The Power of Relationship:
How Mentorship Can Support Chronically Absent Homeless Students

Webinar \ August 29, 2019
1:00PM - 2:15PM EST
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Education Leads Home: A National Campaign Building Stronger Futures for Homeless Students

- Young children will participate in quality early childhood programs at the same rate as their housed peers by 2026.
- High school students will reach a 90 percent graduation rate by 2030.
- Post-secondary students will reach a 60 percent post-secondary attainment rate by 2034.

[www.educationleadshome.org](http://www.educationleadshome.org)
About Us

ICPH
ICPH is a New York City-based policy research organization focused on family homelessness in New York City and throughout the United States.  
www.icphusa.org

SCHOOLHOUSE CONNECTION
SchoolHouse Connection is a national organization working to overcome homelessness through education.  www.schoolhouseconnection.org

CIVIC
Civic is a public policy and strategy firm that helps corporations, nonprofits, foundations, universities, and governments develop and spearhead innovative public policies to strengthen our communities and country.  
www.civicenterprises.net

AMERICA’S PROMISE ALLIANCE
APA is the nation’s largest partnership of its kind, bringing together hundreds of national nonprofits, businesses, communities, educators, and ordinary citizens behind the idea of making the promise of America accessible to all young people.  
www.americaspromise.org

EDUCATION COUNSEL
EducationCounsel is a mission-based education consulting firm that combines significant experience in policy, strategy, law and advocacy to drive improvements in the U.S. education system from early childhood through postsecondary education.  
http://educationcounsel.com/
Our Presenters

Rebecca Camejo  
SchoolHouse Connection Youth Scholar, University of Miami Freshman

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McKinney-Vento Liaison, Spokane Public Schools, Spokane, WA

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Training Director and National Trainer - Check & Connect, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

Katie Brown  
Program Manager, Education Leads Home - SchoolHouse Connection
Today’s Agenda

- Overview of Chronic Absenteeism and its Effects on Students
- Check & Connect: A Model Evidence-Based Intervention
- The Power of Relationship: A Student Perspective
- Implementing Check & Connect in Spokane, WA
- Q&A
Overview of Chronic Absenteeism

What is Chronic Absenteeism?

Students who miss 10 percent or more of days enrolled are defined as chronically absent—including both excused and unexcused absences.

Why Does Chronic Absenteeism Matter?

- Less likely to meet grade level proficiency standards
- More likely to drop out of school
- Absences in early grades have lasting impact

How is Chronic Absenteeism a Warning Sign?

When students consistently miss school, it is often a sign of underlying challenges and may signal a student is experiencing homelessness.
National Chronic Absenteeism Data

The U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) released student absenteeism rates from all 50 states for the 2015-16 school year. This data from all public schools and school districts shows that almost 8 million students were chronically absent from schools in 2015-16.
Of these 8 million students, unsurprisingly, research shows that economically disadvantaged students are more likely to be chronically absent than the overall student population—but studies also indicate that students experiencing homelessness are chronically absent at rates even higher than their housed, low-income peers.
Check & Connect: A Model Intervention
Check & Connect Overview

- Structured mentoring intervention
- Promotes student engagement
  - At school
  - With learning
- Focus on school completion
Fit With Existing Initiatives

Universal 80%
Targeted 15%
Intensive 5%
Evidence-Based Intervention


» C&C is the only dropout prevention intervention to show positive effects for staying in school
Lessons Learned

- The power and the value of personalized interventions
- Relationships are essential
- Coordinator for mentor support and fidelity of implementation
- Multiple dimensions of engagement, in particular how students think (cognitive) and feel (affective) about school
Check & Connect Core Components

Fidelity of Implementation

Check
Connect
Mentor
Family Engagement
Foundational Theories

- Resilience
- Systems
- Cognitive-behavioral
- Intrinsic Motivation
Multidimensional Engagement in C&C

