovative part is it began as a grassroots collaborative of community agencies that saw a need and wanted the need met. All community department heads came together, all stuck together for a year and a half and found out that the problems with kids related to school failure.

Also, we still do home visits, not many programs do. Some parents may be wary of school officials and other helping agencies. School Success helps bridge that gap. You have to have many different agencies buy into it: courts, schools, etc. That takes pressure off one agency to come up with funding. What's remarkable about it is it's not a line item on any state or federal budget. It has blossomed into a multi-county effort encompassing students from preschool to high school.

What was the best lesson learned in the past year?

When you can prove success and you're a positive leader, other communities become very interested in getting it and seeking it out. A community that doesn't have the program will want to start it. The lesson learned is if you keep getting the word out and can improve success, more communities will buy in—never give up. If you know you can help another community, keep going with it.

What was the hardest lesson learned in the past year?

One of the hardest lessons learned over time is being an advocate for certain family and kids doesn't make you popular, especially with families which may have drained community resources. You're not always the most popular person when you're working with the most difficult families. You can't save someone unless there is not some willingness on their part, and that all comes with building relationships.

What really differentiates this program?

Sustainability, financial, and it's available to everyone. Anyone can make a referral to the program. There are no eligibility guidelines or requirements to be in the program. Anyone can make a referral; nothing can prevent you from being in the program. We don't care or ask how much you make.

What are the keys to success for your program?

Sustainability, very low staff turnover rate, a captive audience, and we have the target population right outside our door. We are located right inside the school building. We can see who drops the students off, and who's picking them up. We have community buy-in, financial and in-kind support. For example, local banks do fundraisers for kids in the program. Also, we don't pay any rent so we save \$80,000 a year. They know it's worth the investment.

One of the hardest lessons learned over time is being an advocate for certain family and kids doesn't make you popular, especially with families which may have drained community resources.

What advice would you people wishing to start a program like yours in their community or region?

Find out the needs of the community and go to community service agencies that can touch all the agencies in the community. Everything for us is neutral; we help with community service agencies, find out what their mission is, what their focus is.

What is your dream for kids?

I really think overall, as a whole, my dream is for all kids to have the opportunity and possibility to live out their dreams. My hope is they never look to the future and say they can't do it because of poverty or other circumstances.

What is one concrete thing that could be done to improve the environment for social sector work in Michigan?

The concrete thing that can be done to improve the environment is to really look at the need then the target population and really focus on funding the true need and true target and then focus long-term sustainable funds for those programs – not programs that don't meet the target or need. The only way to truly make this process work is strategic planning.

How do you know you're making progress?

The really nice thing about our program is everything we measure is tangible. I could show you today that a student's behavior, grades, and family life has improved. We can easily measure and prove our program is working.

What are you most proud of?

As director, I'm most proud that over the last 18 years I've been able to educate communities on our program. As a result we have gotten community support—financially, but also that they can trust us. Really, it's the respect the program has earned. It's a good thing to get the public's support for the program. Also, because our program is not a federal or state line item we get more support directly from communities. I can get out in the community and show this program works. I'm also proud of the sustainability; it's all coming from the community. It's not like applying for a grant. It's a buy-in from all different funding sources. For a low amount of money you get a high return on investment. The community has bought into it. Now we're all over Northeast Michigan.

What perceptions, messages, or historical influences create the most significant barriers to engaging Michigan citizens in helping vulnerable children?

So many people, regardless if they're middle class, upper class, or live in poverty, think people who live in poverty live that way because they're lazy, and that's not the case at all. So much of the poverty we have is generational or related to mental health issues. Kids aren't choosing to live in poverty.



**School Success
Partnership Program**
a division of
NEMCSA
Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency, Inc.

A program for all students to ensure the best education possible.

The School Success Partnership is a prevention program that identifies students at-risk for academic failure. Students are referred to the program by school staff, community agencies and parents, with a common goal for the child—SUCCESS!

Once a referral is made, this program provides the necessary tools to address the student's needs and attempts to facilitate a sound, successful learning experience for the student.

Any and all referrals will be considered regardless of income levels. The School Success Services are free to all families enrolled in the School Success Program.

Positive Assumptions can yield Positive Results!

WE ASSUME:

- All parents love their children
- All children can learn
- All families have strengths
- Schools and families have common goals for their students

THEREFORE WE ACCEPT:

- Diversity culturally and socially
- The need to be flexible with families and meet them where they are socially and/or academically
- The need to include parents to create successful students

For more information contact **Dorothy Pintar**, Program Director
(989)358-5006 | pintard@nemcsa.org



Referral Reasons

- Academic concerns
- Attendance concerns
- Behavioral issues
- Family issues: divorce, death, imprisonment, unemployment, economic hardship
- Mental Health issues
- Substance abuse
- Abuse/neglect
- Traditional difficulties
- Untended needs
- Homelessness
- Any factor that may have a negative impact on a child's successful learning experience

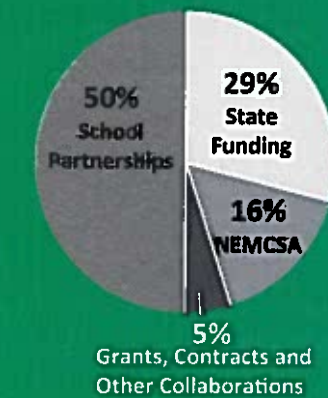
School Success Liaison Services

- Review referral
- Set initial meeting with parents, students and referring source
- Develop an agreed upon case plan which may include: Weekly student contacts, biweekly home visits, teacher contacts, community resource contacts

Studies have shown that parental involvement is paramount to a child's successful school experience (Harvard Research Project).

Further, we can improve student outcomes through strong collaborative relationships between school staff, family and community agencies (Christenson & Reschly, 2010)

HOW WE SURVIVE



WHERE WE EXIST

33 Employees
28 Locations
11 Counties
16 School Districts



ALL OF PROSPERITY REGION 3
Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan,
Crawford, Iosco, Montmorency,
Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego,
Presque Isle and Roscommon



**School Success
Partnership Program**
a division of
NEMCSA
Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency, Inc.

Attendance & Truancy Intervention Guidelines

Good school attendance is the single most important factor in making sure your child gets the best education possible!

The School Success Partnership Program is a prevention program that identifies students at-risk for academic failure. Since academic success or failure can be directly linked to school attendance, the School Success Partnership Program has collaborated with school systems, law enforcement agencies, court systems and other area agencies to address student attendance concerns at both the elementary and secondary levels.

A responsible attendance pattern and positive attitude toward school attendance is an important part of a student's preparation for life. Parents and students alike play a key role in developing the building blocks for student achievement by coming to school daily and on time.

Positive Assumptions can yield Positive Results!

WE ASSUME:

- All parents love their children
- All children can learn
- All families have strengths
- Schools and families have common goals for their students

THEREFORE WE ACCEPT:

- Diversity-culturally and socially
- The need to be flexible with families and meet them where they are socially and/or academically
- The need to include parents to create successful students

For more information contact **Dorothy Pinter**, Program Director
(989)358-5006 | pinterd@nemcsa.org

Addressing Attendance Concerns

School Success Liaisons build relationships with students and parents to improve regular school attendance through home visits, office visits, phone contacts and letters.

When a student has been identified as having a poor attendance pattern, School Success Liaisons will:

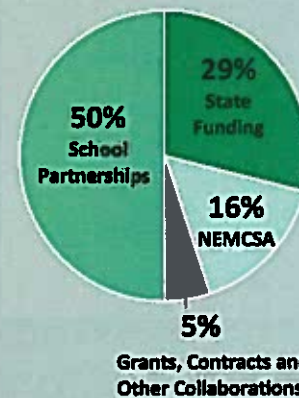
- Notify parent/guardian through a documented phone call or letter after eight (8) absences and/or tardies.
- Notify a parent/guardian via letter after twelve (12) absences and/or tardies.
- After fifteen (15) absences, schedule a face-to-face meeting with the parent/guardian, school principal, School Success Liaison and a law enforcement representative. An action plan is created and signed by all parties. The parent/guardian is also asked to sign a release of information for the student's healthcare provider.
- A request for Preliminary Inquiry may be filed with local family court systems if absences continue. After the action plan is implemented the School Success Liaison, the parent/guardian, and the student attend the Preliminary Inquiry.
- Should absences continue after Preliminary Inquiry, a petition for educational neglect against parent/guardian of student or truancy against the student may be filed in the appropriate court system.

Parents who have a student with poor attendance in the 6th grade or below will be held responsible for their child's absenteeism and can be charged with educational neglect. Students with poor attendance in 7th-12th grades will be considered truant and held responsible for their own actions.

The MI Compulsory Attendance Law states that children between the ages of 8 to 18 must be enrolled in school and that attendance shall be continuous and consecutive for the school year. On January 1, 2014, the law will include students up to the age of 18 which means addressing school attendance in the early years will be critical to future student success.

Studies have shown that parental involvement is paramount to a child's successful school experience (Harvard Research Project). Further, we can improve student outcomes through strong collaborative relations between school staff, families and community agencies (Christenson and Reschly, 2010).

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This publication is funded in part by the
State of Michigan



School Success Partnership Program

a division of

NEMCSA

A Prevention Program that serves ALL students
who are At-Risk of Academic Failure

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Program Director
Office: (989)358-5006
Cell: (989)255-0006

Julie Meyers
Area Manager
(989)358-5991

Lisa Siegert
Program Coordinator
(989)358-5994

School Success Partnership Program

A Prevention Program that serves ALL students who are At-Risk of Academic Failure

Community Stakeholders Meet to Address Needs of Area Children & Families

Needs Assessment Determined: SCHOOL FAILURE Was Common Thread

Program Implemented in 1991

Referral

- Sources
- Teachers
- Administrators
- Counselors
- Parents
- Community Agencies

Referral

- Reasons
- Family Stress
- Transitional Issues
- Attendance
- Crisis
- Academic
- Unmet Mental /Medical Health Needs

Weekly Student Contact

Bi-Weekly Home Visits

Truancy Intervention & Prevention

Coordination of Services with Area Agencies

Performance Objectives

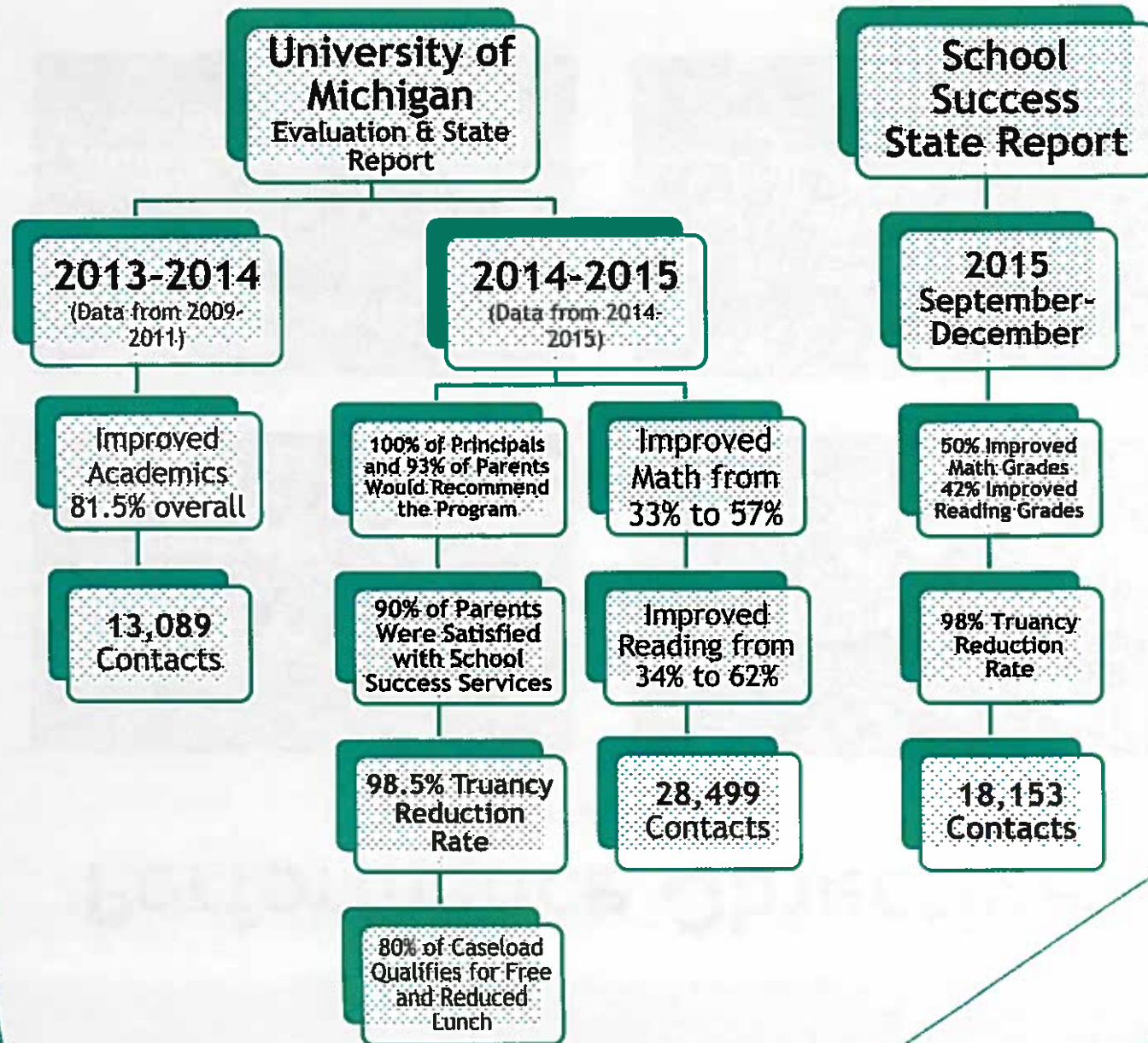
Increase school attendance and decrease chronic absenteeism

Improve academic performance based on grades with emphasis on Math and Reading

Identify barriers to attendance/academic success and connect families with resources to reduce these barriers

Increase parent involvement with the child's education

Program Data Results

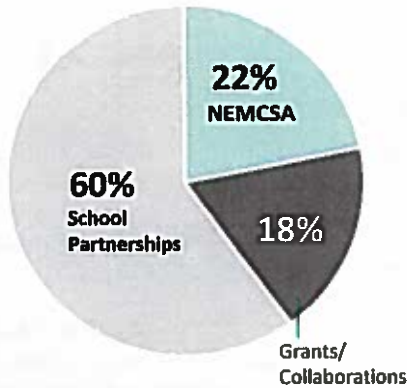


School Success Program Expansion Efforts

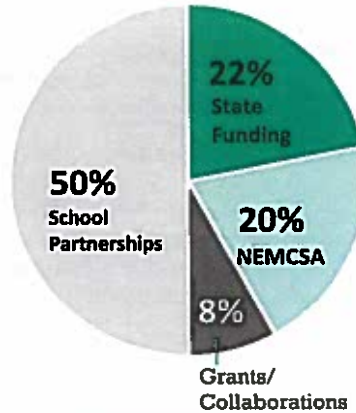
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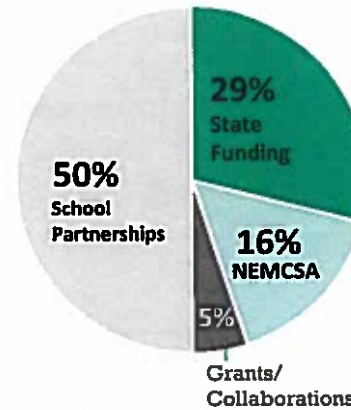
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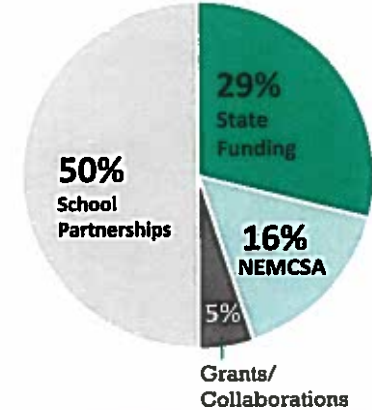
2014-2015



2015-2016



2016-2017



1991-2013

No State Funding

Operating in 4 Counties

- Alpena
- Cheboygan
- Montmorency
- Otsego

•4 Counties, 7 School Districts, 19 Locations, 20 Employees

UofM Evaluation 2009-2011

Improved
Academics
81.5%
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Math Grades

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Continue to
Enhance & Support
Existing
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To Be
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June
2017

Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency Inc.'s School Success Partnership Program: 2014-15 Dashboard

The Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency Inc.'s School Success Partnership Program is a two-decade old community-based program serving school-aged children and youth from Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade who are at risk for academic failure. The School Success program collaborates with family members, teachers and administrators to address each students' needs and barriers to academic success. With a combination of state and internal funds, School Success doubled its service area, from 4 to 8 Northeast Michigan counties, during the 2014-2015 Academic Year. This dashboard highlights results of an outcome and process evaluation assessing program implementation and effectiveness between September 2014 and May 2015.

SCHOOL SUCCESS ENROLLMENT

The number of active cases increased by 57% during the 2014-2015 school year.



537 total students served.

23% of students were served in expansion sites.

60% of students were male.

BARRIERS

Students were most commonly referred for academic concerns.

Academic concerns	312
Attendance concerns	176
Discs	130
Aggressive behavior	124
Withdrawn	76
Untended	19

High rates of students screened positive for anxiety and depression.

Anxiety 40.5%

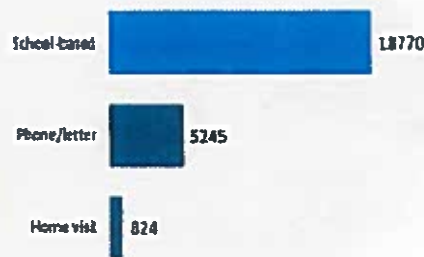
Depression 33.6%

80% of students qualified for Free and Reduced Lunch.

PROGRAMMING

28,499

contacts made with students by School Success workers, most of which occurred in the school.



23

average School Success worker caseload, with a range of 14-37 students.

Workers cited collaborating with a parent, creating a plan/system with a student and providing a referral as the most common strategies to overcoming barriers to students' success.

Example of collaborating with a parent:

A team meeting took place with parent to discuss special education screener. It was recommended that mom pursue an ADD assessment. ”

75% of principals in participating schools reported meeting with School Success workers daily.

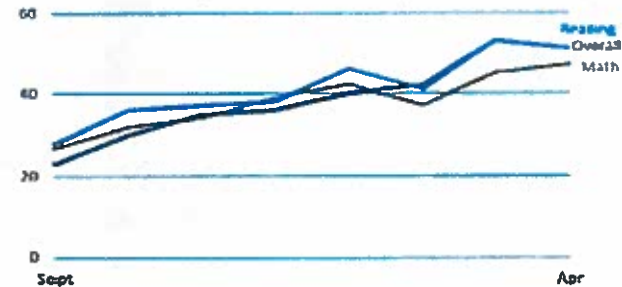
■ Never ■ 2-3 times a month ■ Once a week ■ 2-3 times a week ■ Daily



OUTCOMES

64% of School Success students had fewer absences during the 2014-2015 Academic Year than in 2013-2014.

The number of students rated Average to Excellent on overall quality of academic work, math skills, and reading skills increased significantly* during the school year.



*One-Way Repeated Measures Anova resulted in $p < .01$

SATISFACTION

100% of principals and **93%** of parents would recommend School Success to their peers.

Our School Success worker is helping establish a better...relationship with familiesand breaking those barriers to communication.
-Principal

{School Success} helped us to get more involved in my son's homework and with getting to know his teacher.
-Parent

As part of the Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency Inc, the School Success Partnership Program has been in operation for 25 years. The community-based program serves school-aged children and youth from Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade who are at-risk for academic failure. The School Success Program collaborates with family members, teachers and administrators to address student needs and barriers to academic success. With a combination of state and internal funds, School Success has increased its service area, from 8 to 11 Northeast Michigan counties during the 2015-2016 Academic Year. This dashboard highlights results of that expansion and the continued support of current operating programs.

SCHOOL SUCCESS ENROLLMENT

+15% Of students served in EXPANSION sites.

58% Of students are MALE.

490 Total students served FORMALLY.
908 Total students served INFORMALLY.

K-6 54% Of students are ELEMENTARY students.

BARRIERS

Students were most commonly referred for Academic concerns.

Academic Concerns	306
Crisis	129
Attendance Concerns	124
Aggressive Behavior	121
Withdrawn	100
Untended	47

77%

Of students qualified for Free and Reduced Lunch

PROGRAMMING

18,153

CONTACTS MADE
by School Success Liaisons related to student success.

Student **8,661**

Parent **4,763**

Teacher/
Admin **4,729**

18 Average School Success Liaison caseload, with a range of 15-30 students.

1,258 Referrals or direct contacts made to outside agencies on behalf of students and families.

Liaisons collaborate with parents, create a plan with the student and provide referrals as needed to overcome barriers to student's success.

Example of collaborating with a parent:

"...creating a behavior intervention plan with the parent, teacher and school personnel to keep this child in school. Parent has signed releases in order for the School Success Liaison to talk with DHHS, doctors and counselor to assist in getting the necessary services."

OUTCOMES

Academics

Of formal cases closed to date:

50% IMPROVED Math

47% Stayed the same/Not a Concern

42% IMPROVED Reading Skills

50% Stayed the same/Not a Concern

Parental Involvement

85% Of PARENTS participated in at least one school-related meeting.

54% Of PARENTS participated in 3 or more school activities directly related to their child's academic success.

98%

Reduction in
Chronic
Absenteeism

Recently Awarded...



State-wide Recognition

The School Success Partnership Program that operates through NEMCSA was awarded the **Create Award** during the governor's Education Summit in 2014. The award was based on the program's outstanding results working with children "at-risk" of academic failure.

