



**CHECK &  
CONNECT**



**Denfeld  
High School**

**Full Implementation of  
Tier 2 and Tier 3  
Interventions in a PBS  
Framework: A High  
School's Journey**



# Presenters

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  - » Director of Special Services, Duluth Public Schools

# Agenda

- Overview of Check & Connect
- Background and Exploration Stage
  - » Beginning of the journey
- Installation Stage
  - » Check & Connect training
  - » Processes at Denfeld High School, Duluth Public Schools
- Initial Implementation
- Next Steps Towards Full Implementation

# Check & Connect Overview

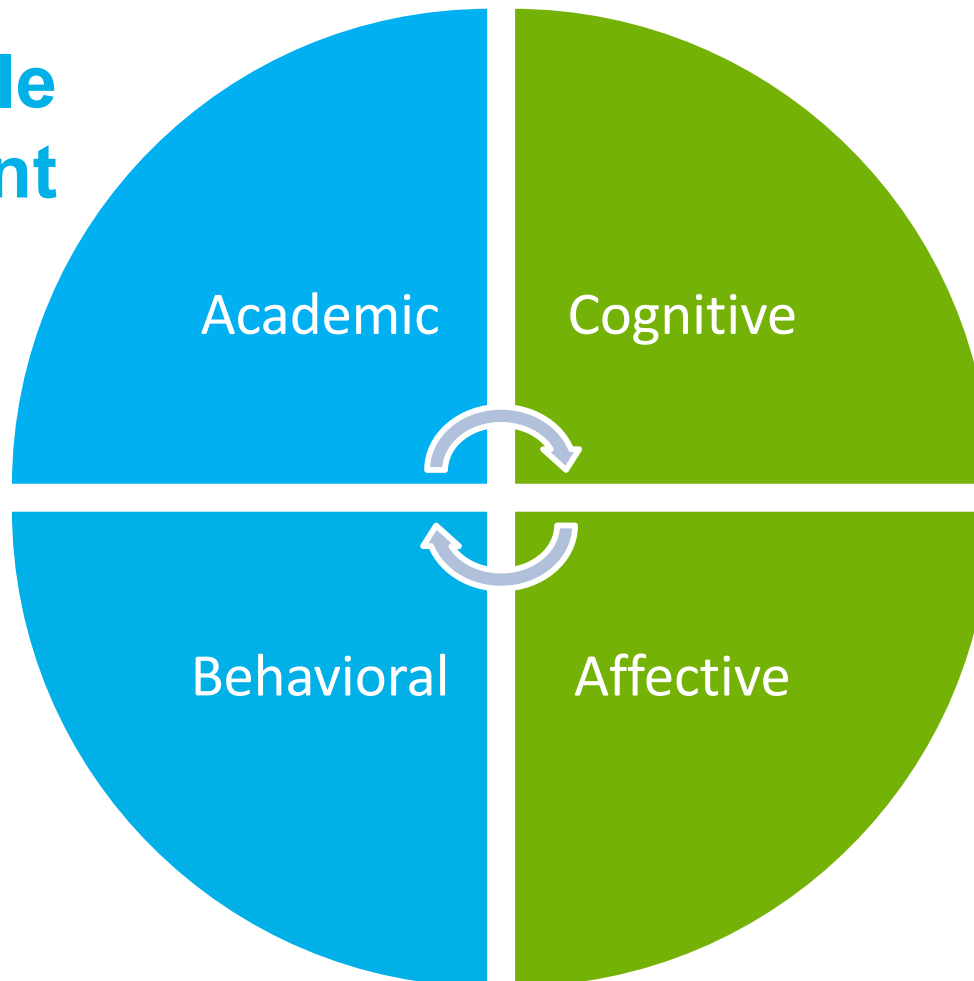


- Structured mentoring intervention
- Promotes student engagement
  - » At school
  - » With learning
- Focus on school completion