Observable Engagement

- Academic
- Behavioral

Internal Engagement

- Cognitive
- Affective
Preparing for Implementation

• Indicators of disengagement
  » Alterable and status risk factors/early warning signs
• Criteria for selecting students
• Selection of mentors
  » Models for staffing the mentor position
• Organizing resources
• Introducing C&C
  » Students, staff, and families
Mentors, on average, spend 1 hour per week on C&C related tasks per student. However, time required can vary based on student need.
Implementation

• Systematic data collection (Check)
  » Monitoring form, C&C App, access to data

• Personalizing the intervention (Connect)
  » Basic and intensive interventions

• Partner with families
  » Core strategies
# Monitoring Form

## Data

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cumulative number of credits earned</th>
<th>Cumulative GPA</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Report Card Data</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1.9</td>
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### Grading Period GPA

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<tr>
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<th>2nd Grading Period</th>
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<td>Month of OCTOBER</td>
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### Behavior Data

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<th>Week One</th>
<th>Week Two</th>
<th>Week Three</th>
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<th>Week Five</th>
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<tr>
<td># of Behavior Referrals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detention (# of days)</td>
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<td>In/out of school suspension (# of days)</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>High Risk</td>
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### Course Performance Data

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<tr>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>% or grade</th>
<th>% or grade</th>
<th># missing assignments</th>
<th># missing assignments</th>
<th>% or grade</th>
<th>% or grade</th>
<th># missing assignments</th>
<th># missing assignments</th>
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<td>U.S. History</td>
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<td>65%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>English 11</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<tr>
<td>ART II</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>50%</td>
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*Use number of grading periods applicable in your school.*
C&C App

- Replaces paper/pencil data forms
- Monitors mentor fidelity
- Collects data at site level to determine impact
- Shows data in engaging visual presentation
## C&C App: Attendance and Behavior Data

### ATTENDANCE

- **Absent (Unexcused)**
  - MON (5/21): 1
  - TUE (5/22): 0
  - WED (5/23): 0
  - THU (5/24): 0
  - FRI (5/25): 0

- **Absent (Excused)**
  - MON (5/21): 0
  - TUE (5/22): 0
  - WED (5/23): 0
  - THU (5/24): 0
  - FRI (5/25): 0

- **Tardy**
  - MON (5/21): 0
  - TUE (5/22): 0
  - WED (5/23): 1
  - THU (5/24): 0
  - FRI (5/25): 0

### BEHAVIOR

- **Behavior referral / infraction**
  - MON (5/21): 0
  - TUE (5/22): 0
  - WED (5/23): 0
  - THU (5/24): 0
  - FRI (5/25): 1

- **Detention**
  - MON (5/21): 0
  - TUE (5/22): 0
  - WED (5/23): 0
  - THU (5/24): 0
  - FRI (5/25): 0

- **Suspension (In-school)**
  - MON (5/21): 0
  - TUE (5/22): 0
  - WED (5/23): 0
  - THU (5/24): 0
  - FRI (5/25): 0
C&C App: Attendance data

Attendance

Severity: Less to More

SEPTEMBER
SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT
1
2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 13 14 15
16 17 18 19 20 21 22
23 24 25 26 27 28 29
30

OCTOBER
SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12 13
14 15 16 17 18 19 20
21 22 23 24 25 26 27
28 29 30 31

NOVEMBER
SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT
4 5 6 7 8 9 10
11 12 13 14 15 16 17
18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30

ENTER ATTENDANCE DATA
C&C App: Behavior Data

**Behavior** | Set as focus area
---|---

Severity: Less to More

**SEPTEMBER**

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**NOVEMBER**

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</table>

[ENTER BEHAVIOR DATA] [BACK TO TOP]
C&C App: Course Performance

Course Performance

- US History
- English 2
- Chemistry
- Art 2
- Physical Educa...
- Algebra 2

Course Performance

ENTER COURSE PERFORMANCE DATA  BACK TO TOP
Basic Intervention

Deliberate Conversation

- Sharing check data
- Providing feedback
- Discussing school
- Facilitating problem solving
Intensive Interventions