Quote from Governor Snyder: "A solid public school education is an important part of Michigan's continuing comeback," Gov. Rick Snyder said. "Children need to have a great start so they can build a foundation for lifelong learning. It's important to identify challenges our children face that could hinder their education. The School Success Partnership is an impressive program, working with students and their families to overcome these challenges."

School Success Program highlighted in the new W.K. Kellogg website—www.michigannightlight.com as a top 100 innovative program in Michigan

Community Recognition

The premise of this award is that championing economic development and enhancing the community's quality of life requires Alpena to change its culture and become renowned for

- Comfort/skill with change
- Optimism
- Customer service
- Intelligent risk
- Love of learning/willingness to explore new avenues
- Accountability
- Interdependence
- Continuous improvement

Dorothy Pintar, Program Director of the School Success Program, received this award on February 11, 2016 from the Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce in recognition of her work in changing the culture in Alpena.



**Site Visit with
Mr. Tim Becker, Chief Deputy Director of DHHS
Posen Consolidated Schools
April, 16 2015**

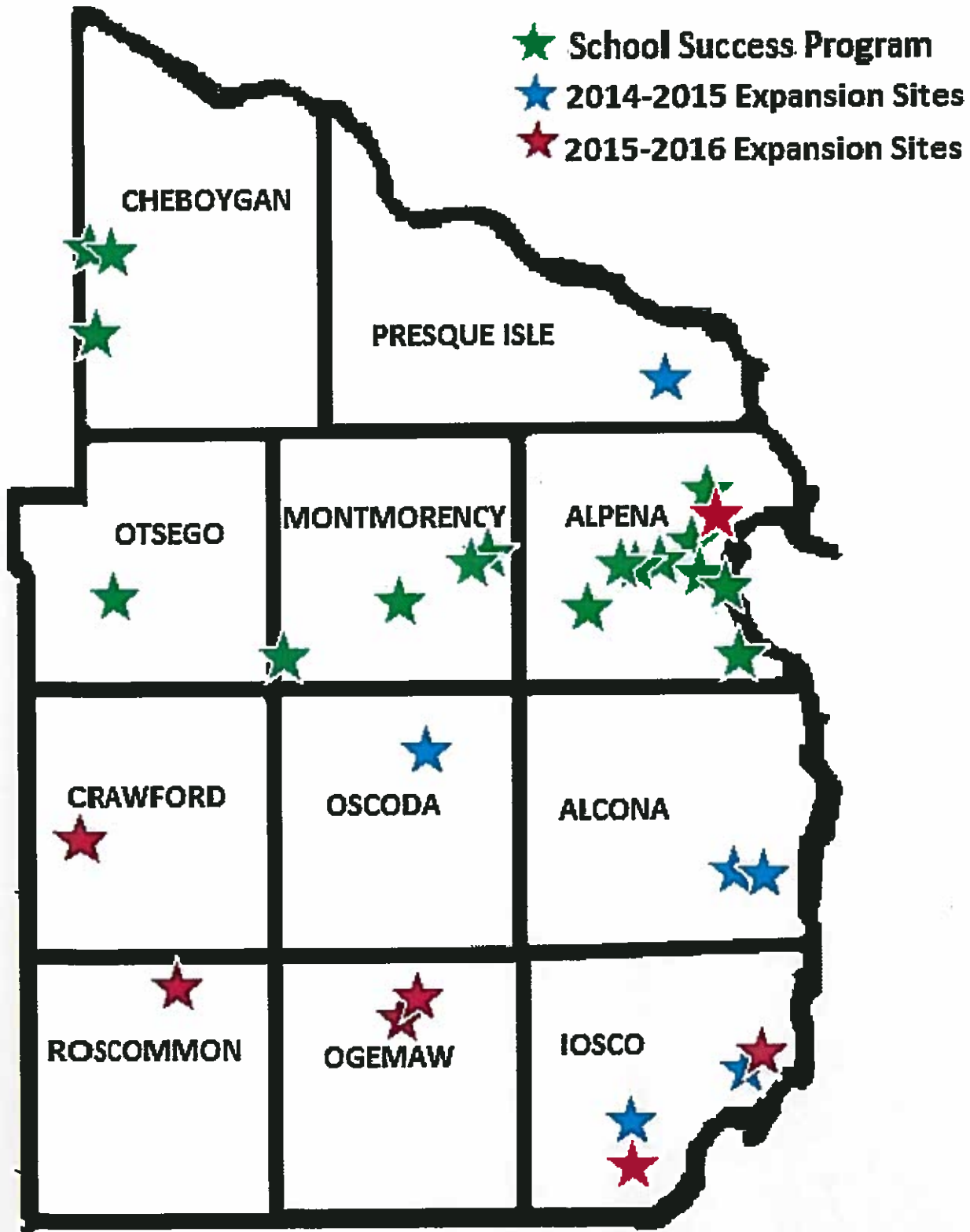


**Site Visit
Carol Viventi, Director of Special Projects for DHHS
Besser Elementary School-Alpena
October 6, 2015**



School Success Programming

Prosperity Region 3



Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency
School Success Program
Evaluation Report: 2009-2011 School Years



For more information, please contact:

Curtis Center - Program Evaluation Group

School of Social Work, University of Michigan

1080 S. University Ave.

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1106

Phone: 734-764-7918, Fax: 734-615-7231

Website: <http://www.ssw.umich.edu/curtiscenter/>

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Program Evaluation Team

Dr. Laura Lein, Dean, Principle Investigator

Sue Ann Savas, MSW, Clinical Faculty, Co-Principle Investigator

Jeremy Gaertner, MSW, Lead Evaluator

Evaluation Assistants: Catherine Fish, Kristen McCurry, Ashley Mirasol, Jessica Smith

Purpose of the Report

The report was written to provide program staff and external stakeholders with results from an analysis of pre-existing School Success program data derived the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years. This report includes an overview of the School Success program, the service area/participating schools, student demographics, reasons for referral to the program, agencies contacted or involved with students, and academic improvement and parental involvement status at program end.

Program Overview

The School Success Program began to form in 1991 in response to discussions between Local Agency Executives who noted their mutual involvement with families. Discussions were held among these Executives at local Community Collaborative meetings and it was determined that if success was to be seen with these families, all would have to cooperate and contribute financially. This executive Collaboration provided the idea and the funding commitment to the local Prevention Council and in doing so, tasked them to build this prevention program. The council found that chronic poverty, unemployment, juvenile delinquency, domestic violence, teen pregnancy, abuse/neglect of children as well as lack of parent education were not only interrelated, but also shared a common factor, a link to SCHOOL FAILURE. In 1993, NEMCSA became the program fiduciary to implement the School Success Program.

The School Success Program serves school-aged children and youth in all grade levels, from Pre-kindergarten through 12th Grade. The program is currently active in nineteen (19) public school locations within seven (7) school districts in the following northeastern Michigan counties: Alpena, Cheboygan, Montmorency, and Otsego.

The program is designed to serve students who are at-risk for academic failure. The students are referred to School Success by teachers, school counselors, community-based providers, parents, and school administrators. Presenting issues include crisis, withdrawn, aggressive, untended, having academic need, or school attendance issues.

Students served by the program experience issues that can affect school performance and create barriers to academic success: family issues (divorce, unemployment, death), attitude issues about attending school, behavioral issues, transitional issues, unmet mental health needs, and unmet medical needs. School failure has been linked to chronic poverty, unemployment, juvenile delinquency, domestic violence, teen pregnancy, child abuse and neglect, and a lack of parent education. The program focuses on managing and ameliorating issues that can alter a student's trajectory toward high school graduation and college access.

Program funding sources currently include: Youth and Recreation Grant, Catholic Human services, Juvenile Court, Community Service Block Grant, Title One, School General Fund, Blended Fund, Community Foundation, and carryover funds from Strong Family Safe Children.

The School Success Liaisons are trained and experienced resource navigators, with BSWs, MSWs, or another relevant human service degree. They provide direct and ongoing assistance to students, parents, and teachers by remedying and managing a student's problems and issues by setting specific short and long-term goals and case coordination.

The School Success program includes these major services: initial planning meeting with parents/guardians, case planning, home visits, weekly student meeting, contact with parents/guardians every two weeks, referrals to other service providers, case closure, case follow-up, and community presentations.

At the end of School Success Program services, students are expected to meet school attendance policy (as evidenced by an increase in attendance), comply with school behavior policy (as evidenced by a decrease in behavioral incidents and suspensions), meet education gain expectations and graduate on time. Parents are expected to increase their involvement in their child's education as evidenced by participation in parent teacher meetings, providing homework help, attending school-related functions, and fully communicating with the school.

Data Collection Process

Data for this report was collected by School Success Workers on paper as services were delivered. Intake data and closing data were including in this program review. Contact data was not a part of this study. The data was entered and analyzed by University of Michigan program evaluation staff, using statistical analysis software SPSS V19.

The data was analyzed to better understand reasons for referral, other agencies involved with students, and to begin to understand changes in academic status and parental involvement upon program completion.

The data was de-identified; an evaluation number was assigned to each student to follow human subject protections. The evaluation was reviewed by the University of Michigan Institutional Review Board as a non-regulated status continuous quality improvement program evaluation study.

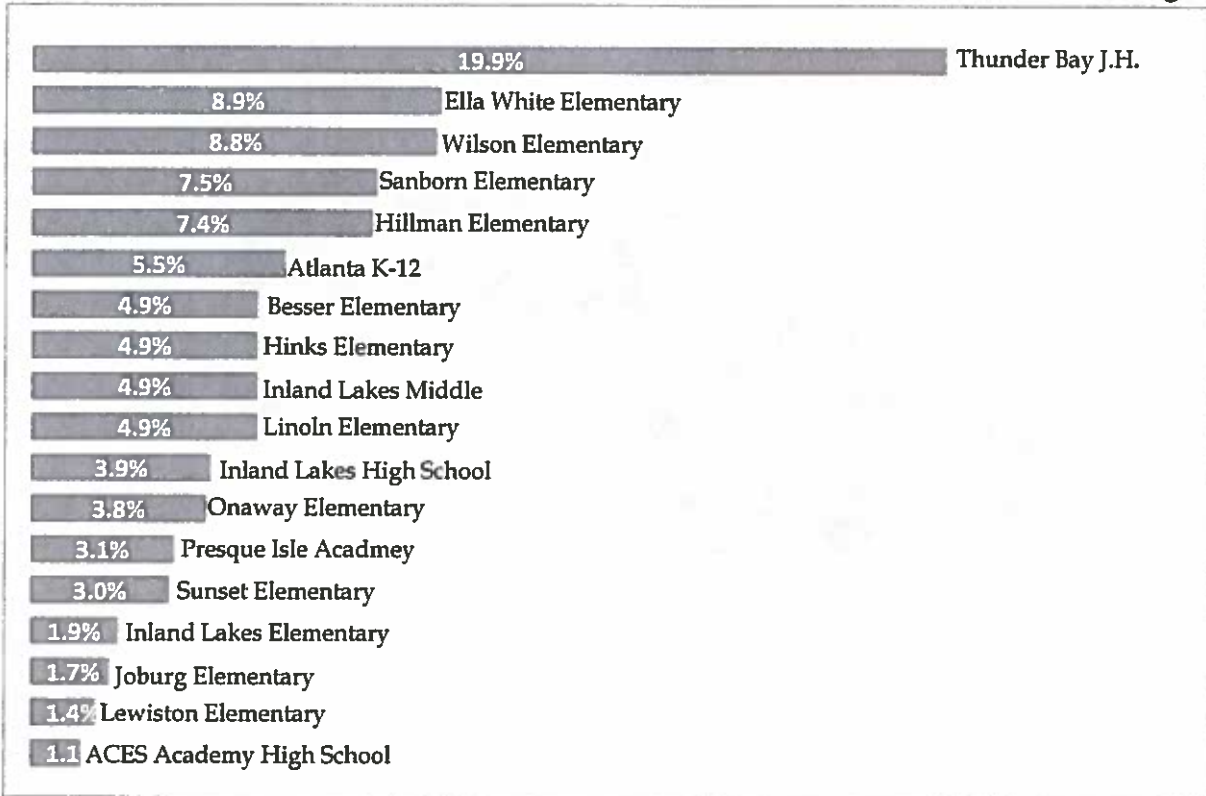
Numbers Served

Six hundred and thirty seven (637) case files were analyzed, representing five-hundred and eighty (580) students who were served during two school years: 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.

Host Schools

The School Success program currently provides services in nineteen (19) different schools located in the counties of Alpena, Cheboygan, Montmorency, Otsego and Presque Isle. Close to 20% of the School Success case load is represented by students enrolled at Thunder Bay Junior High (19.9%).

Figure 1. School Success is serving students in 19 public schools across northeast Michigan



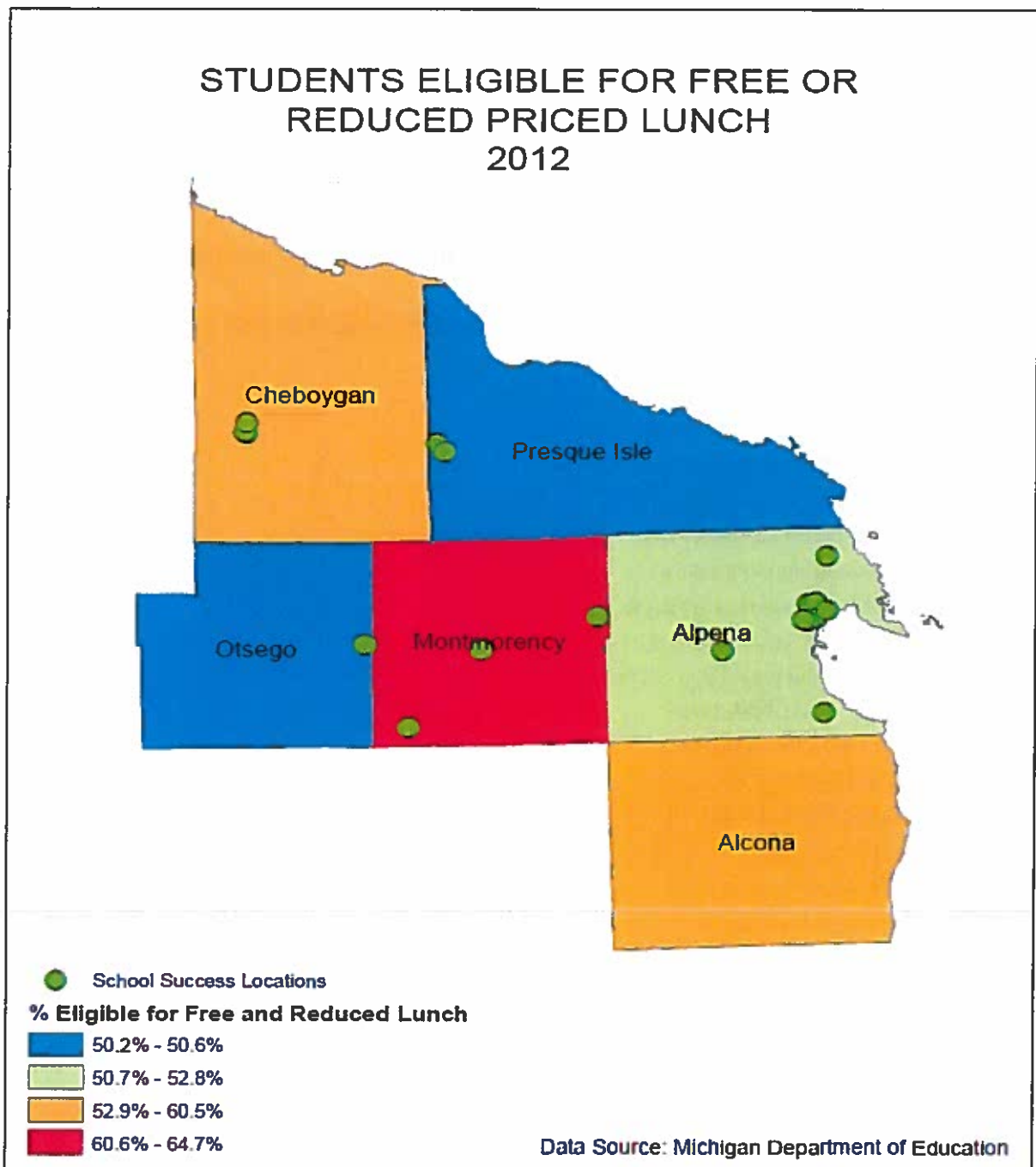


Figure 2. Proxy for poverty layered with School Success school locations

This ArcGIS map was developed to layer a proxy measure of poverty over the locations of the School Success program. A large percentage of Alcona County students are eligible for the free and reduced lunch program but do not have access to School Success. Students and families residing in this county could benefit from the School Success Program.

Student Demographics

School Success data collected for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years show that 58.2% of clients were male, with the remaining 41.8% female (Figure 3).

School Success Program students were served while enrolled in Pre-K to 12th grade. The majority of students were in the fourth (4th) and seventh (7th) grades at 11.3%.

The students least represented on the School Success Program case load were the high school students (9th to 12th grade).

Figure 3. A majority of School Success students are male

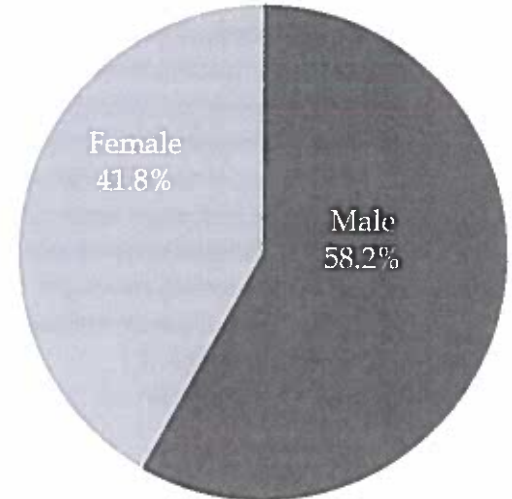


Figure 4: A majority of School Success students are in elementary and middle schools.

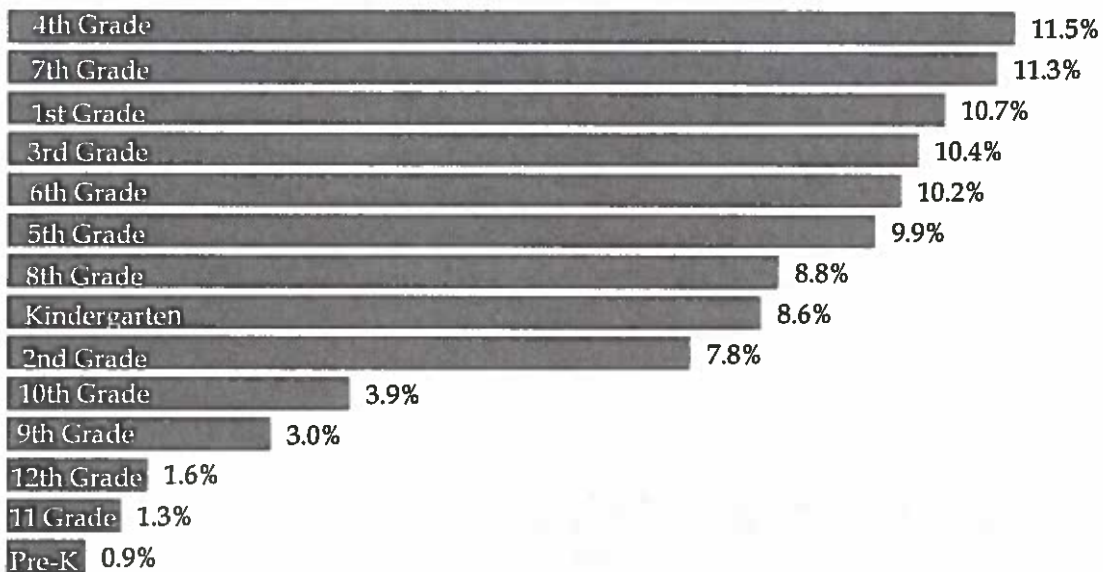
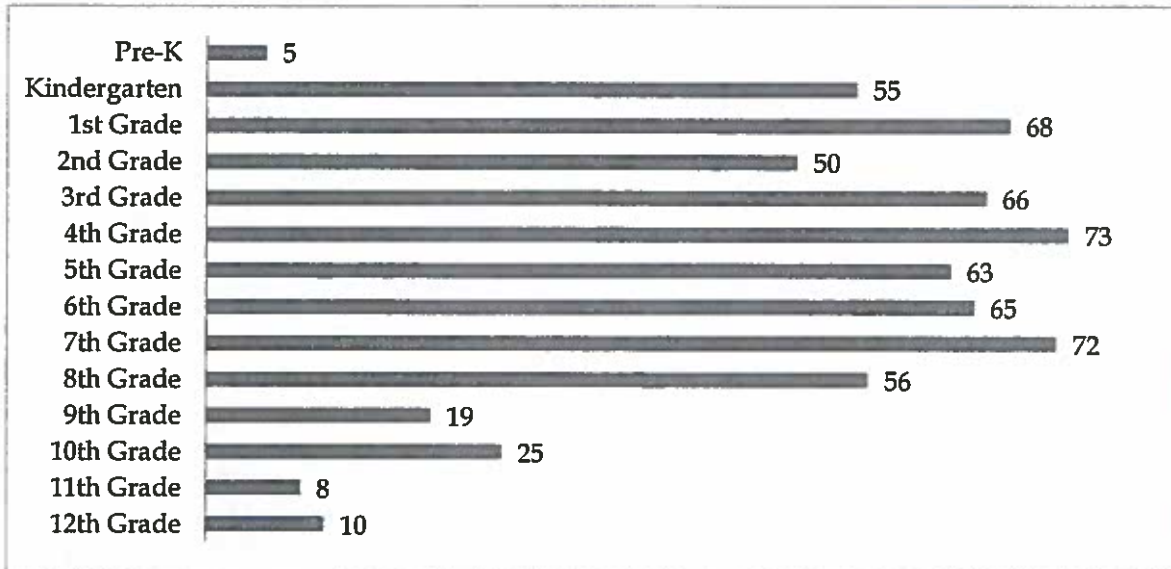


Figure 5. Number of students in School Success by grade level



Reason for Referral

The main reason for a referral to the School Success program in the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years were for crisis concerns (28.1%). This was followed by aggression (23.2%), attendance concerns (18.5%), academic concerns (17.7%), and student withdrawal (9.1%). In addition, 6.8% of students were classified as untended, which includes students who may be in a various states of neglect. However, there were some discrepancies with this data due to inconsistencies in how the workers indicated the reasons for referral. Some School Success workers only indicated one reason for referral, while a small subset noted more than one issue. In addition many workers reported "other" as a reason for referral; this category included many different reasons including anger, issues with bullying, mental health issues, social issues, and issues with self-esteem.