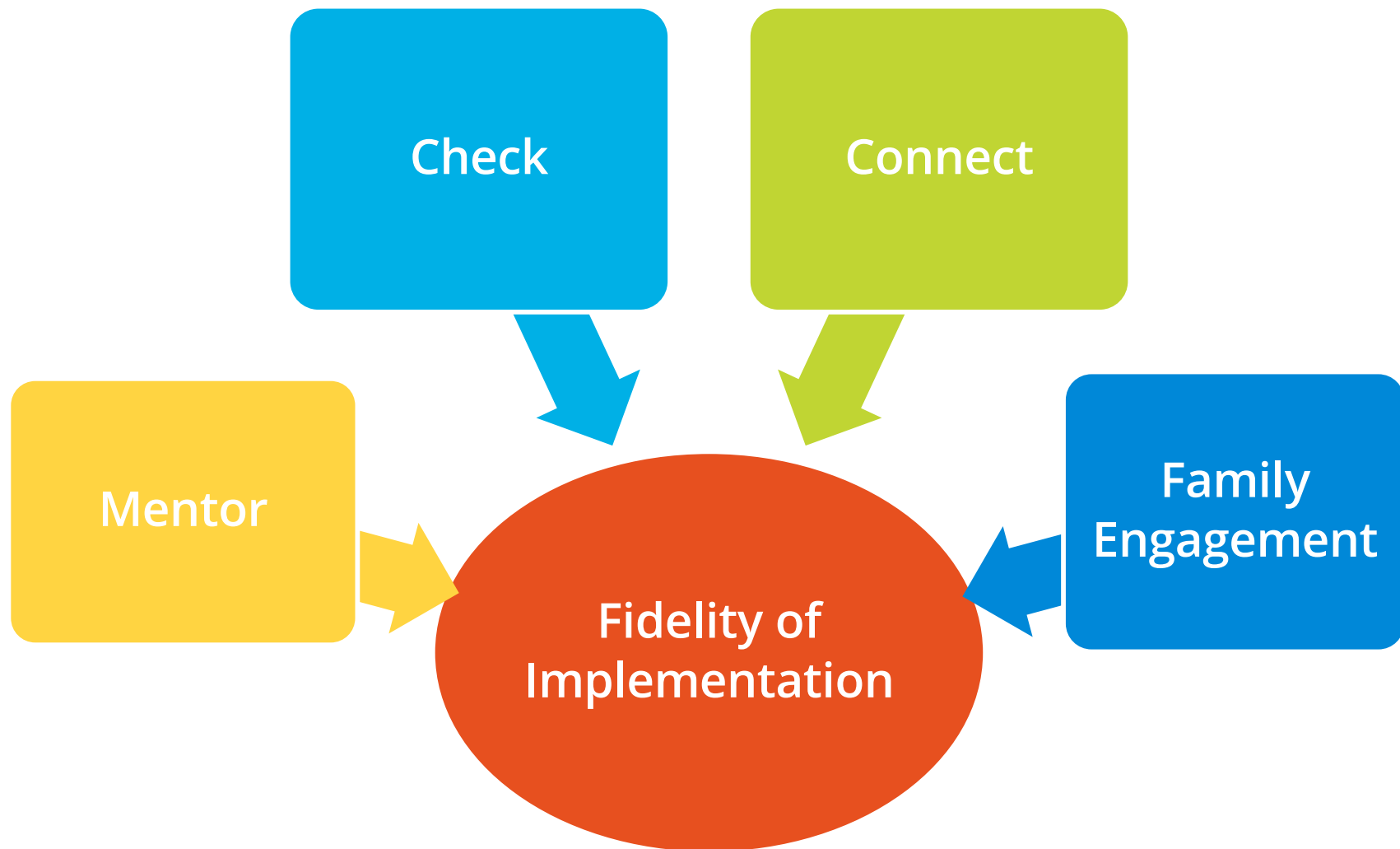
# Multidimensional Engagement in C&C

**Observable  
Engagement**

**Internal  
Engagement**



# Check & Connect Core Components



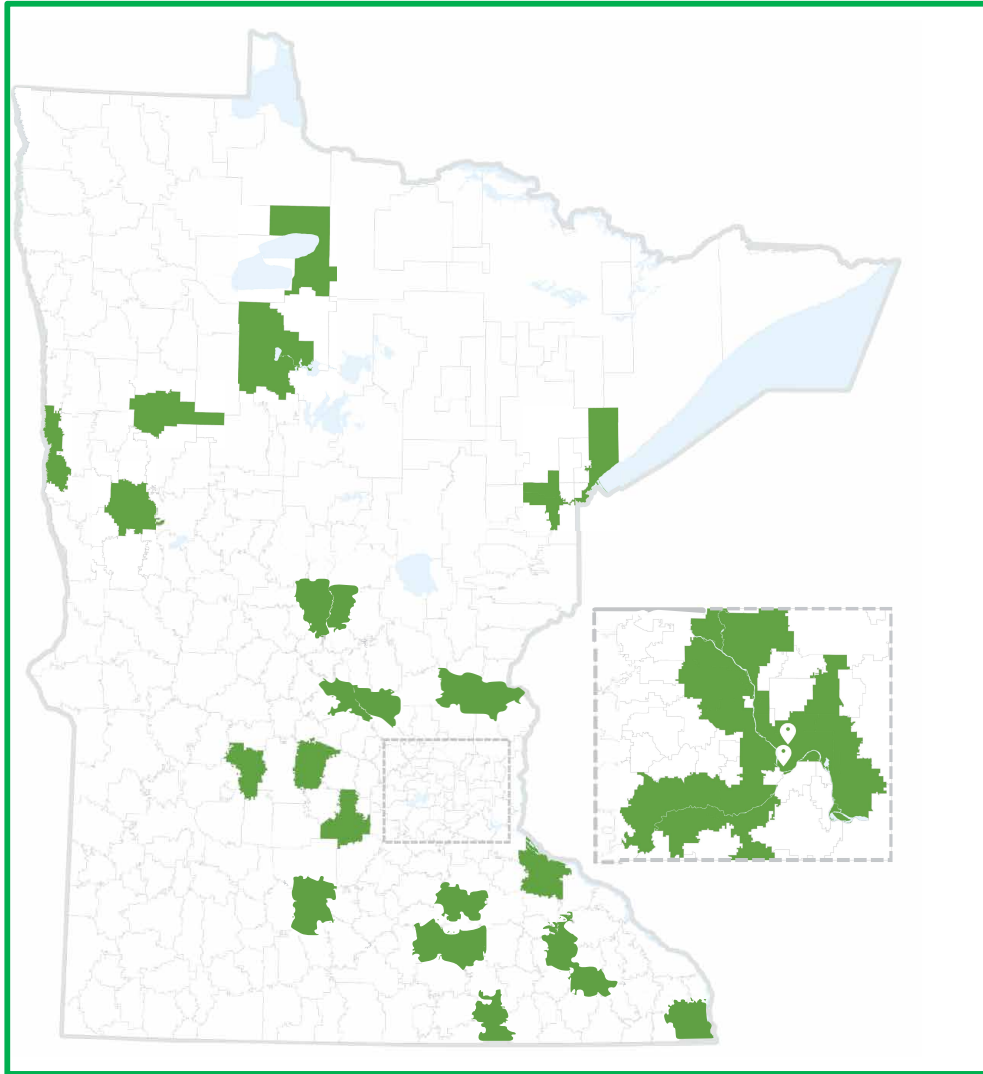
# Evidence-Based Intervention

Check & Connect has met the evidence standards of the What Works Clearinghouse (2006, 2015): <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