Supplemental for Specific High Risk Areas

• Customized, individualized
• Person-environment fit
• Direct service or referral
## C&C App: Monitoring Interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVENTION</th>
<th>REMOVE</th>
<th>MON (5/28)</th>
<th>TUE (5/29)</th>
<th>WED (5/30)</th>
<th>THU (5/31)</th>
<th>FRI (6/1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share “check” data</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
<td>5 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide regular feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
<td>5 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss staying in school</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
<td>10 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solve about risk</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family: Phone conversation</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
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<td>0 MINS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitate tutoring</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 MINS</td>
<td>0 MINS</td>
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<td>0 MINS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Last updated on June 26, 2016, 12:43 p.m.*
Strategies to Engage with Families

- Enhancing home-school communication
- Conducting home visits
- Responding to parents’ questions or concerns
- Encouraging home support for learning
Implementation

- Monitoring the students’ environments
  - Person-environment fit
- Coordinator: The C&C Champion
- Evaluation and fidelity
Person-Environment Fit

**Definition:** Simultaneously supporting students in developing a plan for academic success while encouraging the environment to provide support for this plan
Importance of Monitoring Implementation

• Monitoring and ensuring fidelity of implementation
• Providing information for program improvement
  » Identifying areas for additional professional development
  » Determining what adaptations, if any, are needed for local contexts
• Demonstrating program impact
Tools for Monitoring Implementation

- **Readiness Checklist**
  - Addresses need, fit, capacity to implement
- **Mentor Practice Profile**
  - Describes the mentor practice and levels of performance
  - Supports mentor practice and program improvement
- **Monthly Mentor Fidelity Survey**
  - Periodically checks mentor fidelity
- **Self-assessment**
  - Periodically monitors implementation of the core components
- **Student Engagement Instrument**
  - Assesses students’ cognitive and affective engagement
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Components and Essential Elements</th>
<th>Contribution to Outcome</th>
<th>Proficient (P)</th>
<th>Developmental (D)</th>
<th>Needs Improvement (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MENTOR: Builds relationships based on mutual trust</strong>&lt;br&gt;The mentor’s relationships with students are based on mutual trust and open communication. The mentor focuses on promoting students’ educational success.</td>
<td>Increase protective factors&lt;br&gt;Decrease risk factors</td>
<td>The mentor models respect and expects respectful behavior from all students, using interactions as opportunities to teach appropriate social skills.&lt;br&gt;The mentor engages in two-way, open communication with students using a variety of different strategies.</td>
<td>The mentor uses strategies to build mutual trust with students, but open communication and respect are not demonstrated by the mentor across contexts with every student.</td>
<td>The mentor is unable to establish two-way communication with any student. The mentor has not employed any relationship building strategies with students (i.e., mentor only focuses on sharing check data during weekly meetings).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MENTOR: Long-term commitment</strong>&lt;br&gt;The mentor makes a two-year commitment to working with students and families.</td>
<td>Increase protective factors&lt;br&gt;Decrease risk factors</td>
<td>The mentor consistently meets with students weekly despite their behavior and decision-making, demonstrating acceptance and accountability.&lt;br&gt;The mentor continues working with students and families from semester to semester.&lt;br&gt;The mentor works with students and families for at least two years.</td>
<td>The mentor takes an occasional break in meeting with a student when the student is making poor choices or not taking accountability for their actions.&lt;br&gt;The mentor works with a student at least one-year but less than two years.</td>
<td>Mentor recommends that a student is exited from C&amp;C early or chooses to no longer be their mentor due to a student’s negative behavior.&lt;br&gt;The mentor works with a student for less than one year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MENTOR: Persistence-Plus</strong>&lt;br&gt;The mentor is a persistent source of academic motivation, familiar with the youth and family (continuity), and continues to provide the message that “education is important to your future” (consistency).</td>
<td>Increase protective factors&lt;br&gt;Decrease risk factors</td>
<td>The mentor conveys a consistent message to the student that education is important to the student’s future.&lt;br&gt;The mentor provides personalized, supportive, positive messages to the student over time regarding education and their future.</td>
<td>The mentor is inconsistent with their message that school is important and the need to stay in school and receive their diploma.</td>
<td>The mentor does not convey the message that school is important for the student’s future.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Check & Connect Monthly Fidelity Survey

This survey is for coordinators to assess the quality of a mentor’s data entries for a given student in a given month. It will take approximately 5 to 8 minutes to complete. To fill out this survey, you will need the mentor and student IDs and the mentor’s most recent monthly monitoring form (or C&C App data entries) for that student. The survey will provide vital information to improve implementation of Check & Connect activities.