Figure 6: A majority of students referred to School Success are in crisis.

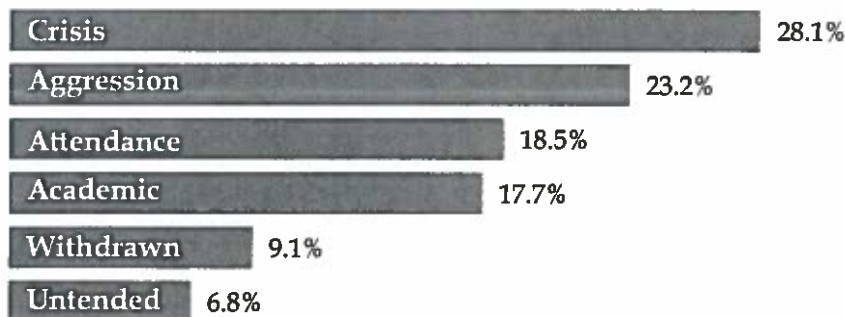
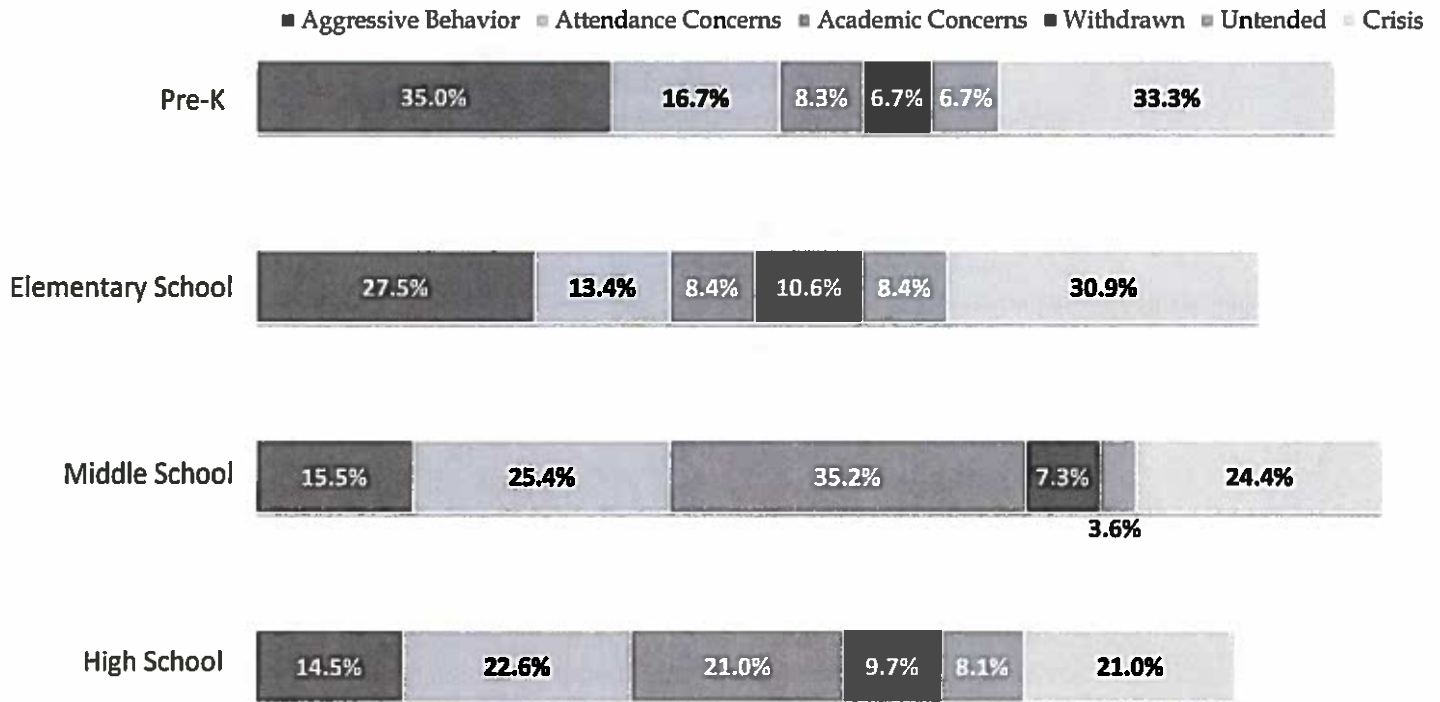


Figure 7 displays the patterns for referral reason by school level. Younger children were largely referred because of concerns with aggressive behavior however this trend starts to decline by 11th Grade. Similarly, referral for academic concerns is low in the younger age groups and seems to increase as the students get older.

Figure 7: Aggressive Behavior referrals are higher among younger students.

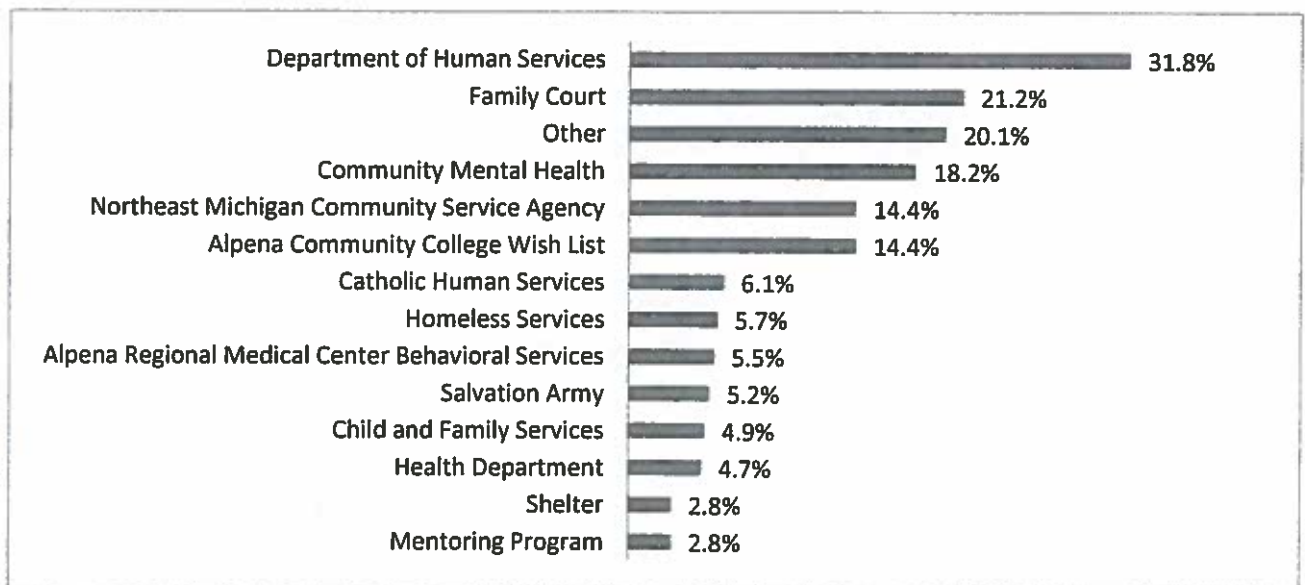
*Percent's may be greater than 100, due to students being referred with more than one area of concern.



Agencies Contacted or Involved with Child through School Success

The School Success Liaisons work closely with community-based public and private agencies to meet the needs of students and families. Figure 8 presents the percentage of students involved with these organizations.

Figure 8: Local organizations partner with School Success to meet student needs.



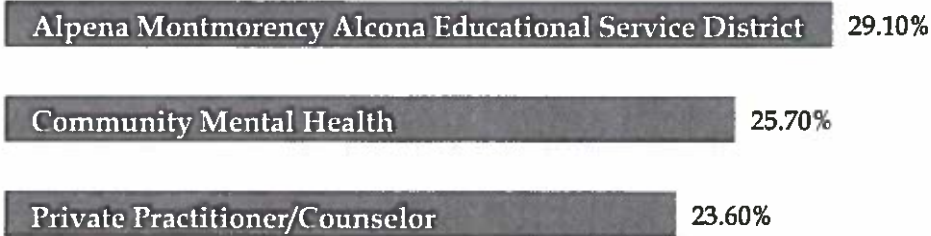
Students referred because of **crisis circumstances** most frequently came into contact with the Department of Human Services, Community Mental Health, Family Court, and Private Practitioners/Counselors.

Figure 9: Agencies most frequently involved with students referred for crisis situations



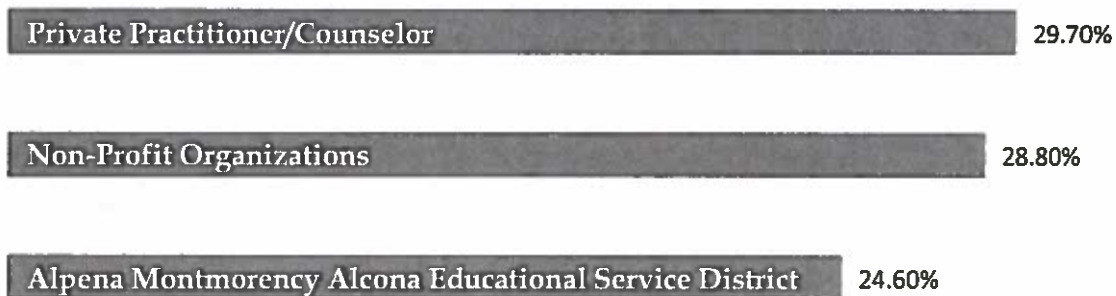
Students referred for **aggressive behavior** were most frequently involved with the Alpena, Montmorency, Alcona Educational Service District, Community Mental Health, and Private Practitioners/Counselors.

Figure 10: Agencies most frequently involved with students referred for aggressive behaviors



Students referred for **attendance concerns** were most likely to be involved the with AMA Educational Service District, Private Practitioners/Counselors, and “other services”, which included organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club, Big Brothers Big Sisters, law enforcement, Wrap Around, and WIC.

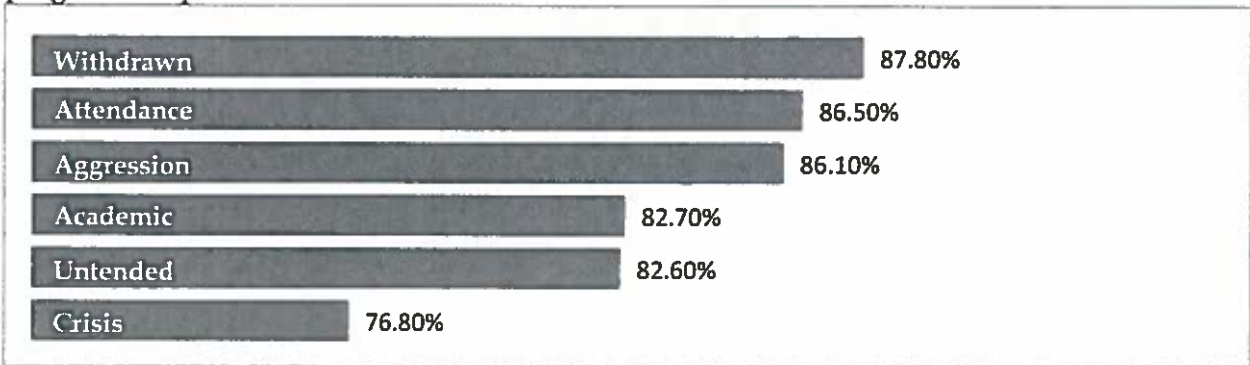
Figure 11: Agencies most frequently involved with students referred for attendance concerns



Academic Improvement (School Success Expected Outcome)

Overall, 64.8% of students improved academically while in the program. Academic improvement rates were similar across referral source areas. The highest percentage of students demonstrating academic improvement were students referred for issues of withdrawal (87.8%) and the lowest academic improvement was reported for students in crisis (76.8%). Over eighty percent (82.7%) of students referred to School Success for academic concerns improved academically by program completion.

Figure 14: Students referred for academic concerns that showed academic improvement upon program completion



To better understand who was improving academically, bi-variate statistics were generated to explore associations between student gender, grade level, and preschool attendance. There were no statistically significant differences with academic improvement.

Figure 12 indicates that 81.5% of all students improved academically at the end of the program. Figure 13 indicates that the students referred for academic concerns performance was similar to the total group (referral for academic concerns was not associated with academic improvement).

Figure 12: All Students

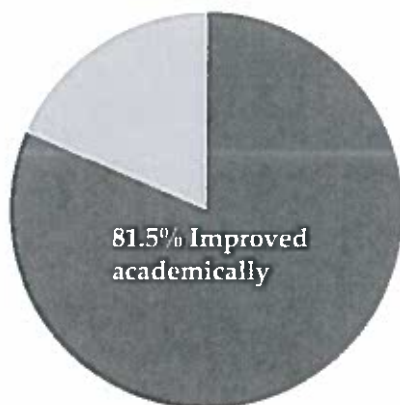
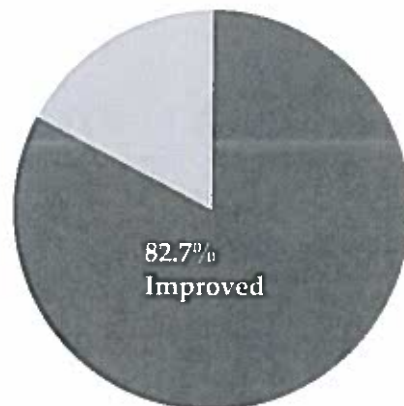


Figure 13: Student's referred for academic concerns



Change in Parental Involvement (School Success Expected Outcome)

Over 62% of the parents increased their involvement in their child’s education. Parents, whose child was referred for academic concerns, showed the most involvement (75.9%), refer to Figure 16.

Figure 15: Over 62% of Parents Increased Parental Involvement at End of School Success Services

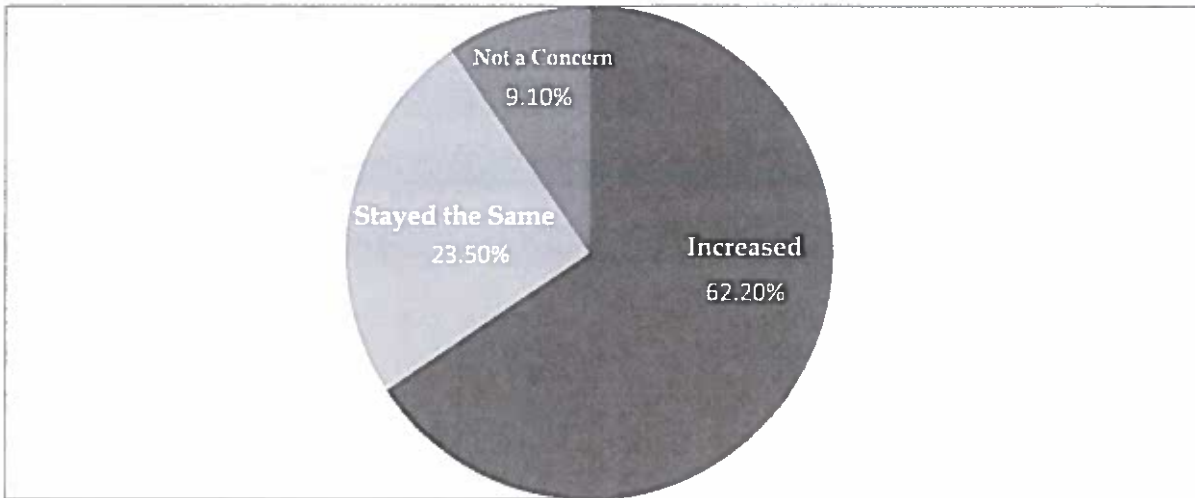
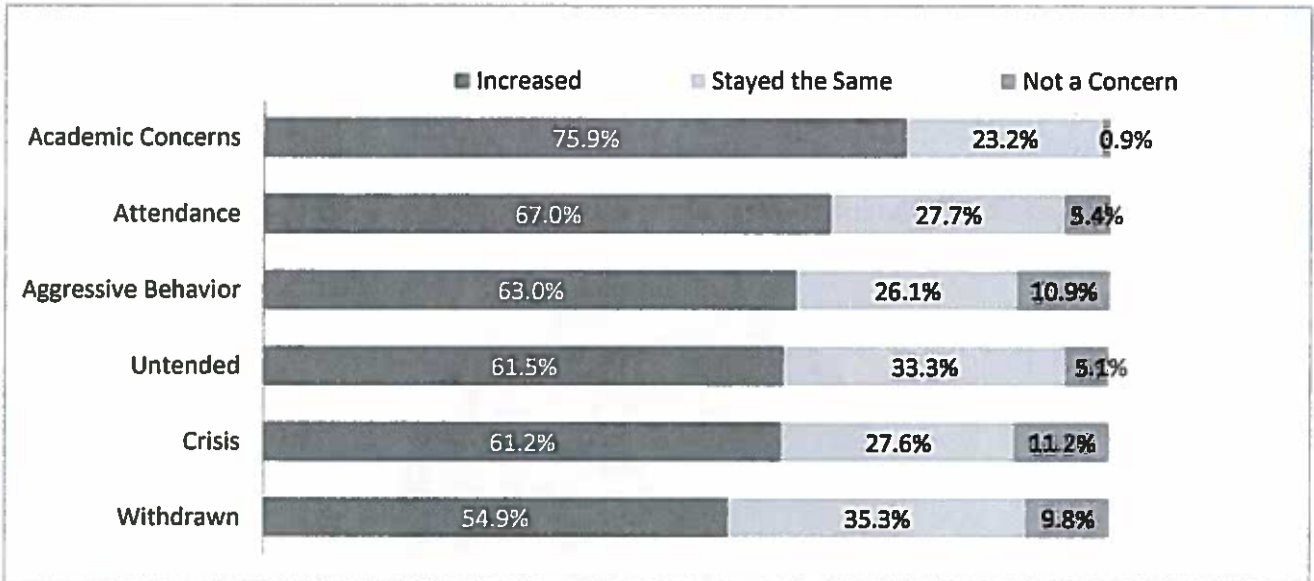


Figure 17: Parental Involvement Improvement Greatest for Students Referred for Academic Concerns




Limitations, Next Steps

The analysis of pre-existing program data was informative as a first step in documenting the students, their reasons for referrals, involvement with community agencies, and two immediate outcomes. The program forms were completed by the School Success Liaisons.

Phase two of the evaluation will include a more in-depth review of School Success Liaison services provided, the addition of standardized scales to capture outcome attainment at program end and post-program. The voice of the students, parents and teachers need to be included as well.

**Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency Inc.'s
School Success Partnership Program
Final Evaluation Report: September 2014 – May 2015
June 30, 2015**

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I. Background and Purpose

a. School Success Partnership Program Overview

The Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency Inc.'s School Success Partnership Program (School Success) serves school-aged children and youth from Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade who are at-risk for academic failure. Students served by School Success are referred to the program due to academic need, poor attendance, aggressive behavior, crisis situations, withdrawn behavior, or being untended. School Success workers provide ongoing assistance to students, parents, and teachers by managing students' problem areas with specific short- and long-term goals. Students with additional needs are provided supplementary referrals to community resources, such as educational services, community mental health clinics, shelters, private practitioners, the Department of Humans Service, and Child and Family Services.

School Success began approximately two decades ago in response to community awareness that school failure was a complex, multi-faceted issue, linked to chronic poverty, unemployment, juvenile delinquency, domestic violence, teen pregnancy, child abuse and neglect, and a lack of parent education. Students served by School Success experience a variety of issues and conditions that affect school performance and create barriers to academic success, including family issues (e.g., divorce, unemployment, death), attendance issues, behavioral issues, transitional issues, and unmet mental health and/or medical needs. The program collaboratively works with students and their families, school administrators, teachers, and staff, and community agencies in order to address presenting issues and meet students' needs. As a result of participating in School Success, students are expected to have increased attendance; decreased behavioral incidents such as detention and suspension; improved academic performance, and advancement to the next grade level. Parents are expected to increase their involvement with their child's education.

School Success has become an integral resource for students, families, and schools in Northeast Michigan. As of the 2013-2014 Academic Year, School Success was active in 17 public school locations within four Northeast Michigan counties, including Alpena, Cheboygan, Montmorency, and Ostego. A 2013 evaluation by the Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group,

assessing the School Success program from 2009-2011, showed that approximately 65% of students participating in School Success demonstrated academic improvement and parental involvement increased for over 60% of students served. School Success program administrators recently sought to extend their reach, with the goal of providing services to help more students in Northeast Michigan. Given the commitment to students and families and the positive impact that the School Success program has had in Northeast Michigan, the state of Michigan recently allocated funds for the School Success Program's expansion to four new counties.

b. Evaluation Purpose

This purpose of this evaluation is to assess the current School Success Partnership Program and its expansion during the 2014-2015 Academic Year. The state of Michigan allocated \$300,000, 25% of the School Success program's \$1.3 million annual budget, to support exiting programming and expansion efforts. This 9-month evaluation aims to (1) document the expansion of School Success into four new counties in Northeast Michigan; and (2) assess the impact of the School Success Partnership program on four key performance objectives identified by the state.