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



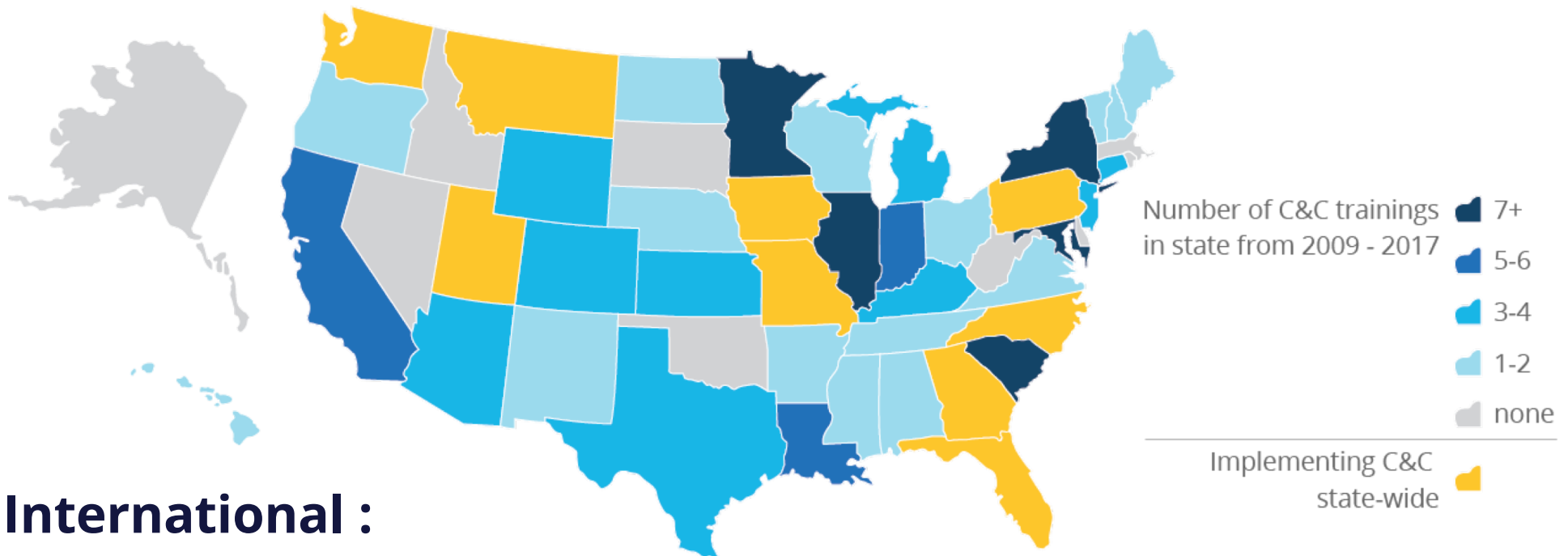
# Check & Connect in Minnesota



School districts and agencies that have received training on Check & Connect and are considered to be still implementing.



# Check & Connect Reach in U.S. and Internationally



## International :

- Yap, Federated States of Micronesia
- Sydney, Australia
- New London, South Africa
- Montreal and Toronto, Canada