Your Name: __________________________  Mentor ID: __________________________
School: ____________________________  Student ID: ____________________________
Monitoring Data Month/Year: _____ / _____

Core Component: Check

Question 1: Mentor recorded data for attendance, behavior, and course performance each week of the month.
Answer Yes if all of the following conditions are met:
1. Attendance data are entered for all school days during the month.
2. Behavior data are entered for all days that a student is in school and a negative behavior occurs.
3. Course performance data are entered each school week of 3 days or more.

☐ Yes  ☐ No

If answered No, provide comments regarding lack of weekly data recording:


Question 2: Mentor determined the level of risk by indicating Yes/No on the monitoring form (or C&C App) or indicated the level of risk in the case notes.
Answer Yes if either of following conditions is met:
1. A yes or no is indicated in the check section of the monitoring form for each risk area (attendance, behavior, course performance) or is documented in the case notes.
2. If using the Check & Connect App, the mentor identifies focus area(s) based on the automatic identification of high-risk by the C&C App (it’s possible that there are no specific areas of focus, if the student is not at high-risk in any area).

☐ Yes  ☐ No

If answered No, provide comments regarding no indication of student risk level:


Introducing Check & Connect’s Engage SEI™ Online Student Engagement Instrument

Engage SEI™ measures what students think and feel about school. Engage SEI™ —

- Measures affective and cognitive student engagement using a self-report survey
- Delivers the survey via an online platform for easy individual or group administration
- Provides data to identify early warning signs of disengagement
- Gives support team members information they need to develop personalized interventions

The online Engage SEI™ is utilized by —

- Teams working on interventions with students who are disengaged
- School staff needing data on student engagement to improve interventions
- Student support teams delivering tiered support systems for at-risk students
- Professionals serving all students in grades 6-12
Implementation Considerations

• Administrator support
• Data collection
• Time (initial training, weekly meetings, mentor professional development, etc.)
• Changes in school personnel
• Competing initiatives, interventions, other mentoring programs
• Engaging families
Implementation Options
Training Options

Check & Connect Training Options

Administrative Overview
Provide an overview of C&C to administrators to help them understand their supportive role (2 hours)

Preparation & Implementation
Help administrators prepare for C&C (1 day)

Mentor Training
Provide in-depth training for new or (2 days)

OR

Comprehensive Implementation Training
Help administrators prepare for C&C implementation and train C&C mentors (2 days)

After one year of implementation...
Resources

- Public website checkandconnect.umn.edu
- Newsletter sign-up z.umn.edu/CnCresources
- Contact us at: checkandconnect@umn.edu
  or call toll-free: 866-434-0010

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C&C Trainings by State from 2009-2019

International C&C training locations — South Africa, Australia, Canada, and the Federated States of Micronesia
The Power of Relationship: A Student Perspective

Rebecca Camejo

HER MENTOR
Hi, I’m Rebecca!
My Experience with Mentorship

➔ Who were my mentors? How did the connect with me in the first place?
➔ Why were my mentors so important to me during my time of homelessness? What did they do to preserve a relationship with me?
➔ How did my mentors impact my school experience and my thoughts about education?
Youth Perspective: What Makes a Mentor?

What defines mentorship--especially to a young person experiencing homelessness?

3-5 key things that mentors (and all school and district staff) can do (or not do) to help make sure students experiencing homelessness:

- Get to school, and
- Succeed in school
Implementing Check & Connect
In Spokane, Washington
We are in a mid-sized to larger district, serving approximately 30,000 students each year. For the past 10 years, we have served 3.5%-4% of the district population with M-V services.