The performance objectives to be measured and reported include:

1. Increasing school attendance and decreasing chronic absenteeism.
2. Increasing academic performance based on grades with emphasis on math and reading.
3. Identifying barriers to attendance and success and connecting families with resources to reduce these barriers.
4. Increasing parent involvement with the parent's child's school and community.

This report presents final evaluation results, based on School Success program data as well as surveys of stakeholders including parents and principals from partner schools, from September 2014 through May 2015.

II. Methodology

a. Design

A mixed methods process and outcome evaluation was utilized to assess the School Success program's expansion efforts and student outcomes. The process evaluation employed a cross-sectional post-test survey of principals at partner schools and a cross-sectional post-test survey of a randomly selected sample of parents whose children currently received School Success services in order to identify stakeholder perceptions of the program as well as barriers and facilitators to program implementation. Survey results were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. These findings have particular relevance to the School Success program's expansion to four new counties between September 2014 and May 2015, and will inform implementation strategies for further expansion.

The outcome evaluation used a one group pre-/post- test design, in which Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were conducted to determine change in student outcomes over time in the School Success Partnership Program. Student outcomes include academic performance with emphasis on math and reading, and attendance. Attendance was also examined descriptively using administrative data that tracks program involvement with students at risk for truancy. Barriers to students' success in school, including potential mental/behavioral health concerns, poverty status were assessed and reported via descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. Additionally, descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were also used to document School Success referrals made to other community resources as a result of identified barriers. Finally, the outcome evaluation also used a post-test only design to assess parents' self-reported involvement with their child, school, and community.

b. Data Collection

Data for the cross-sectional post-test survey of principals was collected via a web-based survey of principals at schools implementing the School Success program. Principals of schools

implementing the School Success program received an email from School Success administrators on April 24, 2015 inviting them to participate in a web-based survey focused on their perceptions of the School Success program and its implementation at their schools. Principals were informed that their participation was voluntary and that their responses were confidential. The email included a link to a web-based survey administered via Qualtrics, an online survey software platform. Twenty-eight (N=28) principals received the survey, and 26 principals (93%) responded.

A cross-sectional post-test survey of parents whose children were currently receiving School Success services was administered in May 2015. Parent surveys assessed parental involvement, parent perceptions of the School Success program, as well as sociodemographic characteristics and health and mental health concerns that may act as barriers to students' success. A random sample of 100 active cases was selected. Evaluators pre-packaged parent surveys with a self-addressed stamped envelope, allowing parents to mail completed surveys directly to the evaluation team. School Success workers distributed the surveys to the randomly selected parents in person, explained the purpose of the survey and its voluntary, confidential nature, and requested their participation. Of the 100 randomly selected parents, 43 (43%) completed the survey.

The outcome evaluation used School Success administrative data collected between September 2014 and June 2015, including intake and closing forms, monthly evaluation forms, and monthly tracking of program involvement with students for attendance and truancy-related concerns, as well data from the post-test only cross-sectional parent surveys administered in May 2015, described above. Intake, closing, and monthly evaluation forms are filled out by School Success workers for every student served. These forms document students' academic performance and attendance, as well as track referrals and barriers to students' success. The administrative data also includes well-established, validated measures to assess students' academic performance and screens for common mental health problems, including depression, anxiety, and substance abuse. All administrative data was de-identified and parents signed a release of information form before their child's de-identified data was shared with the evaluation team. Administrative data tracking the School Success program's involvement with

students experiencing attendance and truancy-related concerns was also used to assess the program's impact on this performance objective.

c. Data Analysis

Qualitative data, comprised of open-ended questions on principal surveys, parent surveys, and monthly evaluation forms, was coded manually for themes.

Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and means were generated. Repeated Measures ANOVA was used to assess change in student outcomes over time in the School Success program.

II. Results

a. Process Evaluation Findings

i. Expansion of the School Success Partnership Program

During the 2014-2015 Academic Year, School Success served students and families in 23 schools within eight counties in Northeast Michigan. This represents an expansion effort in which School Success partnered with schools to implement services in four (4) new counties: Alcona, Iosco, Oscoda, and Presque Isle (see Table 1). The program was implemented in six schools within the four county expansion area between September 2014 and December 2014.

Figure 1. Enrollment in School Success nearly doubled September through April

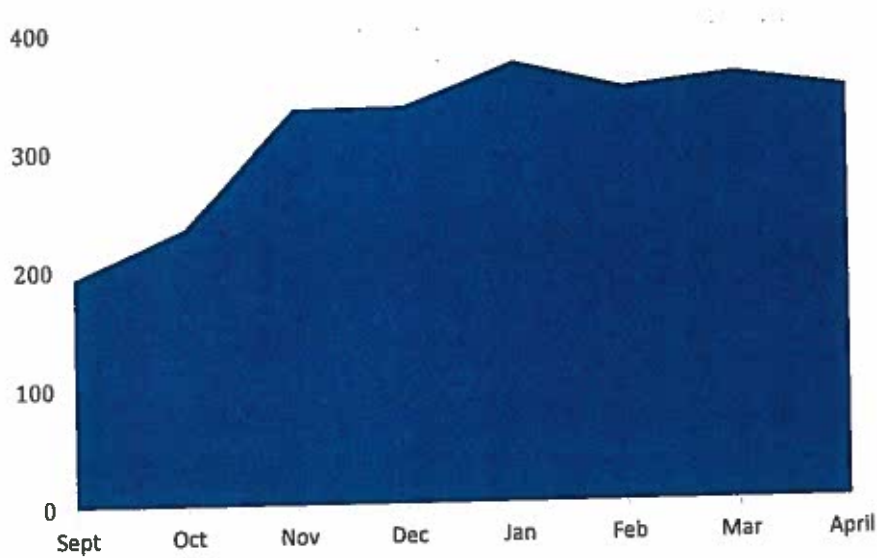


Table 1. School Success Partnership Program Sites: September – April 2015

County	School Name	Number of Students in the School	Number of Students in School Success	Date Became School Success Site
Alpena	Alpena High School	360	23	--
	Besser Elementary	359	18	--
	Ella White Elementary	431	16	--
	Hinks Elementary	140	17	--
	Lincoln Elementary	150	14	--
	Sanborn Elementary	187	21	--
	Thunder Bay Jr. High	486	56	--
	Wilson Elementary	250	27	--
Cheboygan	Cheboygan Area High School	756	23	--
	Inland Lakes Elementary	390	36	--
	Inland Lakes Schools	392	24	--
	Wolverine Schools	304	20	--
Montmorency	Atlanta Schools	259	23	--

	Hillman Elementary	253	34	--
	Hillman Jr/Sr High	240	22	--
	Lewiston Elementary	174	21	--
Otsego	Johannesburg Middle School	316	18	--
Expansion Sites				
Alcona	Alcona Elementary	365	24	09/02/2014
	Alcona Jr/Sr High	370	25	09/02/2014
Iosco	Hale Schools	240	14	09/02/2014
	Oscoda Schools	587	22	11/03/2014
Oscoda	Fairview Schools	304	19	12/01/2014
Presque Isle	Posen Schools	235	20	09/02/2014
Total number of students served by School Success			537	

Between September and April, 2015, 24 School Success workers served 537 students. Staff turnover among School Success workers was very low, with only one staffing change over the course of the academic year. All School Success workers hired for expansion sites were retained and will continue providing services next year. The low turnover is particularly important for continuity of services and building rapport with students and families, as well as school administrators, teachers, and staff.

The number of students served between September 2014 and April 2015 almost doubled (see Figure 1.), indicating that School Success is both needed and acceptable to stakeholders, including schools, parents, and students. One hundred twenty-four (N=124) students served over the course of the academic year attended one of the expansion sites (see Table 1). This represents almost one-quarter (23%) of students receiving services.

It is important to note that the 537 students served represent the School Success program's formal caseload. The program also provided informal services to 2160 students across the 23 schools in their service area during the 2014-2015 academic year. Informal cases represent students with chronic absenteeism who receive services specific to addressing truancy, students and families in crisis, and preventive services, including school-wide and small group programming.

ii. Principal Survey Results

This section of the report presents results of the cross-section post-test survey administered to Principals in April 2015.

Sample Characteristics

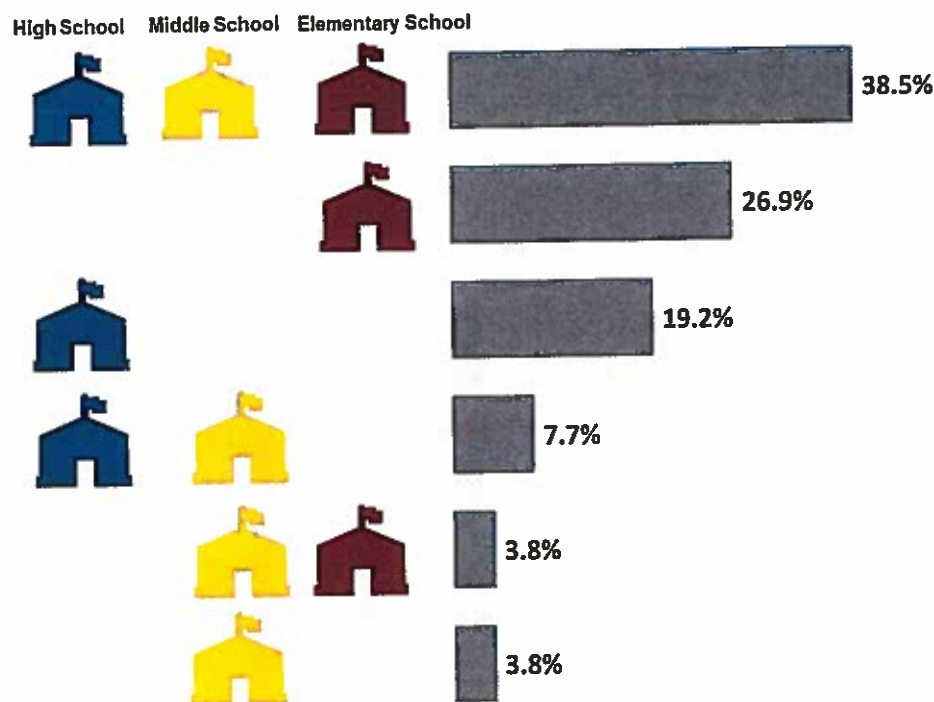
As 26 of 28 Principals (93%) completed the web-based survey, the counties represented reflect the distribution of School Success programs across the existing service area (see Table 1, below).

Table 2. Principal Survey Respondents by County (N=26)

County	N	%	
Alcona*	2	7.7	
Alpena	7	26.9	
Cheboygan	4	15.4	
Iosco*	5	19.2	
Montmorency	3	11.5	
Oscoda*	1	3.8	
Ostego	2	7.7	
Presque Isle*	2	7.7	
Total	26	100	

* indicates expansion site

Figure 2. Principals most commonly described having administrative duties at elementary, middle, and high schools.

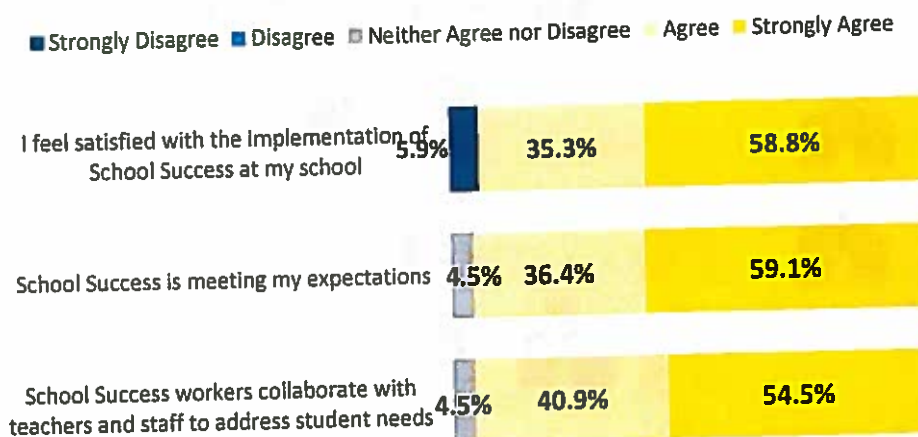


Implementation of the School Success Partnership Program

Principals were asked five questions to assess the implementation of the School Success Partnership Program at their schools. Items related to principals' satisfaction with implementation, whether School Success met principals' expectations, and principals' perceptions of the interaction and collaboration between School Success workers, teachers, and staff. Principals were also asked whether they would recommend the School Success Partnership program to colleagues at other schools.

Principals reported a high level of satisfaction with the implementation of the School Success Partnership Program at their schools (mean= 4.47; SD=.96). In fact, 94.1% of principals (N=22) strongly agreed or agreed that they felt satisfied with the implementation of School Success. Similarly, 95.5% of principals who responded (N=23) strongly agreed or agreed that the School Success program was meeting their expectations (mean= 4.57; SD=.59).

Principals also overwhelmingly endorsed collaboration between School Success workers, teachers, and staff (mean=4.52; SD=.59), with 95.4% of principals reporting that they strongly agreed or agreed that School Success workers collaborate with teachers and staff to address student needs. Principals rated their level of agreement on a five point Likert scale that ranged from zero (0) strongly disagree to five (5) strongly agree.



Principals were also asked about the frequency of their own interactions with School Success workers. Principals rated the frequency of their interactions on a seven point Likert scale that ranged from zero (0) never to seven (daily).

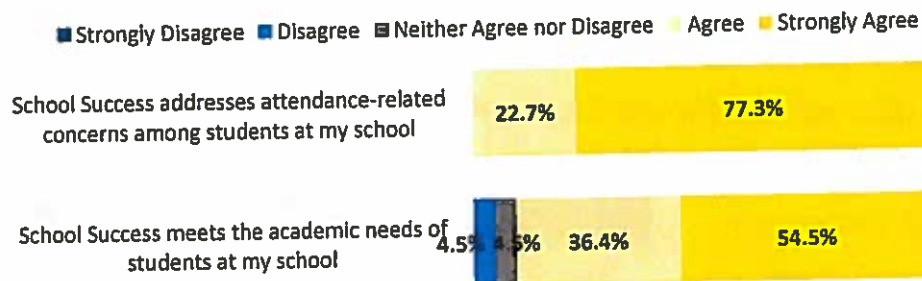
Seventy-five percent (75%) of principals reported *daily* personal interaction with School Success workers (mean=6.48; SD=1.05).



Perceived Impact of School Success Partnership Program on Students Served

Principals were also asked about the impact of the School Success Partnership program on students receiving services at their schools. Specifically, principals were asked rated their level of agreement with statements asking if the School Success program addressed attendance-

related concerns and the academic needs among their students. Principals rated their level of agreement on a five point Likert scale that ranged from zero (0) strongly disagree to five (5) strongly agree.



Principals overwhelmingly indicated that School Success positively impacted attendance-related concerns among students at their school, with 100% of principals who responded reporting that they strongly agreed or agreed that School Success addresses attendance-related concerns (mean=4.78; SD=.42).

Responses also indicate that School Success addresses students' academic needs, as 91% of principals strongly agreed or agreed that the program meets the academic needs of students at their schools (mean=4.43; SD=.79).

Principal Perceptions of the School Success Program

Results presented in this section of the report focus on three open-ended survey questions in order to provide School Success administrators and stakeholders with important insight to implementation facilitators and barriers. Principals were asked to identify what was working well with the School Success program, as well as areas for improvement. Finally Principals were asked whether they would recommend the School Success program to a colleague at another school, and why or why not.

Program Strengths

Principals identified three core strengths of the School Success Partnership program, including improved engagement with at-risk students and families; the cohesive integration of School

Success workers within their school; and the opportunity to address students' need that would otherwise go unmet.

Improved Engagement with At-Risk Students and Families

Principals most commonly mentioned the School Success program's ability to improve engagement with at-risk students and families as a strength. Most notably, principals often explained that School Success workers act as the link between families and the school, connecting with families who

have not previously been involved with their children or the school and bringing them to the table. To this end, one principal noted that School Success has the "ability to involve students and families that would otherwise not be engaged." Another principal

shared that School Success is "providing the liaison relationship between some of our at-risk families and the school staff. They provide necessary supports to our families to meet basic needs - so kids and families can focus on education." Many principals placed high value on the way in which the School Success program addresses a broad range of student and family needs by having the knowledge and resources to provide appropriate referrals. As a principal shared, "[School Success] creates an important link connecting resources with at-risk students and their families. Our School Success worker is helping establish a better, more cooperative relationship with families who often have a history of negative experiences with school and breaking those barriers to communication and cooperation."

"SCHOOL SUCCESS CREATES AN IMPORTANT LINK connecting resources with at-risk students and their families. Our School Success worker is helping establish a better, more cooperative relationship with families who often have a history of negative experiences with school and breaking those barriers to communication and cooperation."

Cohesive Integration of School Success Workers within the School Setting

Principals also identified the cohesive integration of School Success workers within the school

HAVING [SCHOOL SUCCESS WORKERS] IN THE building allows them to become part of the staff and full embrace the student - educationally, socially - and intervene with family issues."

setting as a program strength.

This is exemplified by one Principal who explained, "Our School Success liaison is part of our school's team and is willing to assist when asked with family and student situations." Another

principal noted the importance of having the School Success workers physically in the building, stating, "Having them in the building allows them to become part of the staff and full embrace the student (educationally, socially, and intervene with family issues)." In this regard, Principals also shared that this integration fosters the development and implementation of special programming and initiatives to further support students across the school. As a Principal shared, "Collaborative efforts with other staff to meet the needs of students. Current School Success workers are coordinating a student mentoring program that involves over 80 students."

Opportunity to Address Students' Need that Would Otherwise Go Unmet

Finally, Principals feel that their schools would not have the capacity to address the needs of at-risk students without the School Success Partnership program. Specifically, principals believe that these students'

"THE SCHOOL SUCCESS PROGRAM IS ESPECIALLY critical to our district to support student attendance and [provide] immediate intervention to meet the needs of our at-risk students."

needs would likely go unmet if they were not partnering with School Success. This is explicitly stated by one principal, who shared, "School Success provides a support service for families and students that would otherwise not be available." Many Principals discussed the importance of School Success workers' ability to interact with students on a regular basis, and how this would not be possible without the program. One principal explained, "Daily contact [School

Success workers] have with students allows them to have a positive impact on these students' lives." Another Principal echoed this sentiment, stating, "Daily communication with needed students has been massive." Principals also specifically mentioned the attention School Success places on attendance-related concerns as being value added, and offering a service not otherwise available. As this Principal noted, "The School Success program is especially critical to our district to support student attendance and immediate intervention to meet the needs of our at-risk students."

Areas for Program Improvement

When asked about areas for improvement for the School Success Partnership program, principals most frequently and consistently noted staffing and funding related issues. In particular, Principals identified the need for more School Success workers within their schools, as well as increased financial support for the program.

Staffing Constraints

Principals commonly suggested that staffing was an area for improvement within the School Success program, as many Principals reported that they would like to have more School Success workers serving their schools. As these Principals clearly stated, "It would be great to have another School Success worker" and "one [School Success worker] is often not enough to cover all of the issues students have." Similarly, another Principal explained, "We always need more help. If the ratio of SSW could be close to 150:1. It would certainly help with students who need to be seen more often than time permits." Principals also expressed interest in expanding the School Success program and offering School Success services year round. This is evidenced by a Principal who said, "Have [School Success] worker work year round and continue to work with students and families in the summer." Another Principal mentioned, "It would be great to see [School Success] expand to include more workers in more places."

Funding Constraints

Funding constraints, and the need for increased funding for the School Success program was identified by Principals as an area for improvement. Principals perceived a direct connection between funding constraints and the staffing constraints, described above, with one Principal

noting the need for “more funding to provide additional School Success workers.” Another Principal stated, “It would also be wonderful to see increased funding so that it’s easier to retain people in these key positions.” Principals also commonly acknowledged the limited resources and budgets available to school districts and suggested that the School Success program could

“THIS PROGRAM SHOULD BE OFFERED TO every school district in the state of Michigan. It is money well spent. It should be funded through the State because some districts do not have the funding available to have the program on their own.”

be improved by securing funding from other sources, such as government or foundations, for support. Specifically, one Principal stated, “With tight school budgets, more financial support from the state or foundation grants to assist with covering the costs would help the schools and allow for more

expansion.” Along the same lines, another Principal explained, “This program should be offered to every school district in the state of Michigan. It is money well spent. It should be funded through the State because some districts do not have the funding available to have the program on their own.”

Recommending School Success Program to Colleagues

Principals were asked whether they would recommend the School Success Partnership program to colleagues at other Schools, and why or why not.

All Principals responding to this question (N=22) reported that they would recommend School Success to their colleagues at other schools.

When asked why they would recommend the program, Principals once again focused on the positive impact School Success has on at-risk students and families, as well as the need the program fills within their schools. The general tone of the responses is captured by this Principal, who said, “The difference I see in children from dysfunctional homes is amazing! It gives the parents some tools to better understand and work with their children and it provides a

100%

of responding principals would recommend the School Success program to colleagues at other

safe environment for the children to learn and increase their chances of academic and personal success." In a similar vein, another Principal stated, "School Success is a powerful way to bridge home and school while providing extra support to students who need the extra help."

Principals also brought up the cost-effective nature of the School Success program, as exemplified by these Principals who explained, "It is a cost-effective student support service that helps fill a great need" and "I think that it is a viable cost-effective measure to assist students."

Finally, Principals discussed their willingness to recommend the School Success program to colleagues because of the nature of the School Success program itself, identifying qualified staff and the proactive approach as particularly important factors. One principal

"WITH THE EVER-SHRINKING SCHOOL BUDGETS and the ever-increasing needs in our high poverty community, the School Success worker brings to our school services for children that simply would not exist without them."

shared, "It is a very proactive program with very caring, capable staff. It makes a HUGE difference in our building." Another explained, "It is a great program. The people in charge are all about assisting kids and their families. They want to see students be successful." Again, Principals focused on the value added of School Success, with this Principal noting, "I feel our worker has access and knowledge of ways to help our students that we aren't able to provide with our school counseling." Another principal reiterated the fact that without School Success, many of these students and families' needs would go un-addressed, explaining, "With the ever-shrinking school budgets and the ever-increasing needs in our high poverty community, the School Success worker brings to our school services for children that simply would not exist without them."

iii. Parent Survey Results

Findings from parent surveys administered to 100 randomly selected families who were currently receiving School Success services are presented in this section of the evaluation report.

