



Student-Based Best Practices

Personalized Learning

- **Project-Based Learning:** Implementing project-based learning initiatives can encourage active participation and critical thinking, making learning more relevant and engaging for students.
 - [PBL for ELL Students.](#)
 - [PBL for High School Students.](#)
 - [PBL General Examples.](#)
- **Extracurricular Activities and Clubs:** Expanding extracurricular offerings, including clubs and sports teams, can provide students with diverse opportunities to pursue their interests and passions outside of the regular curriculum.
 - [Extracurricular examples.](#)
 - [Club examples.](#)

Attendance Supports

- **Trauma-Informed Attendance Policies:** Some schools have adopted trauma-informed approaches to address attendance issues. They recognize that students may face various traumas and challenges outside of school that affect their attendance. By providing counseling services, mental health support and a compassionate approach to attendance, schools can create a more supportive environment that encourages regular attendance.
- **Culturally Responsive Attendance Policies:** Schools have implemented attendance policies that consider the cultural backgrounds and circumstances of their students. They recognize that cultural practices and traditions may impact attendance patterns. Instead of punishing such absences, they work with families to find solutions that promote regular attendance while respecting cultural values.
- **Incentive-Based Attendance Programs:** Some schools have introduced incentive-based attendance programs to motivate students to attend regularly. These programs may include rewards, recognition or participation in extracurricular activities for students who maintain good attendance records. By positively reinforcing attendance, schools can increase student engagement and reduce absenteeism. It is important to note that culturally responsive attendance policies should still apply and not be replaced by incentive-based attendance programs.
- **Community Partnership Initiatives:** Schools have collaborated with community organizations and agencies to address attendance challenges. By involving community members and stakeholders in attendance improvement efforts, schools can create a broader support network for students and families facing attendance barriers.

Understanding Context - Student-Based Best Practices

Attendance Supports continued

- **Flexible Attendance Policies:** Schools have adopted flexible attendance policies to accommodate students' individual needs and circumstances. This may include allowing students to make up missed work, providing alternative ways to complete assignments or offering distance-learning options during periods of extended absence.
- **Transportation Assistance:** Some schools have addressed transportation barriers that may hinder students from attending regularly. By providing transportation assistance, such as bus passes or shuttle services, schools can help ensure that students have reliable means of getting to and from school.
- **Early Warning Systems:** Schools have implemented early warning systems to identify students at risk of chronic absenteeism. By using data and attendance tracking systems, schools can intervene early and provide targeted support to students who show signs of attendance issues.
- **School-Home Communication:** Schools have improved communication with families to keep them informed about their child's attendance and academic progress. Building strong school-home partnerships can help identify and address attendance challenges early on.

Supplemental Instruction

- **Response to Intervention (RTI) Framework:** RTI is a preventive approach to improving individual outcomes through high-quality universal instruction within a multi-tiered system that connects supports matched to students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs. Key features of RTI include **collaborative teaming across all educational systems** (including but not limited to general, special, compensatory, and gifted education), **a clear problem-solving model with steps and routine, a formal and predictable process to build and implement solutions, decision rules based on data from a variety of formal and informal assessment tools** (including curriculum-based measurement, diagnostic assessment, observation, and validated screening and progress monitoring tools) and Capacity building opportunities for staff to address and remove barriers to implementation, so staff feel competent to implement supports and confident in the plan's ability to achieve intended outcomes. <https://www.cde.state.co.us/rti/response-to-intervention-rti>.
- **Assistive Technology Integration:** Schools have implemented policies to integrate assistive technology into the learning environment to universally support all students, while also being uniquely responsive to students with disabilities. This includes providing students with access to devices and tools that enhance their communication, mobility and learning abilities.
- **Transition Services (High School to Workforce):** School districts have improved their transition planning and services for students with disabilities as they prepare to move from high school to postsecondary education, employment or independent living.
- **Parental Involvement and Advocacy:** Schools have developed policies to enhance parental involvement and advocacy for students accessing supplemental instructional opportunities. This includes providing parents with information about their rights, opportunities to participate in decision-making processes and access to resources and support networks.

Understanding Context - Student-Based Best Practices

Supplemental Instruction continued

- **ELL Student Support:** By offering tailored support, schools can help ELL students access quality education, unlock their full potential and contribute their unique perspectives to the learning community. Inclusive education not only enhances ELL students' language skills, it also fosters a deeper appreciation for cultural diversity among all students. For additional information on ELL student policies, [see this CDE resource](#).

