



The student success coach role: A critical capacity to create more equitable, personalized and engaging learning environments

As schools reopen and support students in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, meeting students’ holistic needs—social, emotional and academic—will be critical for students to re-engage in school successfully and ultimately, to thrive. **Student success coaches**, who serve full-time in public schools to build relationships with students and offer them research-based support, offer a critical capacity to educators and schools to help students progress in their development, allow for more [personalized learning](#) and engagement, and create more welcoming, equitable learning environments for all.



[My student success coach] made me feel comfortable, like I was part of the classroom... I felt very small, and she made me feel big. - **FABIOLA, STUDENT AT STEVENSON MIDDLE SCHOOL**

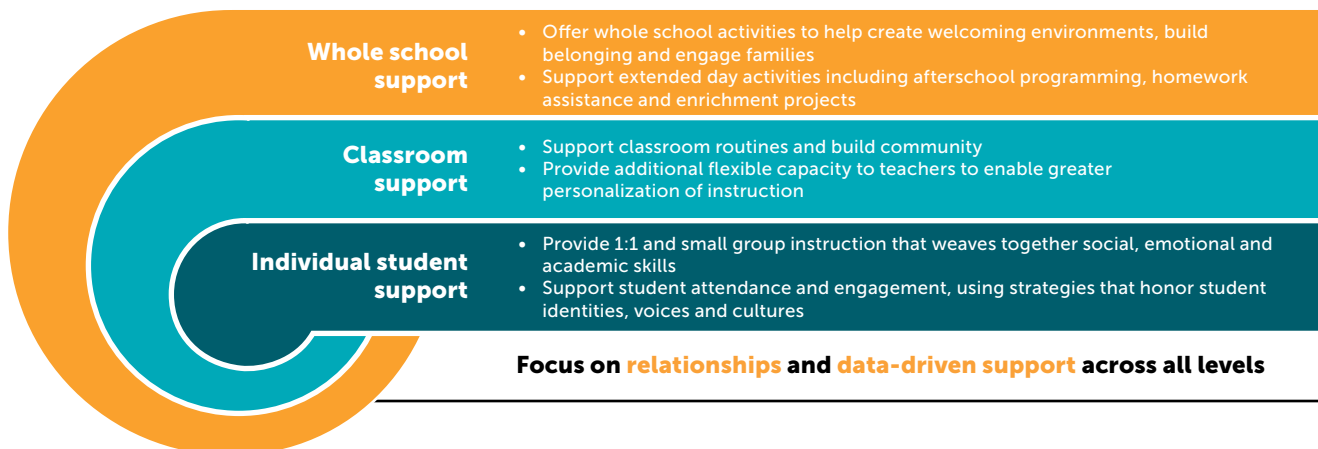
What is a student success coach?

Student success coaches provide integrated social, emotional and academic support, grounded in authentic and supportive relationships that help students and schools expand possibilities for learning and development. Recognizing that learning trajectories are unique for each student and learning happens in community with others, student success coaches—who are often AmeriCorps members—serve in diverse teams and partner with educators to provide near-peer, adaptive supports that benefit students, teachers, classrooms and the whole school. In this time of pandemic recovery, when educators have been asked to do so much for so long, student success coaches can provide an immediate source of additional capacity while also helping to build and diversify pathways to teaching.

What does this look like in practice?

Foundational to the student success coach role is the practice of cultivating consistent, caring, developmentally supportive relationships with students, which help to connect students’ lives with their school experiences, promote student agency and expand their possibilities for success. In addition, student success coaches use data on student learning environments, early warning indicators for students at risk of not graduating, and social, emotional and academic skill development to monitor progress and adapt approaches to better meet student needs.

With a focus on **relationships** and on **data-driven support**, student success coaches deliver holistic, integrated student services at the individual, classroom and whole school levels.





I'm beyond grateful to be working with [my student success coach] in my classroom. He genuinely cares about the success of the students and provides a great deal of support in not only making the learning experience more fruitful but also ensuring that everyone, students and myself alike, feel welcome. - **PARTNER TEACHER**

What is the evidence base for student success coaching?

The student success coach model is grounded in [the science of learning and development](#) and supported by third party research. Studies on City Year, the largest national student success coach provider serving over 300 systemically under-resourced elementary, middle and high schools, show:

- **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT:** Schools that partner with student success coaches are up to [two-to-three times more likely to improve](#) in English and math assessments.
- **HOLISTIC GROWTH:** The more time students spend with student success coaches, the more likely they are to [improve on social, emotional and academic skills](#), with students who are furthest behind benefiting the most.
- **ON-TRACK INDICATORS:** There's evidence that student success coaches have an impact on [reducing the number of students who are off track](#) to high school graduation.
- **COST-EFFECTIVENESS:** Integrating teams of student success coaches is 78% more cost effective than contracting with individual providers to deliver the same set of services.¹



[Student success coaches] in my building are hungry to take on the task of seeing growth [in their students.] They give you the point of consistency, where you know you have one other person, another set of hands. They just fit whatever mode or model we need. - **PARTNER PRINCIPAL**

What conditions need to be in place to enable effective student success coaching?

- Predictable and consistent time (at least three days per week, at least 30-45 minutes per session) for one-on-one and small group instruction
- Planning time and processes to promote effective partnerships between teachers and student success coaches, encourage data-driven adaptations of supports, and allow for school-level coordination that effectively integrates student success coaches into school design, routines and structures
- Ongoing training and coaching to advance student success coaches' skills, knowledge and mindsets, as well as their understanding of their own identity and agency as civic and community leaders



[Students] can open up to me because I've been through it. When they see me, they say, 'he did it before,' or 'he lived that.' I can easily relate to them. I feel like I'm a big brother in that community.

- **DERRYL, AMERICORPS MEMBER AND STUDENT SUCCESS COACH**

¹ In 2017, Deloitte Consulting LLP was engaged to aggregate and synthesize various industry and internal analyses to help City Year estimate and articulate ROI; City Year costs as compared to benchmark analysis of costs to provide similar services provided by a combination of individual providers.