Sample Characteristics

81.4% of responding parents were women (N=35) and 95.3% self-identified as white/Caucasian. On average, responding parents were 40 years old (SD=11.07). Approximately 37.2% of parents reported being either divorced (N=8; 18.6%) or single (N=8; 18.6%), while a little more than one-third of responding parents indicated they were married (N=15; 34.9%).

Parents responding to this survey represented children and families served in seven of the eight counties where School Success has been implemented. Almost 40% of parents responding to this survey indicated that their child received services in one of the four new counties included in the expansion effort (N=16; 37.3%). Among existing counties represented, almost 40% of parents who responded to this survey reported that their child received School Success services in Cheboygan (N=17; 39.5%). Equal proportions of parents indicated that their child received services in Alpena (N=5; 11.6%) and Montmorency counties (N=5; 11.6%). No parent indicated that their child received services in Ostego county.

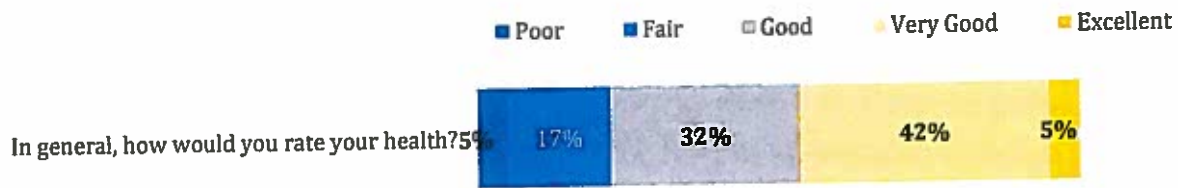
Table 3. Parent Survey Respondents by County (N=43)

County	N	%
Alcona*	2	4.7
Alpena	5	11.6
Cheboygan	17	39.5
Iosco*	6	14.0
Montmorency	5	11.6
Oscoda*	5	11.6
Ostego	0	0
Presque Isle*	3	7.0
Total	43	100

* indicates expansion site

Parents were also asked about their health and mental health status.

Though the majority of parents surveyed reported having good or very good health (N=30; 73.2%), almost one-quarter (N=9; 22%) reported having poor or fair health.



Additionally, nine of 40 parents (22.5%) who completed the Patient Health Questionnaire-2 (Kroenke & Spitzer, 2002) screened positive for depression and eight of 39 parents (20.5%) who completed the Mini-Social Phobia Inventory (Connor et al., 2001) screened positive for social anxiety disorder.

Table 4. Parents Screening Positive for Mental Health Concerns

Patient Health Questionnaire-2 for Depression (N=40)		Mini-Social Phobia Inventory (N=39)	
Score >=3 indicates a positive screen		Score >=6 indicates a positive screen	
N	%	N	%
9	22.5%	8	20.5%

Parent Satisfaction with the School Success Partnership Program

On average, parents reported being satisfied with the services their child received from School Success (mean=4.30; SD=1.23). Almost 90% of parents indicated that they were very satisfied (N=27; 62.8%) or satisfied (N=11; 25.6%) with their child’s School Success services. Parents rated their level of satisfaction on a five point Likert scale that ranged from zero (0) very dissatisfied to five (5) very satisfied.



It should be noted that some students and families automatically receive services because of truancy-related issues. It is likely that these families may be less satisfied with the program. Future evaluations should assess the potential association between involvement type and program satisfaction.

Parent Perceptions of the School Success Program

This section of the report focuses on parent perceptions of the School Success program, as assessed via three open-ended survey questions. Findings related to these open-ended questions provide School Success administrators and stakeholders important insight to parent perceptions of implementation facilitators and barriers. Parents were asked to identify aspects of the School Success program that were helping their child or family, as well as aspects of the program that could be improved. Finally parents were asked whether they would recommend the School Success program to a friend whose child needed additional support at school, and why or why not.

Program Strengths

Parents clearly identified three ways in which the School Success helped their children. Parents indicated that School Success provided Academic Support; Behavior Management Strategies; and Assistance with Crisis Situations.

Academic Support

Parents overwhelmingly identified the academic support provided by School Success as helping their children succeed in school. Parents discussed academic support as it related to both academic performance and attendance.

In regards to academic achievement, one parent shared about their child, "he has gain more confidence in himself and has been turning his assignments in on time. Raised

**"HE HAS GAIN MORE CONFIDENCE IN HIMSELF
and has been turning his assignments in on time.
Raised his grades to As & Bs.**

his grades to As & Bs," while another parent explained that School Success helps their child,

“keep focused on completing assignments, organization, and study skills.” The impact that the School Success program has on addressing attendance-related issues was noted by parents as well, with this parent stating, “It has helped my daughter a lot, made her want to get up and go to school. This was echoed by another parent who said the following about the program’s impact on her daughter: “help[ing] her stay organized and keep her in school.”

Parents also discussed how the School Success program helped them to engage and support

“IT HELPED US TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN MY son’s homework and with getting to know his teachers and feeling not so afraid to talk with them. His attitude changed for the best. He is on his way now.

their children. As this parent noted, “It helped us to get more involved in my son’s homework and with getting to know his teachers and feeling not so afraid to talk with them. His attitude changed for the best. He is on his

way now.” Many parents believed that their children’s academic progress would not have occurred without the services they receive from School Success. One parent explained, “It has helped a lot. If not, he would not be passing his classes.”

Behavior Management Strategies

Parents also commonly perceived the School Success program as providing important behavioral management strategies that assisted their children both at school and at home. Parents also reported that learning about and understanding these behavioral management strategies is extremely helpful for them.

When talking about the School Success program’s role in address their children’s behavioral issues, one parent

“[SCHOOL SUCCESS] HELPED MY SON CALM DOWN and focus more at school and at home. Helped me to keep calm and focus also.

explained that the program “helps my son meet his class goals and works very well with his behavioral issues.” Parents often provided specific examples of behavioral issues addressed by School Success. For example, this parent shared that the program was “helping my daughter with her anger issues and giving her the tools she needs to succeed.” Similarly, another parent noted, “it has helped my son to deal with how to properly interact with other children.”

Parents also often described learning and understanding more about these behavioral management strategies themselves as a result of services from School Success. Many parents discussed that the behavioral management component positively impacted both their children and themselves. This is exemplified by one parent who stated that the program “helped my son calm down and focus more at school and at home. Helped me to keep calm and focus also.” Another parent shared, “It helped us all understand what will help [my daughter] and us to make her a better student. “

Assistance with Crisis Situations

Finally, parents reported that School Success helped their children and families get through times of crisis. A variety of crisis situations were discussed, including chronic absenteeism, bullying, coping with divorce and death, and homelessness. This parent explained, “when my husband passed away, [School Success worker] was very good to my family.” Similarly, another parent shared that School Success helped “with my son after my nephew (his cousin) committed suicide, also with my son getting bullied.” Other parents shared that School Success offered assistance with securing basic needs. One parent explained, School Success “helped me find a house and Christmas gifts,” while another noted, “we get food and Christmas presents.”

Areas for Improvement

Parents had very limited feedback when asked what about the School Success program could be improved. In fact, many parents indicated that they didn’t feel there was anything that needed to be improved. The feedback that was shared regarding potential improvements focused on increasing the scope of existing services. One parent shared, “More! More staff to help kids!” It was clear that parents viewed the need for more staff as important, as it impacted the intensity of services. For example, a parent discussed wanting “more parent contact when there are positive things my son does, not just the bad,” while another noted, “School Success could be in contact more often.” Parents also expressed a desire for “summer services.” It was also clear that parents understood the constraints facing School Success, and mentioned the need for increased funding to support hire more staff and offer additional services. As this parent stated, “they could use more funding so they could get the resources.”

Recommending the School Success Program to a Friend

Forty of the 43 parents (93%) who responded to the survey reported that they would recommend the School Success program to a friend.

When asked why recommend School parents discussed that program had As stated by this

"I SEE THAT [SCHOOL SUCCESS] WORKS. I was very apprehensive of it at first but I see how it has helped my child."

they would Success to a friend, the positive impact on their children. parent, "I see that it

works. I was very apprehensive of it at first but I see how it has helped my child." Another parent shared, "I have seen a big improvement with my son attitude and school work." Finally, a parent noted, "if my stubborn son can be helped with structure, I believe in the School Success program."

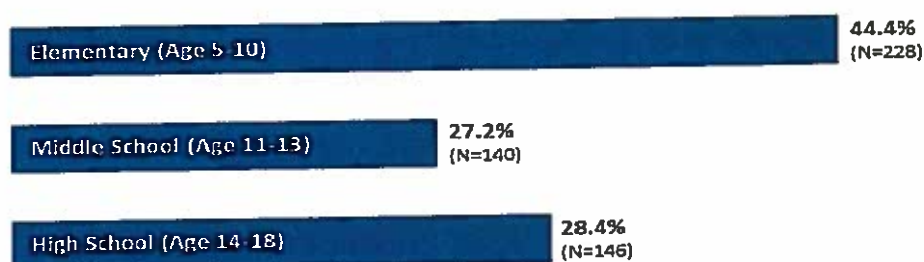
Parents again brought up the program's attention to behavioral issues and holistic approach when discussing why they would recommend it to a friend. One parent explained that School Success "gives kids a chance to help learn to deal with stress and help deal with anger" while another cited "help with family issues and problems we were having with bullying and teachers." Finally, this parent shared that the program "helped both the children and myself."

b. Outcome Evaluation Findings

i. Student Characteristics

Of the 537 students School Success served during the 2014-2015 academic year, almost forty-five percent (N=228; 45%) of the students were in elementary school, while 28% (N=146) were in high school and 27% were in middle school (N=140; see Figure 3).

Figure 3. School Success Students Served by School Type.



On average, students served in the program during the 2014-2015 academic year were eleven years of age ($SD=3.5$) and in the sixth grade (see Table 5). The majority of students served by School Success were male (60%).

Table 5. Characteristics of Students Served by the School Success Partnership Program: September 2014 – April 2015

County	School Name	Students Served	Gender		Age		Grade Level		Free & Reduced Lunch	Current IEP	Current 504
			% Male	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	% Eligible	% Yes	% Yes	
Existing Sites											
Alpena	Alpena High School	23	45%	14.2	9.3	9.3	0.8	87%	20%	15%	
	Besser Elementary	18	67%	7.2	2.9	2.9	1.5	78%	6%	0%	
	Ella White Elementary	16	81%	7.3	3.2	3.2	1.8	93%	6%	6%	
	Hinks Elementary	17	76%	8.4	3.7	3.7	1.3	86%	12%	33%	
	Lincoln Elementary	14	71%	8.6	3.2	3.2	1.3	100%	7%	0%	
	Sanborn Elementary	21	67%	8.1	3.5	3.5	1.3	94%	5%	10%	
	Thunder Bay Junior High	56	50%	12.4	6.9	6.9	0.9	86%	24%	26%	
	Wilson Elementary	27	52%	7.3	2.7	2.7	1.4	79%	7%	7%	
Cheboygan	Cheboygan High School	23	17%	14.2	8.9	8.9	0.9	100%	14%	10%	
	Inland Lakes Elementary	36	50%	7.8	2.7	2.7	1.7	73%	9%	0%	
	Inland Lakes	24	38%	14.5	9.2	9.2	1.8	100%	13%	55%	
	Wolverine	20	55%	14.8	8.9	8.9	1.8	75%	11%	22%	
Montmorency	Atlanta Schools	23	74%	10.8	6.6	6.6	3.0	86%	43%	5%	
	Hillman Elementary	34	74%	9.2	4.2	4.2	1.1	71%	15%	6%	
	Hillman High School	22	68%	14.6	8.5	8.5	1.5	75%	23%	18%	
	Lewiston Elementary	21	53%	9.3	4.3	4.3	1.6	52%	0%	0%	
Otsego	Johannesburg Middle School	18	56%	10.9	5.6	5.6	2.7	61%	29%	39%	
Expansion Sites											
Alcona	Alcona Elementary	24	79%	2.4	3.5	3.5	1.9	80%	23%	4%	
	Alcona Jr/Sr High School	25	48%	1.4	8.9	8.9	1.5	96%	4%	0%	
Iosco	Hale Schools	14	93%	3.9	5.8	5.8	3.5	100%	21%	14%	
	Oscoda Schools	22	68%	4.1	6.0	6.0	3.9	81%	14%	84%	
Oscoda	Fairview Schools	19	58%	4.1	8.1	8.1	3.4	78%	21%	11%	
Presque Isle	Posen Schools	20	70%	3.3	8.1	8.1	3.2	50%	10%	0%	
Total		537	60%	11.1	3.5	6.1	3.0	80%	15%	13%	

Though the School Success program does not have income-based eligibility criteria, 80% of students served were eligible for free and reduced lunch. Comparatively, 48.6% of students in the state of Michigan were eligible for free and reduced lunch in 2013 (Michigan Department of Education, 2013), suggesting a substantially higher proportion of students served by the School Success program are economically disadvantaged when compared to students across the state.

Furthermore, 15% of students served by the School Success program have a current Individualized Education Program (IEPs) and 13% of students have a 504 plan. As of the 2012-2013 academic year, 13.5% of Michigan students had IEPs (U.S. Department of Education).

Therefore a similar proportion of students in the School Success program have IEPs when compared to students across the state.

Additionally, the School Success program began screening students for common mental health disorders this academic year. School Success workers were asked to screen all students for depression (Patient Health Questionnaire-2; Spitzer & Kroenke, 2002) and anxiety (Screen for Child Anxiety Related Emotional Disorders - Brief Version; Birmaher et al., 1997) at intake. High school students, age 14-18, were also screened for risk of substance abuse (CRAFFT; Knight et al., 2002). Results suggest that of 507 students assessed, 33.6% of students screened positive for depression. Of 506 students completing the anxiety measure, 40.8% screened positive for an anxiety-related emotional disorder. Finally, approximately 11% of the 284 students assessed were found to be at increased risk for substance abuse.

Table 6. School Success Students Screening Positive for Mental Health Concerns at Intake

Patient Health Questionnaire-2 for Depression (N=507)		Screen for Child Anxiety Related Emotional Disorders (N=506)		CRAFFT Substance Abuse Screening Test (N=284)	
Score >=3 indicates a positive screen		Score >=3 indicates a positive screen		Score >=2 indicates increased risk for substance abuse	
N	%	N	%	N	%
160	33.6%	219	40.8%	30	10.6%

ii. Reason for Referral

Students were most commonly referred for School Success services by their teachers (37.8%; N=203) or parents (24.0%; N=137). School Success workers and school principals each referred approximately 10% of students as well. Less common referral sources included school counselors and probation officers (see Table 7).

Figure 4. Teachers were the School Success program’s most common referral source.

Table 7. School Success Partnership Program Referral Sources (N=474)

Referral Source	Total	
	N	%
Teacher	203	37.8%
Parent/Guardian	137	24.0%
School Success Worker	59	10.5%
Principal	45	9.2%
Probation Officer	13	3.4%
School Counselor	17	2.9%

This academic year, students were most commonly referred to School Success for academic concerns (N=312), followed by attendance concerns (N=179), crisis (N=139), and aggressive behavior (N=124). Fewer students were referred due to withdrawn behavior (N=76) or being untended (N=39). It is important to note that students can be referred to School Success for more than one reason so the reasons for referrals total more than the number of students served (N=869).

Table 8. School Success Partnership Program Reasons for Referral

Reasons for Referral	Total
	N
Academic Concerns	312
Attendance Concerns	179
Crisis	139
Aggressive Behavior	124
Withdrawn	76
Untended	39

iii. Contacts

From September 2014 to April 2015, School Success workers had 28,499 contacts to support students they serve (see Figure 6 and Table 10). Approximately two-thirds of these contacts (N=18,770; 65.8%), were direct, school-based interactions, in which the School Success worker met with the student and/or parents at school. On average, students and families received between 6.5 and 9.9 school-based contacts with School Success workers per month (see Figure 5 & Table 9).

Figure 5. Average Number of Contacts by Month: September 2014 – April 2015

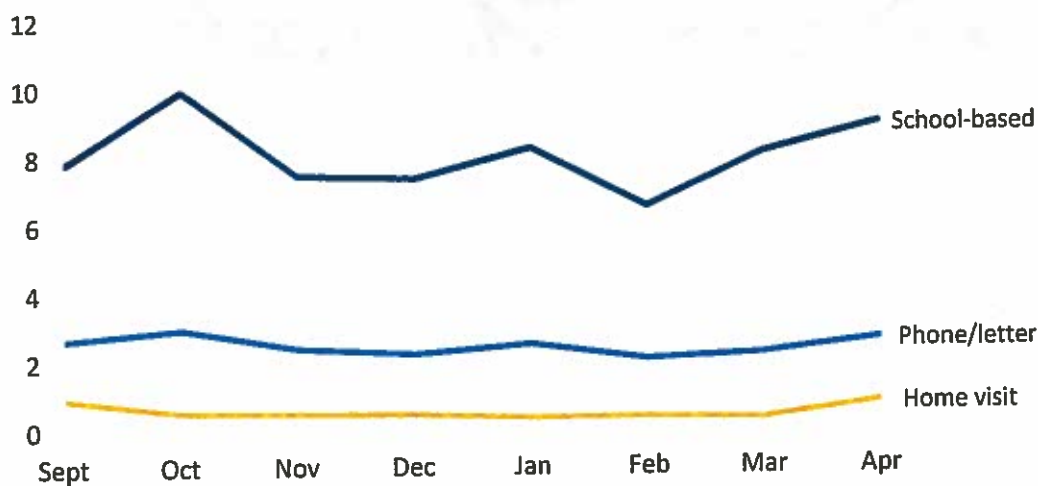


Table 9 Average Number of Contacts by month: September 2014-April 2015

	Sept	SD	Oct	SD	Nov	SD	Dec	SD	Jan	SD	Feb	SD	Mar	SD	Apr	SD
School-Based	7.8	6.9	9.9	8.6	7.4	5.3	7.4	5.8	8.2	6.9	6.5	5.4	8.1	6.9	8.9	10.2
Home Visit	0.9	2.4	.5	.9	.5	.8	.5	.7	.4	.7	.4	.8	.3	.6	.8	6.6
Phone/Letter	2.6	2.9	2.9	3.6	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.5	3.1	2.1	2.7	2.2	4.1	2.6	6.2

Almost 20% of School Success contacts (N=5245) consisted of phone calls and letters related to the case. These calls and letters may be to parents, teachers, staff, and principals at school, or community resources. A little more than 10% (N=3660) of contacts were classified by School Success workers as “other.” When asked to specify these contacts, workers most commonly described face-to-face meetings with teachers, staff, and principals at school, face-to-face meetings with the students’ other providers and/or referral sources, and accompanying students and families to appointments. Less than 5% of the contacts consisted of home visits (N=824).

Figure 6. Total Number of Contacts by Month: September 2014-April 2015

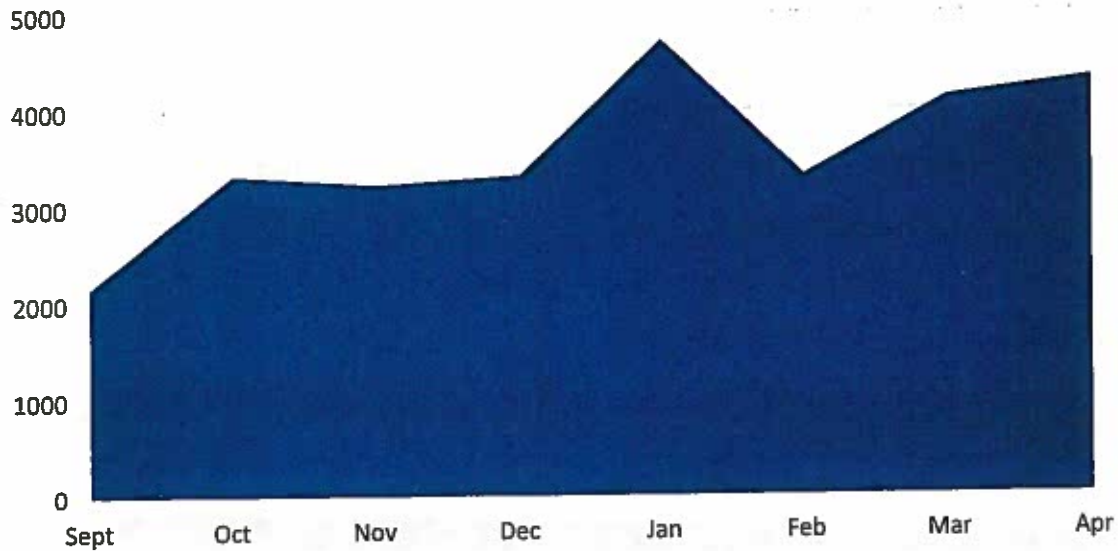


Table 10. Total Number of Contacts by Month: September 2014-April 2015

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
School-based	1336	2261	2165	2132	2981	2123	2830	2942	18770
Home visit	105	80	102	91	92	96	82	176	824
Phone/letter	407	606	620	581	823	657	728	823	5245
Other	314	378	339	520	819	440	480	370	3660
Total	2162	3325	3226	3324	4715	3316	4120	4311	28499

c. Performance Objectives

i. Increasing School Attendance and Decreasing Chronic Absenteeism

Part of the School Success program’s role is to intervene and offer services to students experiencing chronic absenteeism that may result in truancy. If a student misses eight (8) days of instruction, the School Success program becomes involved and makes contact with the student and parents. Involvement with these students and families persists if absenteeism continues, as School Success once again engages with families if students reach 12 and 15 absences, respectively. These contacts from School Success are designed to prevent petitions related to truancy.