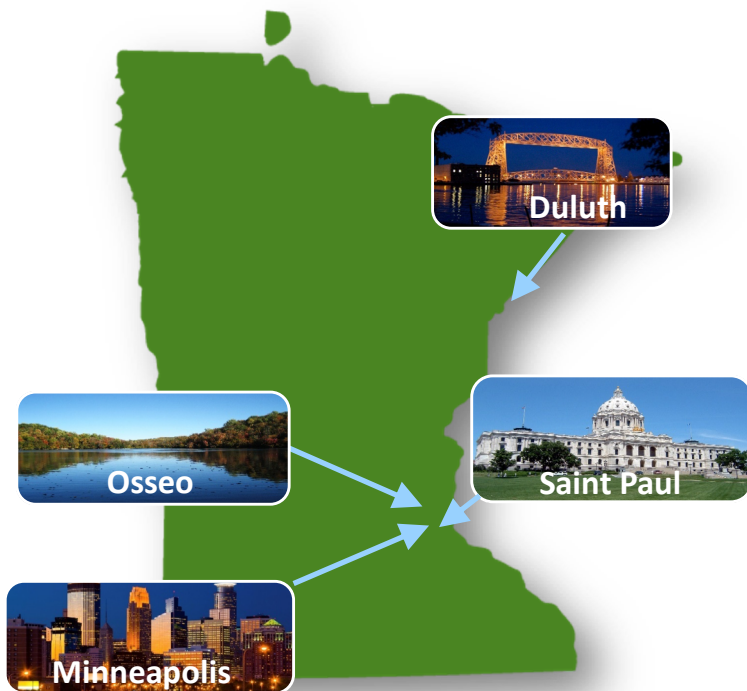
# The Beginning of the Journey

## Office of Special Education Program (OSEP) Charge to States

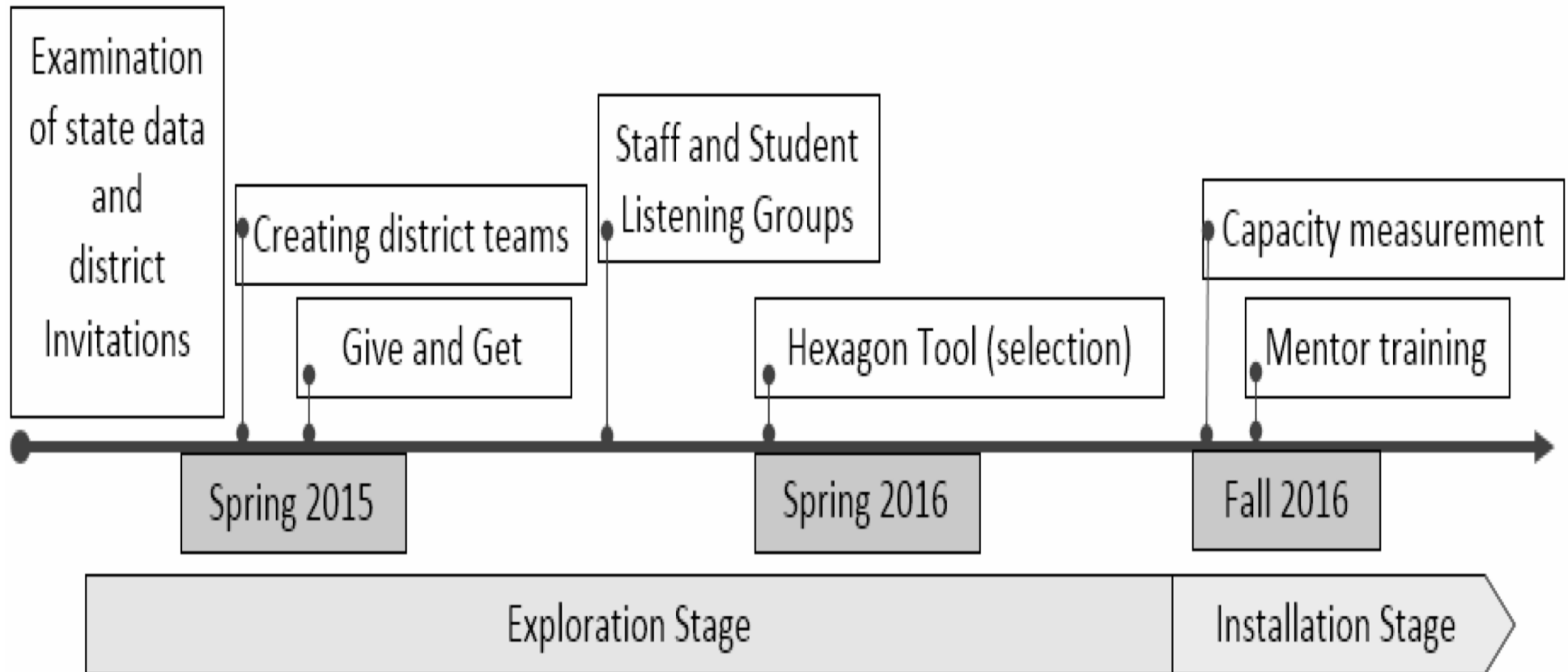
- » Develop a comprehensive, ambitious, yet achievable multi-year plan that states will develop to improve results for children/students with disabilities (and their families).
- » Increase the capacity of districts to implement, scale up, and sustain evidence-based practices that will result in improved results.