Our district has placed a strong value on the M-V program. We have four staff dedicated to providing services:

- McKinney-Vento Liaison (7 hours a day, 10 months)
- Intake Specialist & Transportation Coordinator (8 hours a day, 10 months)
- McKinney-Vento Specialists (2 positions: 7 hours a day, 10 months)

We use:

- Title I Homeless Set-Aside (federal)
- McKinney-Vento Grant (federal)
- Homeless Student Stability Program Grant (state)
- Transportation Funding (state)
- private donations (mostly for our “extras”)
Program Structure

Intake and Transportation:
- Managing phones
- Communication to schools
- Transportation Coordination
- Student Information Manager

Liaison
- Professional Development
- Community Liaison & Coordinator
- Data & Reports
- Serves specific schools as lead
- Overall manager of program

Specialists
- Serve specific high schools as lead (number of schools varies based on a needs assessment of district)
- Primary population is unaccompanied youth
- Each has a shelter that they visit regularly
- Tasks:
  - Intakes & Assessments
  - Community referrals
  - Mentor
  - Collaborator
  - Assistant Dream Locator
Our Model of Intervention

- Our program was asked to create an MTSS model for all students in the district for McKinney-Vento

- This is our working model:
  - Liaison – Tiers 1 to 3
  - Intake and Communication - Tier 2
  - Specialists – Tier 3
Check & Connect: McKinney-Vento Specialists

- Total M-V caseload is about 200 students across 2-3 schools.
- Primary focus is on unaccompanied youth.
- Check & Connect services are provided to about 15-20 students from each caseload.

Selection Process for C & C Services

- McKinney-Vento Eligible (AND)
- Specific Referral (or)
- Top 10% of Absences, Discipline Incidents, Current F’s
Data, Data, Data

- Again, strong support from our district
- District-wide program: “School Data Tools”
- Provide many data reports, assessments, and our Early Warning System
# Checks – Outcome Form

## HEART Outcome Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Student ID</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>UY?</th>
<th>HEART Start Date</th>
<th>Check &amp; Connect Start Date</th>
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### Initial Check
- **SECCA Involved?**
- **Periods Absent**
- **Discipline Incidents (D)**
- **Current F’s (F)**
- **Credits Earned (total)**

**Date:**

### Outcome Checks

**Semester 1:**

**Semester 2:**

### CHECK codes
- A. Attendance (number of absences and codes)
- B. Behavior (number of discipline incidents)
- C. Course Completion (number of failing grades)

### CONNECT codes
- D. College/Career Readiness (HARTA, MC & beyond)
- E. Housing
- F. Community Resources
- G. Medical/Health
- H. Employment
- I. Family
- J. School Starrings
- K. Crisis Intervention
- L. Food outside of school

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## Check & Connect Log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>CHECK codes</th>
<th>CONNECT codes</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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SPS HEART Program | HEART Outcome Form | 1 | HEART
Connects

- Connects are so diverse!
- This is where the relationship happens:
  - Establishing trust
  - Identifying goals of the student
  - Student identification of barriers
  - Goal setting
  - Self assessment/reflection
Our Commitment to C & C students:

- Meet once a week
- Reviewing Check data with student
- Remain with student for duration in program
- Engage student in the process
- Collaborate with outside parties (i.e. parents, teachers, administrators, community members)
Our Barriers

- Having the student remain engaged when they are out of crisis
- Remaining with student throughout duration in program
- Balancing the need for data and documentation with the need for personal connection
- Finding times to meet with students that do not disrupt the educational process
Q&A
Resources

SchoolHouse Connection:  
http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/

Education Leads Home:  
http://www.educationleadshome.org

National Center on Homeless Education:  
https://nche.ed.gov

Check & Connect  
http://checkandconnect.umn.edu/

Attendance Works:  
https://www.attendanceworks.org/

Everyone Graduates Center:  
http://every1graduates.org/
Contact Information

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