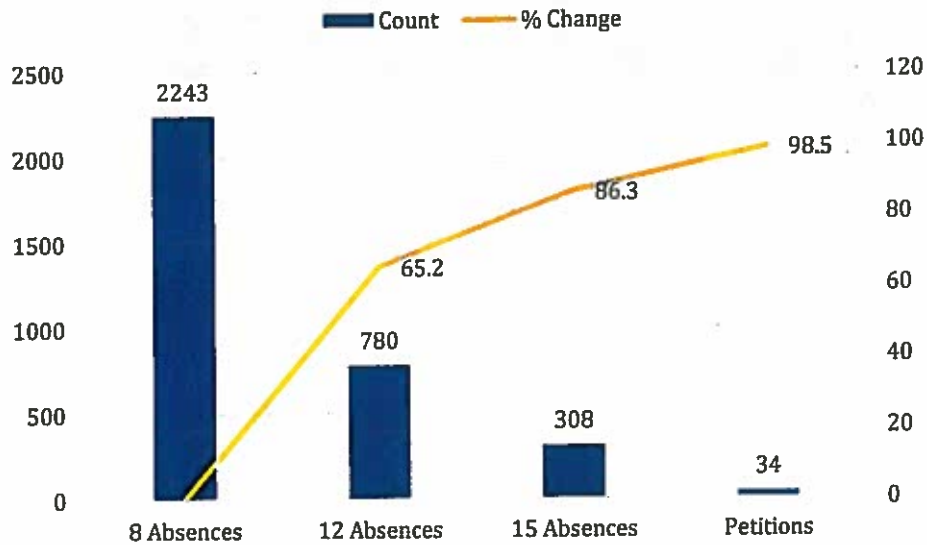
These students and families are offered School Success services, but may or may not decide to formally enroll in the program. Regardless of the families’ decision about formal participation in School Success, the program facilitates attendance meetings with the student and family. These meetings result in a mutually agreed upon action plans that families are to follow in order to prevent future absences and ultimately avoid court involvement for truancy. School Success workers make contact with students and families if a student has another absence or there is failure to comply with the action plans.

Table 11. School Success Contacts with Students for Chronic Absenteeism: September 2014 – April 2015

County	School Name	Students with 8 Absences	Students with 12 Absences	Students with 15 Absences	Students Petitioned for Truancy
Existing Sites		N	N	N	N
Alpena	Alpena High School	104	20	8	4
	Besser Elementary	39	13	3	0
	Ella White Elementary	186	54	2	0
	Hinks Elementary	35	10	1	0
	Lincoln Elementary	69	43	8	1
	Sanborn Elementary	26	11	4	2
	Thunder Bay Junior High	175	70	36	2
	Wilson Elementary	50	8	0	1
Cheboygan	Cheboygan High School	174	78	70	2
	Inland Lakes Elementary	189	103	41	1
	Inland Lakes	140	52	45	0
	Wolverine	21	4	0	0
Montmorency	Atlanta Schools	114	34	12	6
	Hillman Elementary	97	14	5	3
	Hillman High School	70	28	8	1
	Lewiston Elementary	32	11	2	0
Otsego	Johannesburg Middle School	142	0	5	2
Expansion Sites					
Alcona	Alcona Elementary	98	36	12	1
	Alcona Jr/Sr High School	78	25	17	3
Iosco	Hale Schools	20	6	3	0
	Oscoda Schools	325	148	24	5
Oscoda	Fairview Schools	2	0	0	0
Presque Isle	Posen Schools	57	12	2	0
Total		2243	780	308	34

Therefore, this aspect of the program, reaching out and supporting students with chronic absenteeism, is above and beyond the services provided to students on School Success workers’ regular caseloads. Over the course of the 2014-2015 academic year, the School Success program was in contact with 2243 students who missed eight (8) or more days of school at the 23 partner schools in their eight county service area.

Administrative data suggest the involvement of School Success with students experiencing chronic absenteeism and its potential consequences, as well as providing the option of receiving services through School Success, leads to a substantial reduction in court petitions for truancy cases. In fact, only 1.5% of the 2243 students School Success informally engaged with due to missing eight (8) or more days of school, were ultimately petitioned. This represents a 98.5% decrease between students at-risk for truancy and actual petitions.



It is likely that many schools would not have the internal resources to reach out to students at-risk for truancy; therefore, the School Success program fills an important, otherwise unmet need that results in substantial cost savings to partner schools and districts. It is arguable that the School Success program’s intervention for students with chronic absenteeism helped to keep 2209 students in school during the 2014-2015 academic year. Given the \$7,200 full time equivalent for students, School Success potentially saved its partner schools \$15,904,800.

The School Success program also collected administrative data documenting the number of days absent per month for students receiving formal School Success services. Data suggests attendance concerns were either not applicable, or mitigated, among the majority of cases. Please note that due to data integrity issues, data from Alpena High School were not included in these analyses. The average number of days absent among students continuously served by School Success between September 2014 and April 2015 ranged from 1.44 (*SD*=1.84) to 2.00 (*SD*=2.46), indicating consistently low levels of absenteeism. Given the stable attendance among

this sample of School Success students, Repeated Measured Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) does not demonstrate a statistically significant pattern of difference in absences per month among students served by the School Success program between September 2014 and April 2015.

Table 12. Change in Students' Attendance Over Time in the School Success Program: Results of One-Way Repeated Measures ANOVA (N=82)

	September 2014		October 2014		November 2014		December 2014		January 2015		February 2015		March 2015		April 2015		F	df	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Days Absent	2.0	2.5	1.8	1.9	1.4	1.8	1.7	2.2	2.0	2.4	1.6	2.6	1.9	1.9	1.7	3.2	1.1	7	.38

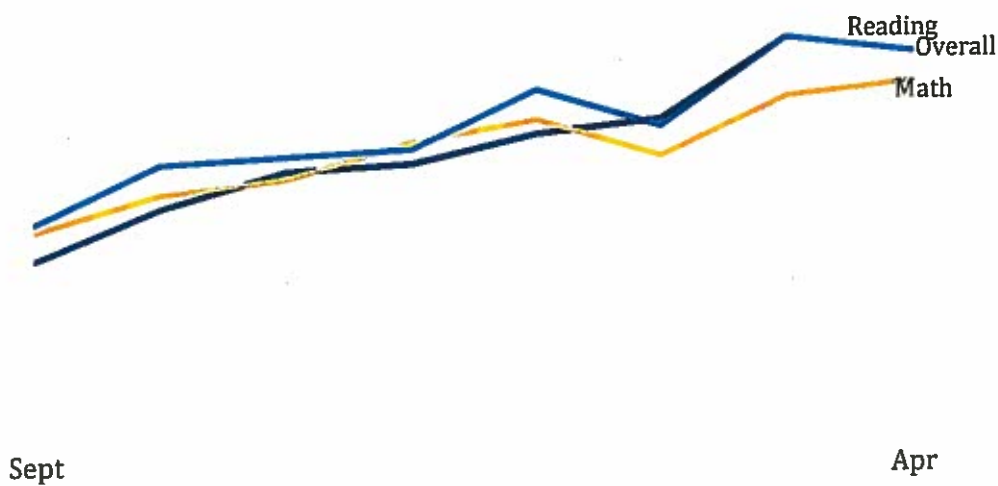
ii. Increasing Academic Performance Based on Grades with Emphasis on Math and Reading

Academic performance was assessed via School Success worker ratings of overall quality of academic work, quality of math skills, quality of reading skills, frequency of homework completion, and quality of completed homework among students continuously served by the School Success program between September 2014 and April 2015. Due to data integrity issues, data from Alpena High School were not included in these analyses. These academic performance indicators reflect a modified version of the Academic Performance Rating Scale (DuPaul, Rapport, & Perriello, 1991). School Success workers rated the quality of students' academic performance on a five-point scale ranging from zero (poor) to four (excellent), and frequency of homework completion on a five-point scale ranging from zero (never) to four (very often), on a monthly basis.

Students consistently served by School Success during the 2014-2015 academic year experienced substantial gains in all academic performance indicators. The percentage of students rated as having average to excellent quality academic work went from 23% in September 2014 to 62% in April 2015, representing a 39% increase. This pattern was consistent when examining the quality of students' math and reading skills. The percentage of students rated as having average to excellent math skills increased by 24% over the academic year, going from 33% in September

2014 to 57% in April 2015. There was a 28% increase in the number of students rated as having average to excellent reading skills over the course of the academic year, moving from 34% in September 2014 to 62% in April 2015. The percentage of students rated as having average to excellent quality homework increased from 38% to 57% from September 2014 to April 2015, rising 19%. The percentage of students completing homework often or very often also increased from 38% in September 2014 to 57% in April 2015.

Figure 7. Number of Students Rated Average to Excellent on Quality of Academic Work: September 2014-April 2015



There was also a statistically significant pattern of difference in overall quality of academic work, quality of math skills, quality of reading skills, and quality of completed homework among students continuously served by the School Success program between September 2014 and April 2015, indicating improvement in academic performance over time in the School Success program.

Table 13. Change in Students' Attendance Over Time in the School Success Program: Results of One-Way Repeated Measures ANOVA (N=82)

	September 2014		October 2014		November 2014		December 2014		January 2015		February 2015		March 2015		April 2015		F	df
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Overall quality of students' academic work	1.1	1.1	1.4	.99	1.5	1.0	1.6	.98	1.6	.97	1.7	.93	1.7	.85	1.7	.85	10.5***	3.4
Quality of students' math skills	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.0	1.5	1.0	1.5	.94	1.5	.98	1.4	.98	1.5	.96	1.6	.97	7.28***	3.8
Quality of students' reading skills	1.3	1.1	1.4	.99	1.6	.96	1.5	.99	1.7	1.0	1.6	1.0	1.7	.94	1.7	.92	4.58**	2.9
Frequency of homework completion	1.6	1.1	1.8	1.0	1.9	1.1	2.0	1.1	2.1	1.1	2.1	1.1	2.5	3.6	2.2	1.1	1.82	1.2
Quality of completed homework	1.4	1.1	1.6	1.0	1.7	1.0	1.7	.94	1.7	.94	1.7	.92	1.7	.92	1.8	.89	4.17	3.1

Note: *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

iii. Identifying Barriers to Attendance and Success and Connecting Families with Resources to Reduce these Barriers

As discussed above, the School Success program began screening students for common mental disorders during the 2014-2015 academic year. Students' mental health needs, emerged as potential barriers to students' academic success, as high rates of students screened positive for both depression (33.6%) and anxiety (40.8%). Though unanticipated, results suggest that both depression and anxiety symptoms were reduced among students participating in the School Success program. Students' mental health symptoms were assessed at both intake and case closure. Paired samples t-tests suggest a significant decrease in mean symptom levels of both depression ($t(81)=4.2$; $p < .001$) and anxiety ($t(80)=4.9$; $p < .001$) among students in the School Success program whose cases were closed during the 2014-2015 academic year.

Additionally, each month, School Success workers documented barriers to academic success experienced by students they served. Thematic analysis suggests that behavior issues, family issues, and mental health or learning disability-related issues present substantial barriers to

academic achievement for students served by School Success. Health issues were also noted as barriers, but to a much lesser extent. As expected, academic and attendance issues, the top two reasons for referral to the program, emerged as barriers to students’ success as well. The reported barriers and examples of each are included in Table 9., below.

Table 14. Barriers to School Success Students’ Academic Achievement		
Barrier	Number of Times Mentioned	Quotes from School Success Worker Report
Behavior Issues	454	<p>Student has been skipping class and sitting in the bathroom until class is over.</p> <p>Student jumped from 20 ft window</p>
Family Issues	322	<p>This student is dealing with the new separation of her parents and is having difficulty regulating her emotions in school.</p> <p>This student has been struggling with some family issues at home and has become very emotional and sensitive this month.</p>
Academic Issues	302	<p>This student continues to struggle with reading and comprehension, but has seen some success and is now more motivated to do well.</p>
Mental Health or Learning Disability-Related Issues	287	<p>Student has autism struggles with socialization has meltdowns</p> <p>Child has a diagnosis of ADHDtrying to get back on meds</p>
Attendance	280	<p>This student has continued to be late or miss first hour.</p>
Health Issues	53	<p>Student was tardy and missed 2 days due to illness</p> <p>Student is legally blind in one eye</p>

Once School Success workers identify barriers to students’ academic achievement, they work with students and families to resolve barriers and increase students’ ability to success in school (see Table 10). The most common approach to resolving barriers involves creating a plan or system with the student and/or parent or guardian. The plans often consist of strategies that students and parents can employ to overcome barriers. For example, one School Success worker devised a plan for a student having anger issues impeding success at school, in which the student would excuse himself and come to the School Success office when starting to feel irritated or angry.

Meeting and talking with students also emerged as an important strategy for overcoming barriers to academic achievement. These meetings provide an opportunity for students to share feelings or discuss issues they are having, as well as a venue for School Success workers to offer important guidance and information. Additionally, School Success workers described educating students and parents, by sharing information and providing skills, as a way to overcome barriers. This information and associated skills are often used to support the plans collaboratively developed to assist students and families. Finally, School Success workers provide referrals to help students and families resolve identified barriers that are beyond the scope of the School Success program.

Table 15. Resolution to School Success Students’ Barriers		
Resolution to Barrier	Number of Times Mentioned	Examples from School Success Worker Report
Partnered with Parent or Guardian to Create Plan	441	I have met with student, mother and future step-father to discuss issues at home. I assisted mom in setting up chores and appropriate consequences at home.
Created Plan/System with Student	424	Student will report to School Success Office before calling home for illness

Met/Talk with Student	233	I have begun to build a rapport with this student who is new to our school as of last month. She is seeking someone to be able to talk to besides her parents Talked with the student about a high school diploma being necessary to get into the post-high school program he wants to attend
Referral	226	Referral to DHS community giving program Referral made to Middle School Teacher Aide for after school homework help 2x a week
Provided skill/information	172	Worked with mother to help establish a concrete sleep pattern. Student now getting more sleep Using calming activities to help alleviate sensory issues

Meeting and talking with students also emerged as an important strategy for overcoming barriers to academic achievement. These meetings provide an opportunity for students to share feelings or discuss issues they are having, as well as a venue for School Success workers to offer important guidance and information. Additionally, School Success workers described educating students and parents, by sharing information and providing skills, as a way to overcome barriers. This information and associated skills are often used to support the plans collaboratively developed to assist students and families. Finally, School Success workers provide referrals to help students and families resolve identified barriers that are beyond the scope of the School Success program.

Providing referrals and connecting students and families to needed community resources represent an integral part of the School Success program. In fact, from September 2014 to April 2015, School Success workers reported making 1140 referrals to community resources. While School Success workers refer students and families to a range of community resources, as summarized in Table 11, below, referrals were most commonly made to Education Services (N=196), followed by Private Practitioners/Counselors (N=195), Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency (N=136), the Department of Human Services (N=129), and Community Mental Health (N=128). The distribution of referrals may reflect the substantial documented barriers related to mental health and learning disability-related issues, as well as the high symptom levels of depression and anxiety found among students served.

Table 16. School Success Referrals: Connecting Students and Families to Community Resources

Referral Type	2014				2015				Total
	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	
Educational Services	22	33	21	28	25	16	27	24	196
Private Practitioner/Counselor	21	21	18	20	28	35	24	28	195
NEMCSA	17	16	16	17	21	14	16	19	136
Department of Human Services	11	20	25	16	17	13	13	14	129
Community Mental Health	18	24	18	18	14	16	11	9	128
School-Based Health Clinic	11	10	16	7	11	9	7	4	75
Family Court	5	5	4	12	12	9	8	8	63
Homeless Services	9	11	5	7	9	4	7	1	53
Child and Family Services	10	9	2	5	4	5	5	2	42
Mentoring	3	6	6	4	7	6	4	1	37
Salvation Army	5	7	7	3	1	2	3	1	29
Employment Services	5	5	3	4	3	0	0	1	21
Health Department	4	5	2	4	2	3	0	1	21
Shelter Services	1	2	2	3	0	1	2	1	12
Substance Abuse Services	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
Monthly Totals	143	174	146	148	154	133	127	115	1140

Figure 8. On average, School Success Provided 143 Referrals per Month During the 2014-2015 Academic Year, with Referrals Peaking in October 2014.



iv. Increasing Parental Involvement with the Parent’s Child’s School and Community

Parental involvement was assessed via parent self-report on the cross-sectional survey administered in May 2015 and School Success workers' monthly reports of parental involvement. The parent survey included a self-assessment of parental involvement. An established, nine-item measure of parental involvement asked parents to indicate whether or not they had engaged in activities related to their child, child's school, or community over the last three months.

Among this sample of parents whose children and families received School Success services, the most frequently endorsed activities included talking to a teacher about their child's progress in school (N=40; 93%); helping their child with homework (N=36; 83.7%); and attending a school play, concert, sporting event or other activity (N=26; 60.5%; see Table 17). These activities directly relate to the School Success program's areas of focus, as School Success workers help to facilitate engagement and interaction between parents and school administrators, teachers, and staff. School Success also helps parents to create plans to support their children, which often include homework help and checks.

It is also notable that 30 of 40 parents (75%) who completed the parental involvement measure positively endorsed engaging in three or more activities in the last three months.

Table 17. Parents' Self-Reported Involvement (N=43)

Item	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Have you talked to a teacher about your child's progress in school in the last three months?	40	93.0	3	7.0
Have you helped your child with his/her homework in the last three months?	36	83.7	7	16.3
Have you attended a school play, concert, sporting event, or other school activity in the last three months?	26	60.5	17	39.5
Have you helped with a special school project, school trip, or other school activity in the last three months?	18	41.9	25	58.1
Have you attended a PTA or other school meeting in the last three months?	12	27.9	31	72.1
Have you read a book or pamphlet about parenting or raising a child in the last three months?	12	27.9	31	72.1

Have you worked with a youth group, sports team, or club in the last three months?	9	20.9	34	79.1
Have you led a Sunday school class or other religious program in the last three months?	6	14.0	37	86.0
Have you attended a class about parenting or raising a child in the last three months?	3	7.0	40	93.0

Parental involvement was also assessed through thematic analysis of School Success workers' documented engagement with parents. This engagement demonstrates an increase in parent's involvement with their children and school (see Table 18).

Most commonly, School Success workers and parents collaborated to implement a plan to improve the student's behavior or academics. Through these plans, parents often employed strategies to help their child succeed, thereby increasing their involvement in their child's daily life both at home and at school. School Success workers also often provided parents with information and education about their child's needs. School Success worker reports indicate that parents sometimes are not sure how to get involved or what is needed to help their child. By offering this information, School Success helps to increase parental involvement.

Additionally, many workers noted that with the support of School Success, parents took an active role in participating in meetings with teachers, principals, and other providers in order to collaboratively address their child's needs. School Success workers also documented that parents increased their involvement with their children and other family members by attempting to better understand their perspectives. Workers were able to facilitate productive discussion or dialogue between parents and children, or provide small group sessions for families to share and discuss issues they were having at home. Finally, some parents sought referrals from School Success to help themselves or other family members.

Table 18. School Success Worker Reports of Involvement and Engagement Among Parents: September 2014 – April 2015	
Parental Involvement	Examples Documented by School Success Workers
Parent collaborated with worker to implement plan	Worked with mother to establish an earlier bedtime. Saw behavioral improvement with increased rest. Parent now laying out clothes and making sure to check daily for cleanliness.
Parent received information from worker about child's needs	Educated parents and child about the compulsory attendance laws Worked with guardian to explain importance of medical documentation on file to exempt student from participation.
Parents collaborated with school and worker	Met with parents, Oscoda Probation officer and principal.
Worker facilitated meeting with family	I arranged and facilitated a meeting with this student and his mother [so] that he could express how he was feeling.
Worker and parent met with provider	I attended a doctor's appointment with this student's parents, his CMH counselor, and his doctor from Ann Arbor.
Parents sought referrals from worker for themselves or family members other than their child	Parents seeking medical attention. Have appointments set up at U of M next month.

III. Discussion

The School Success Partnership Program initiated a large-scale expansion effort, doubling the number of Northeast Michigan counties served between the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 academic years. School Success met the state's requirement of expanding into four new counties by December 2014, with the majority of schools implementing the program in September 2014. As a result, School Success provided services to 124 students and their families in six additional partner schools during the 2014-2015 academic year. This represents a 23% increase in students served.

School Success employed 24 School Success workers who provided direct services to students and families over the course of the 2014-2015 academic year. All but one of the 24 School Success workers (96%) were retained and will continue serving children and families next year. This exemplary staff retention has important implications for continuity of services, as well as

the ability for School Success to build relationships and develop rapport with administrators, teachers, and staff at partner schools.

Evaluation findings also suggest high levels of satisfaction from multiple stakeholders engaged with the School Success program. Surveys of both Principals at partner schools and parents indicate that program implementation has met the needs of relevant stakeholder groups. Most notably, Principals reported that School Success offers services to children and families that otherwise would not be engaged by the school, and would likely fall through the cracks. Additionally, Principals noted that School Success workers collaborate closely with administrators, teachers, and staff, indicating that, on average, they interact with School Success workers on a daily basis. Parents also endorsed the ability of School Success to provide necessary academic support to their children, and particularly emphasized the ability of School Success to address their children's behavioral concerns. Parents viewed the use of behavioral management strategies as positively impacted their children's academic success as well as their own understanding of their children's needs.

Over the course of the 2014–2015 academic year, School Success served 537 students, the majority of whom were economically disadvantaged. Almost one-fifth of students served by School Success have Individualized Education Program and students in the School Success program screened positive for depression and anxiety at rates substantially higher than the national prevalence estimates for children and adolescents. This indicates that School Success serves students with a high level of need and with a myriad of risk factors for academic problems.