Academic Support for Students Facing Academic Challenges

- **Accelerated Learning Programs:** School districts have developed accelerated learning programs to provide challenging and advanced coursework for students who exceed grade level standards. These programs offer opportunities for students to take higher-level classes or participate in enrichment activities that cater to their intellectual abilities.
- **Subject or Grade Skipping:** Some schools have revised policies to allow subject or grade skipping for students who demonstrate exceptional abilities in certain areas. This means allowing a student to move ahead in a specific subject or skip a grade level to ensure they are appropriately challenged.
- **Gifted and Talented (GAT) Programs and Infusion in Classrooms:** School districts have established GAT programs to identify and serve students with exceptional abilities and talents. These programs offer specialized educational experiences, mentorship opportunities and challenging projects to stimulate advanced learners. Teachers have also been trained to use differentiated instruction techniques, tailoring their teaching methods to meet the diverse learning needs of students exceeding grade level standards. This includes providing more complex tasks, deeper exploration of subjects and individualized learning plans.
- **Early College Programs:** Some schools have partnered with colleges and universities to provide early college enrollment options for students exceeding grade level standards. This allows students to take college-level courses while still in high school, earning college credits and experiencing a more challenging academic environment.
- **Competitions and Olympiads:** Schools have encouraged above grade level students to participate in academic competitions and Olympiads in various subjects. These events allow students to showcase their talents, compete at higher levels and interact with like-minded peers.
- **Virtual Learning Opportunities:** To provide greater flexibility and access to advanced coursework, schools have implemented virtual learning options. Virtual platforms can offer a broader range of subjects and allow students to progress at their own pace.

Understanding Context - Student-Based Best Practices

AP and High-Demand Course Support

- **Pre-AP and Preparatory Programs:** School districts have introduced pre-AP or preparatory programs to help students build the necessary skills and knowledge required for success in AP courses. These programs aim to bridge the gap and support students in preparing for more advanced coursework.
- **Financial Support for AP Exams:** Some schools offer financial assistance or subsidies to students facing financial constraints, making it more accessible for them to take AP exams.
- **Virtual AP and High-Demand Course Options:** Schools/districts have offered virtual or online course options to increase flexibility and access, especially for students in rural areas or those with scheduling conflicts.

Behavioral and Sense of Belonging Support Best Practices

- **Elimination of Zero-Tolerance Discipline Policies:** Some school districts have reformed their disciplinary policies to move away from zero-tolerance approaches. Zero-tolerance policies often disproportionately affect students of color and those from low-income backgrounds. Instead, restorative justice practices and positive behavior interventions are adopted to address behavioral issues, focusing on resolving conflicts, building relationships and promoting a supportive school climate.
 - **Restorative Justice Practices:** Restorative justice focuses on repairing harm caused by misbehavior and building a sense of community through dialogue and problem-solving, rather than punishment.
 - **Trauma-Informed Practices:** Schools have adopted trauma-informed approaches to better support students who have experienced trauma. Understanding the impact of trauma on behavior helps educators respond with empathy and provide appropriate support.
 - **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS):** PBIS is a prevention-based framework for organizing evidence-based behavioral supports into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social outcomes for all students. PBIS policies and practices are implemented to create a positive and supportive school culture that encourages expected and desired behavior and provides instructional approaches to address undesired and problematic behavior. <https://www.cde.state.co.us/mtss/pbis>
 - **Bullying Prevention:** Please note that repairing harm through mediation should not be used in bullying situations since it often results in re-victimizing the target of bullying.
- **Wraparound Services:** School districts have partnered with community organizations to provide wraparound services for students with behavior issues. These services may include mental health counseling, family support and mentorship programs to address underlying factors contributing to challenging behavior.
- **Support LGBTQ+ Students:** LGBTQ+ students often face unique challenges, such as discrimination, bullying and social isolation, which can significantly impact their mental and emotional well-being, as well as their academic performance. By actively supporting LGBTQ+ students through policies, educational programs and a welcoming atmosphere, schools not only ensure their safety and well-being, but also [affirm their identities and promote a sense of belonging](#).

Technology Support Best Practices

- **One-to-One Technology and Mobile Wi-Fi Initiatives:** School districts have implemented one-to-one technology initiatives and included mobile Wi-Fi hotspots that students can borrow to access the internet from home. This ensures that all students have equal access to digital resources and learning opportunities.
- **Digital Equity Grants and Collaboration with Community:** School districts have secured funding through grants to address digital equity issues in addition to partnering with community organizations to secure technology donations. These funds are used to purchase technology devices, software and internet connectivity solutions for students without access to these tools.
 - **Leveraging E-Rate Program:** This is a federal program that supports schools and libraries in obtaining affordable telecommunications and internet access.
- **Digital Literacy Training:** Schools have provided digital literacy training for students and parents to ensure that they can effectively use technology for educational purposes. This helps bridge the digital divide and ensures that all students can navigate online learning platforms and resources.
- **Extending Technology Access Hours:** Some schools have extended their technology access hours beyond regular school hours, allowing students to use school technology resources even after the school day ends.