Students were most commonly referred to School Success by teachers and parents. The primary reasons for referral were academic concerns and attendance concerns. In order to support and assist students and families in addressing these concerns and increasing academic performance, School Success workers made over 28,000 contacts with students and families between September 2014 and April 2015. The majority of these contacts consisted of direct interaction with the students and families at the school. It is important to note that the structure of the School Success program likely decreases many substantial barriers faced by rural populations. Students and families do not have to secure transportation in order to receive services, as School Success workers meet students at school, schedule home visits as needed, and take students and

families to appointments. Further, the program is free for students and families, eliminating cost barriers, but does not have income-based eligibility criteria which lessens stigma that may be associated with utilizing public services among rural residents.

Students served by School Success during the 2014-2015 academic year made significant progress related to the program's performance objectives.

School Success engages with students who have chronic absenteeism, making contact with all students at partner schools who miss eight (8) days of school. Evaluation results suggest that this attendance-related intervention has a substantial impact on preventing petitions for truancy. In fact of the 2243 students the School Success program served for chronic absenteeism, on 1.5% of cases resulted in truancy petitions. It is estimated that School Success saved partner schools almost \$16 million by working with these students and keeping them in school. It is also important to note that most schools would not have the internal capacity to provide this type of intervention for students at risk for truancy.

Additionally, students continuously served by the School Success program during the 2014-2015 academic year experienced increased mean scores related to quality of academic performance, quality of math skills, reading skills, and quality of homework increased over time in School Success program. Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance found that this increase was statistically significant for all quality indicators of academic performance identified above.

Furthermore, School Success workers are actively identifying barriers to students' academic achievement and linking students and families to community resources needed to resolve barriers beyond the scope of their program. Between September 2014 and April 2015, School Success workers made 1140 referrals to community resources on behalf of students and their families. Referrals were most frequently made to Educational Services, Private Practitioners and Counselors, and Community Mental Health. Though anticipated, evaluation findings suggest that, on average, students served by School Success experienced significant decreases in symptoms of both depression and anxiety. This result requires further attention, as it is not clear if the decrease is related to direct services provided by School Success or due to appropriate referrals to address behavioral health needs.

Finally, School Success is actively engaged with parents and supporting them as they increase involvement with their child, the child's school, and community. A cross-sectional post-test survey of parents suggest high rates of self-reported parental involvement, particularly related to activities that directly support their children's academic success (e.g., help with homework; meetings with teachers; attending school events). In fact, 75% of parents surveyed reported participation in three or more activities in support of their children over the last three months. School Success workers also reported consistent interactions with parents that demonstrated increased involvement from September 2014 to April 2015. School Success is actively helping parents to identify strategies to support their children's academic success and providing support in attending meetings and engaging with the child's school and community resources.

a. Limitations

While this preliminary evaluation report has many strengths, including the mixed methods research design and the use of established, empirically validated outcome measures, there are some limitations that need to be addressed.

One of these limitations relates to the measures. The performance objectives sought to assess increase in academic achievement based on grades, with an emphasis on math and reading. However, individual schools partnering with School Success do not consistently employ the same grading system. This is in part due to the fact that schools serving different grade levels (e.g., elementary v. high school) utilize developmentally appropriate assessment of academic performance. For example, high schools often use grade point averages to report grades; though weighting and ranges may vary across schools, while elementary schools commonly report rating categories such as proficient or satisfactory. Given the age range of students and different systems for grading across partner schools and districts (e.g., GPA; letter grade; rating category such as proficient, satisfactory, etc), it was not possible to use grades as an outcome measure. Additionally, the performance objective related to parental involvement was assessed via a post-test survey of a random sample of parents. Though the parent survey utilized an established measure of parental involvement, the cross-sectional results do not allow for the assessment of change in parental involvement over time receiving School Success service.

Second, results assessing performance objectives related to attendance and academic performance are limited to an analytic sample of students who entered the School Success program in September 2014 and were continuously served through April 2015. This limitation is due to the fact that the analytic strategy, Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance, while appropriate, cannot account for missing data. In order to best understand the impact the program had on students over this time point, it was necessary to restrict the analytic sample to the students continuously served. However, it is also likely that students who received services throughout the academic year had greater needs than other students served. Therefore, the impact the program has on performance objectives may be underestimated.

IV. Next Steps

The Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group conducted a comprehensive process and outcome evaluation assessing the School Success Partnership program's expansion effort as well as its impact on state-identified performance objectives over the 2014-2015 academic year. This evaluation built upon a previous evaluation in which the evaluation team retrospectively assessed School Success outcomes between 2009-2011. Throughout the evaluation processes, the evaluation team has worked closely with School Success administrators in order to develop the program's internal capacity to assess program outcomes moving forward. Given that results suggest successful implementation of the School Success program expansion effort, as well as positive outcomes related to all performance objectives, it is recommended that School Success utilizes the resources developed during the evaluation process, including evaluation forms and standardized measures, to engage in program monitoring and routinely examine primary outcomes, as identified by performance objectives, as part of standard practice. At this time, the evaluation team does not recommend on-going formal evaluation by an independent evaluator. However, additional formal evaluation should be considered if the School Success program is implemented outside of the rural Northeast Michigan communities it was designed and developed to serve or if substantial changes are made to the program's service delivery model.

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School Success Partnership Program

a division of

NEMCSA

Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency, Inc.

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I. Background and Purpose

a. School Success Partnership Program Overview

The Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency Inc.'s School Success Partnership Program (School Success) serves school-aged children and youth from Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade who are at-risk for academic failure. Students served by School Success are referred to the program due to academic need, poor attendance, aggressive behavior, crisis situations, withdrawn behavior, or being untended. School Success Liaisons provide ongoing assistance to students, parents, and teachers by managing students' problem areas with specific short- and long-term goals. Students with additional needs are provided supplementary referrals to community resources, such as educational services, community mental health clinics, shelters, private practitioners, the Department of Health and Human Service, and Child and Family Services.

School Success began approximately two decades ago in response to community awareness that school failure was a complex, multi-faceted issue linked to chronic poverty, unemployment, juvenile delinquency, domestic violence, teen pregnancy, child abuse and neglect, and a lack of parent education. Students served by School Success experience a variety of issues and conditions that affect school performance and create barriers to academic success including family issues (e.g., divorce, unemployment, death, etc.), attendance issues, behavioral issues, transitional issues, and unmet mental health and/or medical needs. The program collaboratively works with students and their families, school administrators, teachers and staff, and community agencies in order to address presenting issues and meet students' needs. As a result of participating in School Success, students are expected to have increased school attendance; improved academic performance; an increase in parental involvement with their child's education; and family barriers identified and removed for student success.

School Success has become an integral resource for students, families, and schools in Northeast Michigan. As of the 2014-2015 Academic Year, School Success was active in 23 public school locations within eight (8) Northeast Michigan counties, including Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan,

Iosco, Montmorency, Oscoda, Otsego, and Presque Isle. A 2014-2015 evaluation by the University of Michigan Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group, assessing the School Success Program, showed that approximately 62% of students participating in School Success demonstrated academic improvement. Parental involvement data indicated that 75% of parents participated in three or more school activities directly related to supporting their child's academics. School Success program administrators recently sought to extend their reach, with the goal of providing services to help more students in Northeast Michigan. Given the commitment to students and families and the positive impact that the School Success Program has had in Northeast Michigan, the State of Michigan recently allocated another \$150,000 to the already allocated \$300,000 equaling a total of \$450,000 for the support of existing program sites and expansion to three (3) new counties throughout 2015-2016.

b. Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to assess the current School Success Partnership Program and its expansion during the 2015-2016 Academic Year. The State of Michigan allocated \$450,000, 29% of the School Success Program's \$1.6 million annual budget, to support exiting programming and expansion efforts. This nine-month report intends to (1) document the support of existing schools with a School Success presence and expansion of the School Success Program into three new counties in Northeast Michigan; and (2) assess the impact of the School Success Partnership Program on four key performance objectives identified by the State in all program sites.

The performance objectives to be measured and reported include:

1. Increasing school attendance and decreasing chronic absenteeism;
2. Increasing academic performance based on grades with emphasis on math and reading;
3. Identifying barriers to attendance and success and connecting families with resources to reduce these barriers; and
4. Increasing parent involvement in child's school and community.

This report presents results based on School Success Program data from September 2015 through December 2015.

II. Methodology

a. Data Collection

Data collection for the progress report was conducted through initial intake reports, exit reports, and monthly case reports completed by the School Success Liaisons.

The outcomes reported used School Success Liaison data collected between September 2015 and December 2015 including; monthly data reports, initial intake and exit reports and Results-oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) reports. School Success Liaisons completed these monthly forms for every formal caseload student served from the date they entered the program to the time they exited the program.

School Success administrators then entered, compiled and analyzed all the data. The administrative data includes well-established, validated measures to assess student academic performance, attendance, parental involvement and removal of barriers through community collaboration.

b. Data Analysis

Monthly comparisons will indicate improvements in Performance Objectives.

III. Results

a. Expansion of the School Success Partnership Program

The School Success Partnership Program has expanded the program into three (3) new counties within Northeast Michigan: Crawford, Ogemaw and Roscommon. School Success implemented its program in four (4) sites within the three (3) county expansion area as well as one (1) new site in an existing county between September 2015 and December 2015. As of December 31, 2015, School Success was serving 490 students, 75 of whom attended one of the expansion sites (see Figure 1/Table 1).

Figure 1. School Success Existing and Expansion Sites: 2015-2016

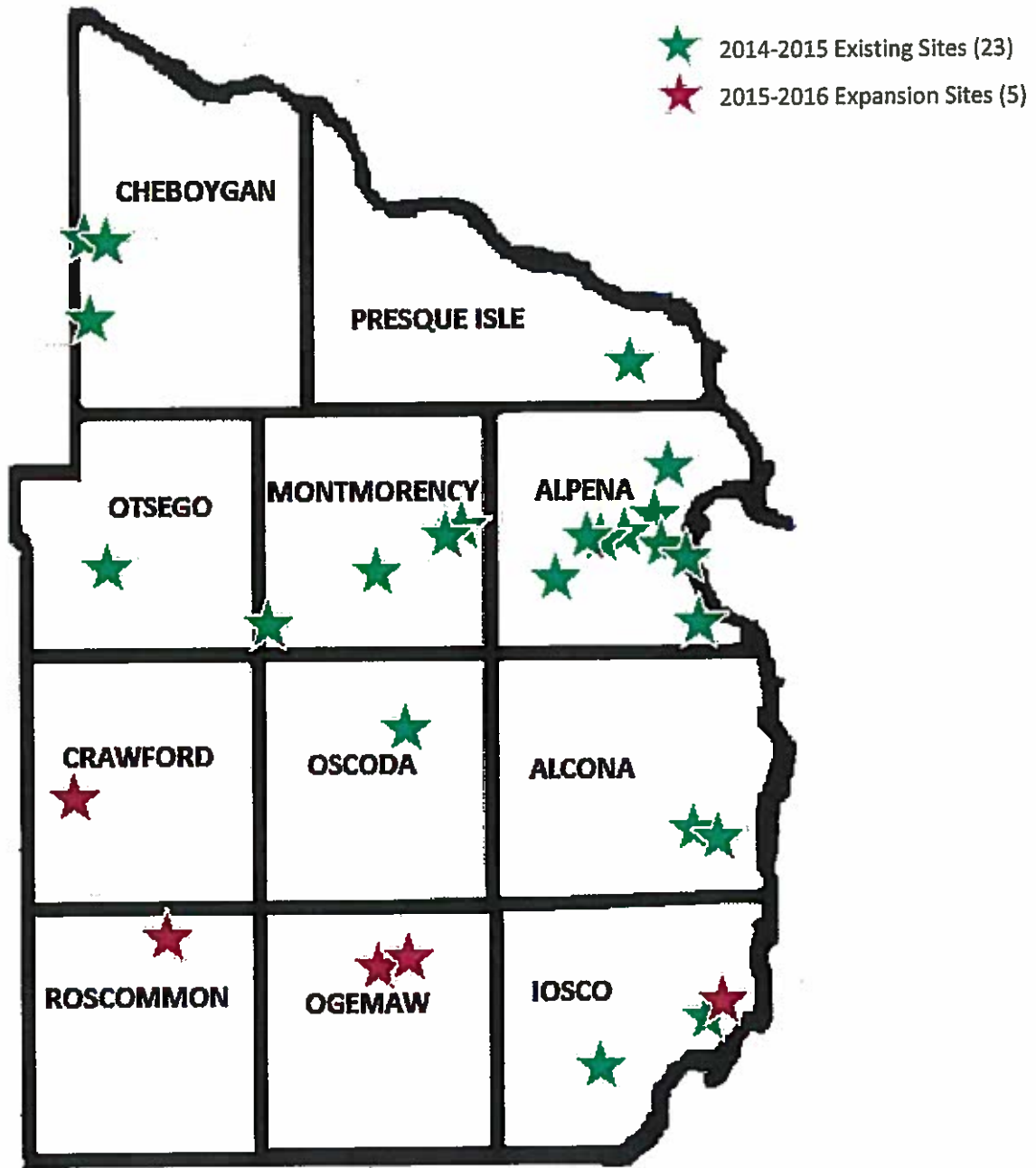


Table 1. School Success Partnership Program Sites: September - December 2015				
County	School Name	Number of Students in the School	Number of Students in School Success	Date Became School Success Site
Alpena	Alpena High School	364	21	--
	Besser Elementary	426	15	--
	Ella White Elementary	471	27	--
	Hinks Elementary	161	15	--
	Lincoln Elementary	175	15	--
	Sanborn Elementary	179	15	--
	Thunder Bay Jr. High	885	31	--
	Wilson Elementary	224	21	--
Cheboygan	Inland Lakes Elementary	314	16	--
	Inland Lakes Schools	439	18	--
	Wolverine Schools	280	16	--
Montmorency	Atlanta Schools	258	17	--
	Hillman Elementary	249	27	--
	Hillman Jr/Sr High	226	18	--
	Lewiston Elementary	177	19	--
Otsego	Johannesburg Middle School	306	18	--
Expansion Sites 2014-2015				
Alcona	Alcona Elementary	372	16	9/2/2014
	Alcona Jr/Sr High	370	17	9/2/2014
Iosco	Hale Schools	240	15	9/2/2014
	Richardson Elementary School	654	23	11/3/2014
Oscoda	Fairview Schools	304	20	12/1/2014
Presque Isle	Posen Schools	235	15	9/2/2014
Expansion Sites 2015-2016				
Crawford	Grayling Elementary/Jr High	1041	4	8/31/2015
Iosco	Oscoda High School	541	16	8/31/2015
Ogemaw	Surline Elementary/Jr High	971	18	8/31/2015
	Ogemaw Heights Jr/Sr High	923	20	8/31/2015
Roscommon	Roscommon Middle School	329	17	8/31/2015

i. Identifying and Collaborating with Expansion Sites

School Success administrators implemented rigorous outreach efforts to identify new counties, and schools within those counties, for the program's expansion. In order to meet the goals of

expanding into three (3) new counties (five new sites), School Success administrators directly contacted four (4) school districts in three (3) Northeast Michigan counties. Crawford, Ogemaw and Roscommon counties were selected for expansion as they were the last three (3) counties in Prosperity Region 3 without School Success programming and of these counties all but one was in alignment with Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency Inc.'s (NEMCSA) service area. An additional site was added in Iosco County due to the student/liason ratio. Given the persistent poverty and high unemployment rates, this rural region of the state is in high need of resources and programming aimed at improving the quality of life of children and families. As NEMCSA remains the School Success Program's home, it is important for School Success administrators and liaisons to be able to engage and collaborate with one another. Finally, one of the most common reasons students leave the School Success Program is that they move out of the district into a new district that does not have the program as a resource. However, School Success students frequently move to nearby districts. Therefore, increasing the availability of the School Success, program in the region increases the opportunity for continuity of services for these students.

Of the four (4) school districts in the three (3) counties that School Success reached out to, three (3) school districts became partners and have implemented the School Success Program this academic year. Before reaching out to potential expansion sites, School Success administrators researched the districts, in terms of their geographical catchment area and the number of students, and documented needs as demonstrated by KIDS Count information (Annie E. Casey Foundation) and Michigan's Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI). School Success administrators' strategy for outreach to potential expansion sites consisted of email, postal mail, telephone, and in-person contact to superintendents and principals. Administrators also presented information about School Success to School Boards and County Boards of Commissioners. Many of the school districts approached already knew about the program from word of mouth and media attention. Once the planned expansion of the School Success Program became public knowledge, some schools outside of the designated expansion area contacted the Program Director and meetings were conducted at the school request. School Success administrators establish partnerships on a first come, first served basis.

Once the three (3) counties and five (5) expansion sites were identified, School Success began reaching out to teachers and staff, as well as parents, to inform them about the program and its services. School Success administrators began introducing the program to teachers and staff in multiple venues. Parents were informed via School Open Houses held prior to the first day of school, Parent Teacher Organization meetings, school newsletters, and newspaper articles.

ii. Hiring and Training Additional School Success Workers

The School Success Program expansion resulted in the hiring of five (5) new School Success Liaisons. This included five (5) full-time, part-year School Success Liaisons recruited through advertisements in local newspapers, on the NEMCSA website and by word of mouth. The positions required, at minimum, a Bachelor's degree in a human service field. Experience with at-risk populations was preferred. School Success program administrators also looked for individuals knowledgeable about and invested in their communities. Newly identified partner schools assisted with the interview process.

In preparation for the expansion, School Success administrators described making substantial changes to their employee training process. School Success administrators and liaisons collaboratively developed a formal employee handbook, which became the basis for a full-day training, and initiated a mentorship program to assist and support new workers. All newly hired School Success Liaisons were paired with a mentor, who was an experienced School Success Liaison. Before serving students, new School Success employees shadowed their mentors, and once new School Success Liaisons started serving students, mentors went on periodic site visits to provide guidance and ensure the program was implemented as intended. School Success Liaisons also received the standard new employee training from NEMCSA, including workplace violence training, as well as standard training on School Success Program requirements. On-going training and support is provided to School Success Liaisons through monthly staff meetings, job-specific conferences and mentorships.

iii. Strengths of Expansion Effort

The School Success Program was able to expand into three (3) new counties within the first three months of the 2015-2016 Academic Year as well as adding support to an already existing

school. The expansion resulted in a 15% increase in the number of students served by School Success.

Administrators spent a substantial amount of time learning about communities before implementing their program in new sites, which helped create new partnerships and successful transitions into new schools. In fact, the Program Director hired another Coordinator to do substantial research on each new county and presented this research to superintendents in those counties as well as to state leaders such as Mr. Tim Becker (Chief Deputy Director DHHS) and Mr. Steve Yager (Executive Director, Children's Services Agency, DHHS.)

Additionally, School Success administrators recognize the program's local reputation as being an important strength of the expansion. Given that School Success is well known in the community and has been shown to improve outcomes for the students and families served, many schools and districts were eager to partner with the program and provide a proven, needed service to their students. Rural communities in Michigan have limited access to services and to dollars for those services, so being able to implement a known commodity with a track record of success was important for the new service sites.

The School Success Program was developed in the rural context, and is therefore responsive to unique needs of communities in rural Michigan. Particularly, School Success provides services to students and families primarily at school, with home visits as needed. Therefore, the School Success Program lessens transportation barriers, as the ability to participate is not contingent on the ability of parents and students to secure transportation to and from services. Further, School Success does not utilize income-based eligibility criteria. This lessens stigma among rural populations that place high value on independence and self-reliance.

Finally, another positive impact of the School Success Program is its presence in all 11 counties of Prosperity Region 3. For those families who are more transient, moving from one school to the next or one county to the next, accessing the program or continuing School Success services means students can continue to succeed no matter where they live. School Success Liaisons are able to transfer student case files and information to each other thereby eliminating communication barriers between schools. This continuity of services and lifeline between

School Success Liaisons creates a stronger program and smoother transition for students and families as they move.

iv. Challenges of Expansion Effort

The major challenge of the expansion effort was securing funding from partner schools. This was primarily due to the timing of the expansion in relation to budget years. When School Success partners with a school, both NEMCSA and the school provide funds to support the program. The School Success expansion effort began in the summer of 2015, and as the new budget year for schools began on July 1, 2015, it was difficult for expansion sites to readjust their budgets in order to partner with School Success. Schools were motivated to implement School Success, so the expansion sites worked to allocate monies to support the program. In some cases, schools were able to utilize Title I and other county funding streams to support School Success. The need to modify budgets that were already in place complicated the preparation of budgets, and subsequently complicated billing and contract information, at each new expansion site.

Finally, although School Success recognizes that a ratio of 450 students per School Success Liaison creates better services for students and families, the Crawford-AuSable School District in Crawford County was only able to provide funding for one liaison. Unfortunately, school administration expected NEMCSA's School Success Liaison to work with over 1000 students. School Success Program administration requested a compromise to focus services on the 600 students located at the elementary level. Since no resolution could be reached, the program contract was dissolved. School Success administrators are still working towards obtaining enough funding to put two School Success Liaisons in the school district to resolve this issue.

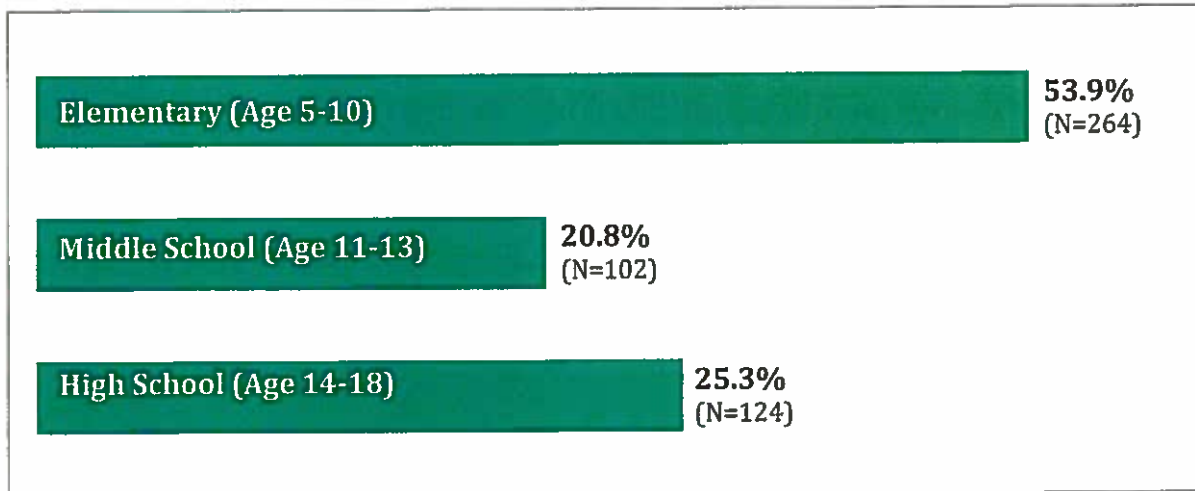
b. Students Served

i. Student Characteristics

As previously stated, between September and December 2015, the School Success Program has served 490 students on a formal caseload basis and served 908 students informally across 29 schools within eleven counties. More than half of the students served (N=264; 54%) by School

Success are in elementary school, while 25% (N=124) are in high school. Slightly more than 20% of students served are in middle school (N=102); see Figure 2. The majority of students served by School Success are male (58%).

Figure 2. School Success Students by Age



Though the School Success Program does not have income-based eligibility criteria, 77% of students served are eligible for free and reduced lunch. In the State of Michigan, 46.7% of students are eligible for free and reduced lunch (Michigan Department of Education, 2014), suggesting a substantially higher proportion of students served by the School Success Program are economically disadvantaged when compared to students across the state.

ii. Reason for Referral

Almost two-thirds (65.3%; N=320) of the students who entered the School Success Program between September and December 2015 were referred for services by their teachers (43.1%; N=211) or parents (22.2%; N=109). School Success Liaisons and other community partners, including probation officers, school counselors, family members other than parents, and school secretaries were responsible for slightly over 26% of referrals. School principals referred the balance of the student participants which was nearly 9% of students. See Table 4.

Referral Source	Total	
	N	%
Teacher	211	43.1%
Parent	109	22.2%
School Success Worker/Other Partners	128	26.1%
Principal	42	8.6%

This academic year to date, students were most commonly referred to School Success for academic concerns (N=306), followed by crisis (N=129), attendance concerns (N=124), and aggressive behavior (N=121). Almost as many students were referred due to withdrawn behavior (N=100), as to the opposite, aggressive. Fewer students were referred as untended (N=47) or other (N=38). It is important to note that students were referred to the School Success Program for more than one reason so the reasons for referrals total more than the number of students served (N=490). See Table 5.

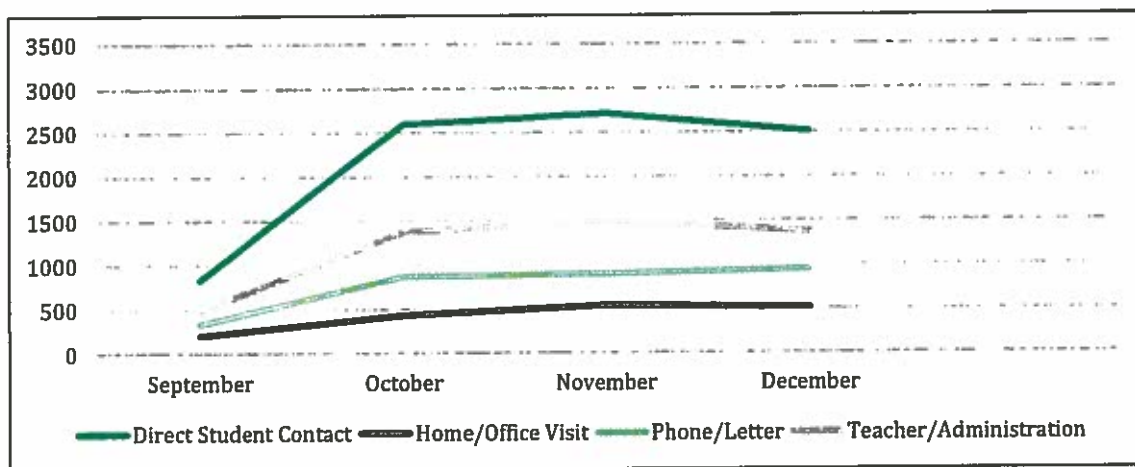
Reasons for Referral	Total
	N
Academic Concerns	306
Crisis	129
Attendance Concerns	124
Aggressive Behavior	121
Withdrawn	100
Untended	47
Other	38

iii. Contacts

From September to December 2015, School Success Liaisons had 18,153 contacts related to students they serve. See Figure 3. Almost half of these contacts (N=8,661) were direct, school-

based interactions, in which the School Success Liaison met with the student at school to achieve Action Plan goals. Parents and/or guardians meeting with the School Success Liaison made up nearly 10% (N=1,705) of the School Success contacts. Almost 17% of School Success contacts (N=3058) consisted of phone calls and letters related to the case. These calls and letters were direct contacts with parents and sometimes consisted of emails, text messages, and other forms of social media. Contacts with teachers and administrators comprised approximately 26% (N=4729) of related student case interactions.

Figure 3. School Success Program Contacts: September - December 2015



c. Performance Objectives

i. Increasing School Attendance and Decreasing Chronic Absenteeism

School Success believes that consistent school attendance is the single most important factor in making sure a child receives the best education possible. Since its inception, the School Success Program has worked with school systems, law enforcement agencies, court systems and other agencies to address student attendance. As a result of this belief and community collaboration, the School Success Program has developed and implemented a process to address this concern.

School Success Liaisons monitor attendance in their respective buildings and if a student has eight (8) absences the parent is notified by the liaison through a letter or documented phone call. Should the student continue to miss and have 12 absences, the parent is again notified by

mail and the liaison continues to work informally with the parent to address the truancy and remove any barriers that may exist. Should the student reach 15 absences, a face-to-face meeting is held with the parent, student, the building principal and the assigned law enforcement liaison. At this meeting, a formal action plan is developed, signed and a release of information is also signed by the parent so any other professionals involved may provide information. If the plan is not followed, local family court personnel will conduct a Preliminary Inquiry to attempt to gain compliance. If necessary, formal court action through a petition and formal court proceedings may be requested if truancy continues.

From September through December of 2015, 612 first letters were sent out to parents indicating an attendance concern. With contact and interventions from the School Success Liaison, only 170 second letters were necessary and of those only 59 third letters were needed – a 90% decrease of students with truancy concerns. With continued planning and interventions, only 13 Preliminary Inquiries have been held resulting in a 98% decrease in the number of students identified to date with truancy concerns. Only one (1) student identified as having attendance concerns has been petitioned to the court system formally for truancy. It is a protocol that works and is based on building relationships between the school and home and not on punitive measures. Our final report in June will chart each individual school as well as total number of letters sent.

Of the 490 formal School Success cases, 124 had attendance related referrals. Of these referrals, 112 were identified as having an attendance concern along with other referral reasons and 12 referrals were for attendance concerns alone. Of those 12 referrals for only attendance reasons, six (6) cases have been closed – five (5) showing improvement and successful completion of their case plan and one (1) moving out of the area prior to closing.

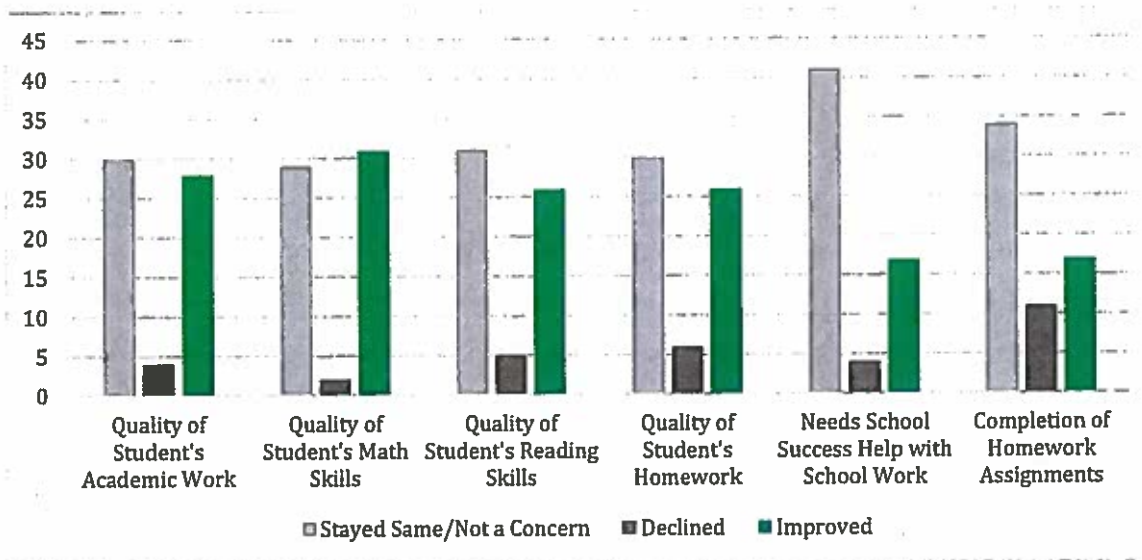
In conjunction with monitoring student attendance, as part of the monthly reporting process to School Success administrators, School Success Liaisons were also asked to report on increased student attendance in class. Of the 490 students in the School Success Program, 45% (N=221) of students stayed in class more often, 42% (N=206) students were not a concern and less than 8% (N=38) of students were observed as not being in class more often. Ensuring that students stay in class more often is just as important as having regular school attendance. School Success

Liaisons approach class attendance using a team approach with staff, student and parents to determine the reasons for class absences and assist in creating a plan to improve student outcomes.

ii. Increasing Academic Performance Based on Grades with Emphasis on Math and Reading

Results suggest that of the 62 formal cases closed to date, 45% (N=28) of School Success students demonstrated an improvement in the overall quality of their academic work with 48% (N=30) either staying the same or not a concern and only four (4) students not improving between September and December 2015. Additionally, 50% (N=31) of School Success students improved the quality of their math skills, 47% (N=29) stayed the same or were not a concern and two (2) students did not improve. Quality of student reading skills improved by 42% (N=26) with 50% (N=31) of students staying the same or not a concern and five (5) students showing no improvement. Furthermore, completion of homework assignments improved by 27% (N=17) and quality of homework completed improved by 42% (N=26). It is also important to note that two thirds, 66% (N=41), of students did not need School Success Liaison help with school work and only 27% (N=17) required School Success assistance with school work. See Figure 4.

Figure 4. Academic Performance: September - December 2015



Further, the data indicates that of those students who showed a decline in academic performance targets, five (5) students moved to other schools or school districts after the initial intake was complete. The School Success Action Plan was unable to be implemented due to family relocation. In addition, two (2) students transferred to Alternative Ed programs, one (1) student was referred for Special Education evaluation, one (1) student successfully transferred in-district, and one (1) student was placed in foster care in another county.

Student grades, including overall GPA and grades in Math and Reading will be assessed as an indicator of academic performance for the final report in June 2016.

iii. Identifying Barriers to Attendance/Success and Connecting Families with Resources to Reduce these Barriers

Each month, School Success Liaisons document barriers to academic success experienced by the students they serve. Historically, data suggests that family issues, behavior issues, and mental health or learning disability-related issues present substantial barriers to academic achievement for students served by School Success. This school year was no exception. Academic and crisis issues, the top two reasons for referral to the program, emerged as barriers to student success as well.

Once School Success Liaisons identify barriers to a students' academic achievement, they utilize a team approach to resolve barriers and increase the students' ability to succeed in school. This team includes, and is not limited to, school personnel, the student, parent(s) and other community resources. The most common approach to resolving barriers involves creating a plan or system with the student and/or parent or guardian. The plans often consist of strategies that students and parents can employ to overcome barriers. For example, a School Success Liaison worked with an anxious student to reduce anxiety by creating a plan that involves a "special job" to do when the student arrives each morning thus reducing the anxiety and increasing a positive atmosphere and attitude between school and student.

Meeting and talking with students also emerged as an important strategy for overcoming barriers to academic achievement. These meetings provide an opportunity for students to share feelings or discuss issues they are having, as well as provide a venue for School Success Liaisons

to offer important guidance and information. Additionally, School Success Liaisons described educating students and parents, by sharing information and building skills, as a way to overcome barriers. This information and associated skills are often used to support the plans collaboratively developed to assist students and families. Finally, School Success Liaisons provide referrals to help students and families resolve identified barriers that are beyond the scope of the School Success Program. See Table 6.

Table 6. School Success Referrals/Contacts: Connecting Students and Families to Community Resources September - December 2015	
Referral Type	Total
	N
Education Services	174
Private Practitioner/Counselor	152
Department of Human Services	146
Community Mental Health	89
School-Based Health Clinic	82
NEMCSA Programs NOT including School Success	73
Homeless Services	53
Mentoring	42
Child and Family Services	32
Employment Services	17
Salvation Army	16
Shelter Services	5
Substance Abuse Services	3
Other	336
Overall	1,258

Providing referrals and connecting students and families to needed community resources represents an integral part of the School Success Program. In fact, from September to December 2015, School Success Liaisons reported making 1,258 either referrals and/or direct contacts to community resources. While School Success connects with a wide range of community resources, as summarized in Table 6 above, School Success students were most commonly referred to and/or liaisons directly connected with Education Services (N=174), followed by Private Practitioners/Counselors (N=152) and the Department of Health and Human Services

(N=146). This may reflect the barriers related to mental health, learning disability-related issues, and crises in the family found among students served. These barriers often prevent student success in the classroom and emerge in poor school attendance, poor class attendance and poor grades.

iv. Increasing Parental Involvement in Child's School and Community

School Success Liaisons reported engaging with parents 4,763 times from September 2015 through December 2015 through home visits, office visits, phone calls, letters and school meetings. Most commonly, School Success Liaisons and parents collaborated to implement a plan to improve the student's behavior or academics. Through these plans, parents often employed strategies to help their child succeed, thereby increasing their involvement in their child's daily life both at home and at school. School Success Liaisons often provided parents with information and education about their child's needs. Liaison reports indicate that parents sometimes are not sure how to get involved or what is needed to help their child. By offering this information, School Success helps to increase parental involvement.

Additionally, many liaisons noted that with the support of School Success, parents took an active role in participating in meetings with teachers, principals, and other providers in order to collaboratively address their child's needs. School Success Liaisons also documented that parents increased their involvement with their children and other family members by attempting to better understand their perspectives. Liaisons were able to facilitate productive discussion or dialogue between parents and children, or provide small group sessions for families to share and discuss issues they were having at home. Finally, some parents sought referrals from School Success to help themselves or other family members.

Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency requires all of its programs to complete annual Results-Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) reports. The system requires each of the 38 programs operated through NEMCSA to set milestones to achieve and then compares annual accomplishments to projections. The School Success Program uses their performance objectives as milestones so that they measure increased communication between home and school; increased school attendance; and setting and achieving action plan goals. For each

milestone a projection of how many children/families will achieve that goal is set at the beginning of the school year. Progress is monitored throughout the year and then annual achievements are compared to annual projections. The School Success Program has met or exceeded their performance targets (within the range of +/- 10%) for every year in the program's history. Some programs collect data quarterly to assist in the annual roll-up. Because School Success is a school-year based program, they have set their quarters to be September-November; December-February; and March-May.

Documentation from the first quarter ROMA report (September-November 2015) indicates that while in the School Success Program approximately 89% of parents identified family needs, developed an action plan and agreed to the action plan in conjunction with the School Success Liaison. Furthermore, 82% of parents advocated for their child in at least one school meeting and 65% of parents participated in an initial home visit. Since this reporting is done quarterly and only two reports are required for the State, the balance of the data collected will be reflected in June's year-end report.

In order to determine the extent of the parental engagement by families participating in the School Success Program, School Success Liaisons also documented school activities each family participated in at least one time as well as the number of families participating in three or more school activities. Data demonstrates that, of the 490 students/families participating in the School Success Program, slightly more than 85% (N=418) of parents participated in a home/office visit. In addition, 57% (N= 279) attended parent/teacher conferences, almost 38% (N=185) attended a holiday dinner or program, and slightly less than 25% (N=120) met with the principal or teacher to address student concerns. Other (N=85) school activities were defined as participation in classroom activities, dropping off homework/medication, transportation, school sporting events, etc. This engagement directly demonstrates an increase in parental involvement with their children and school. See Table 7.

Table 7. Parent Participated in at least one of the following:	
School Activity	Total
	N
Home Visit/Office Visit	418
P/T Conferences	279
Holiday Dinner/Program	185
Principal/Teacher Mtg.	120
Signed Planner 50%	80
Attendance Mtg.	58
Signed Reading Log 50%	48
504/IEP Mtg.	45
Field Trip	10
PAC/Parent Forum Mtg.	4
Other	85

Further, data indicates that 54% (N=266) of families participated in three (3) or more school-related activities to increase their child's academic success. Given that parental involvement tremendously increases the likelihood for student success, encouraging parents to get involved is a key component of the School Success Program model.

III. Discussion

The School Success Program initiated a large scale expansion effort, doubling the number of Northeast Michigan counties served (from 4 counties to 8 counties) in between 2013-2015. The School Success Program met the State requirement of expanding into four new counties by December 2014, with the majority of schools implementing the program in September 2014. In 2015, the School Success Program intensified its expansion efforts once again. State funding increased from \$300,000 in 2014 to add an additional \$150,000 totaling \$450,000 for 2015-2016. With the increased funding, the State tasked the School Success Program with supporting existing schools as well as expanding into the three remaining counties (Crawford, Ogemaw and Roscommon) in Prosperity Region 3 that did not already have a School Success presence. As a result, the School Success Program has served students and families in five (5) additional schools, and increased the number of students served by 15% (N=75). As of December 2015,

School Success was serving 490 students, the majority of whom are economically disadvantaged with 77% of those students in the School Success Program qualifying for free and reduced lunch.

Students were most commonly referred to the School Success Program by parents and teachers (65.3%; N=320). The primary reasons for referral were academic concerns and crisis concerns. In order to support and assist students and families in addressing these concerns and increasing academic performance, in the four short months between September 2015 and December 2015, School Success Liaisons made over 13,000 contacts with students and families. The majority of these contacts consisted of direct interaction with the students and families either at the school or at the student's home. It is important to note that the structure of the School Success Program likely decreases many substantial barriers faced by rural populations. Students and families do not have to secure transportation in order to receive services, as School Success Liaisons meet students at school, schedule home visits as needed, and take students and families to appointments. Further, the program is free for students and families, eliminating cost barriers, but does not have income-based eligibility criteria which lessens stigma that may be associated with utilizing public services. This stigma may be exacerbated by the rural nature of service delivery where everyone knows everybody.

As of December 2015, students who had been served by the School Success Program since September 2015 were making significant progress related to the program's four performance objectives (1. improved attendance; 2. improved math and reading scores; 3. increased parental involvement; and 4. identifying barriers to success and connecting families with resources to reduce these barriers). Specifically, at this point, not even half way through the school year, schools collaborating with the School Success Program have seen a 98% improvement in truancy rates.

Additionally, of formal cases closed to date, 45% of School Success students demonstrated improvement in the overall quality of their academic performance, with 50% showing improvement in math skills and 42% showing improvement in reading skills.

Furthermore, School Success Liaisons are actively identifying barriers to students' academic achievement and linking students and families to community resources needed to resolve

barriers beyond the scope of the program. Between September 2015 and December 2015, School Success Liaisons made 1,258 referrals/contacts to community resources on behalf of students and their families. Referrals were most frequently made to Educational Services, private practitioners/counselors, and Department of Health and Human Services.

Finally, School Success is strongly engaged with parents to help and support them as they increase involvement with their child, their child's school, and their community. School Success Liaisons reported parents engaged in 1,332 school-related events that demonstrated increased parental involvement from September to December 2015. School Success is actively helping parents to identify strategies to support their children's academic success and providing support in attending meetings and engaging with the child's school and community resources.

a. Limitations

One limitation relates to the measures of this report. The performance objectives seek to assess an increase in academic achievement based on grades, with an emphasis on math and reading. Given the time period this report covered, improvement could only be documented on those cases that have been closed between September 2015 and December 2015. Along with that limitation, elementary students no longer receive letter grades and do not have grade point averages. Academic success will be determined by the number system now given to record student achievement with 1= Not Proficient to 4=Advanced.

Additional limitations are found within the program itself in regards to securing adequate funding to serve the large number of schools and students located in such a vast geographical area. Along with that limitation comes the number of students to School Success Liaison ratio (450:1) which is currently being exceeded in some schools due to lack of staff and/or funding.

Other constraints to the program are found in the lack of appropriate, affordable trainings for School Success Liaisons. Trainings that would be beneficial to liaison staff would include such topics as: childhood mental health issues, abuse and neglect, childhood trauma, and motivational strategies. Rarely are these types of trainings offered in the Prosperity Region 3 area.

IV. Next Steps

As the School Success administration continues assessing the School Success Partnership Program over the next six months, we plan to take the following steps:

1. Continuing to collect monthly data.
2. Surveying school principals in expansion sites as to their satisfaction of the impact of the program.
3. Randomly surveying a statistical sample number of parents regarding their involvement and perception of barriers to their child's success utilizing the Results Oriented Management and Accountability performance-based system in each School Success location.
4. Obtaining year-end data related to the School Success truancy program to be reported in June 2016.
5. Completing and submitting the second required report to the state by June 30, 2016.

References

Michigan Department of Education. (2014). Free and reduced lunch counts. Retrieved from: <https://www.mischooldata.org/Other/DataFiles/StudentCounts/HistoricalFreeAndReducedLunchCounts.aspx>