# Identification of Four School Districts

- » State identified four districts - these four districts accounted for approximately 30% of the population group
- » Goal: Increase 6-year graduation rates for Black and American Indian students with disabilities



# Our Journey: Exploration to Installation



# Mentor Training

- Core Components of Check & Connect
  - » Mentor
  - » Check
  - » Connect
  - » Family Engagement
- Application of Skills
  - » Relationship building
  - » Problem-solving with students

# Mentor Characteristics



- A personal belief in the power and value of problem solving with students
- A personal belief that all students:
  - » Have abilities, strengths, and can learn
  - » Can progress and change their level of engagement

# “Check” Procedures

- Check = systematically monitoring level of engagement and educational progress
- Assess **monthly** for high risk
- Compare data to pre-determined criteria for high risk on page 43 in *Implementing with Fidelity*
- Determine the level of intervention
  - » Basic Intervention = All C&C students
  - » Basic + Intensive Intervention = C&C students indicating high risk

# Basic “Connect” Intervention

- A formal weekly meeting between the mentor and a student
- Mentors develop a personalized data-based intervention, considering:
  - » “Check” data
  - » Student’s needs and perspective
  - » Family influences and circumstances
  - » Available school and community resources



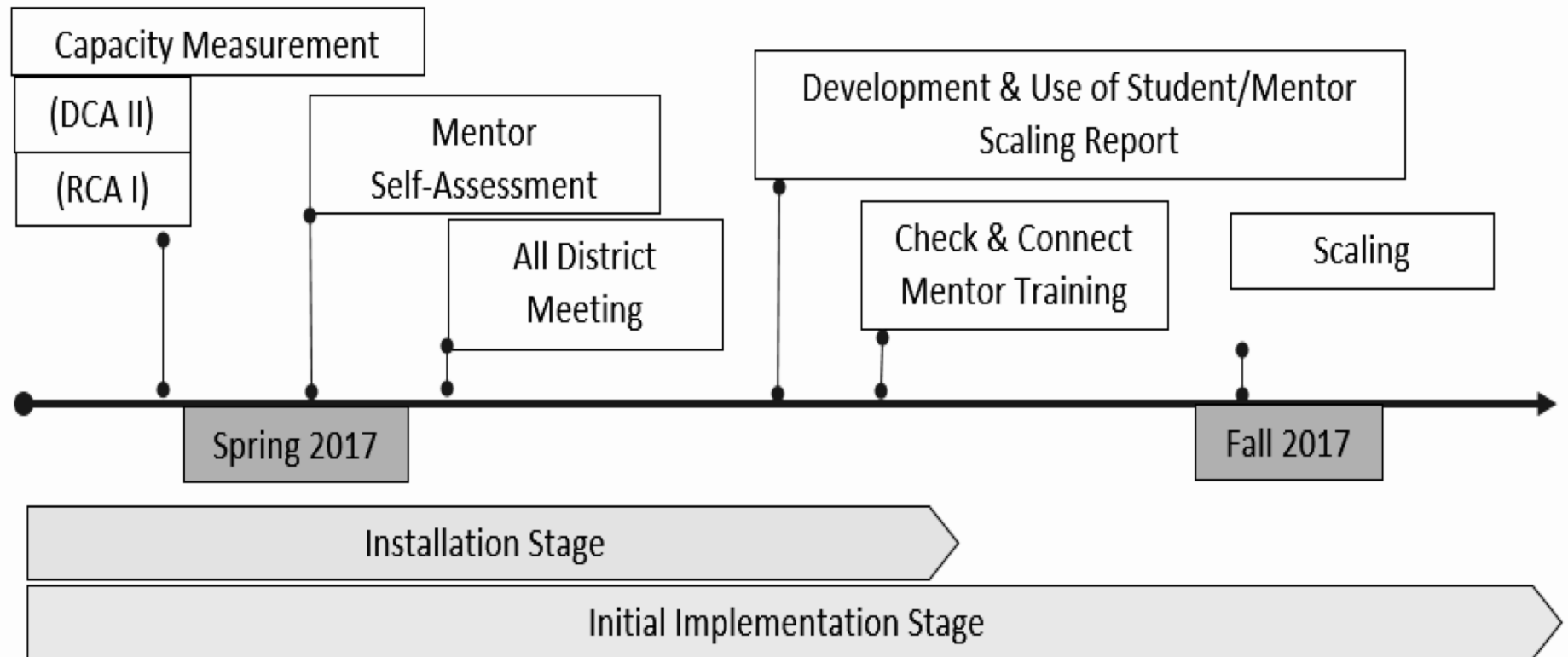
# Family Engagement



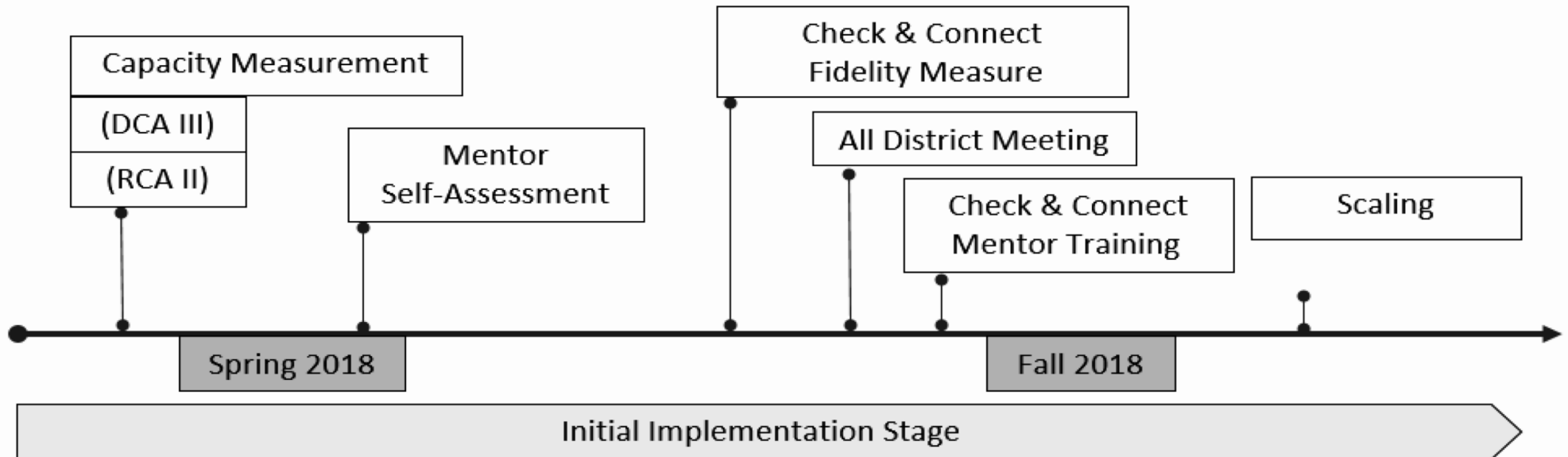
“Cooperation, coordination, and collaboration between the mentor and family to enhance students’ learning opportunities, educational progress, and school success in four domains: academic, social, behavioral, and emotional.”

(Christenson & Sheridan, 2001, p.37)

# Journey: Installation to Initial Implementation



# Journey: Initial Implementation



# Creating a Team

## Check & Connect Team

- Minnesota Department of Education Staff
- District Administration
- Denfeld Principal
- Check & Connect Coordinator
- Two Check & Connect Mentors

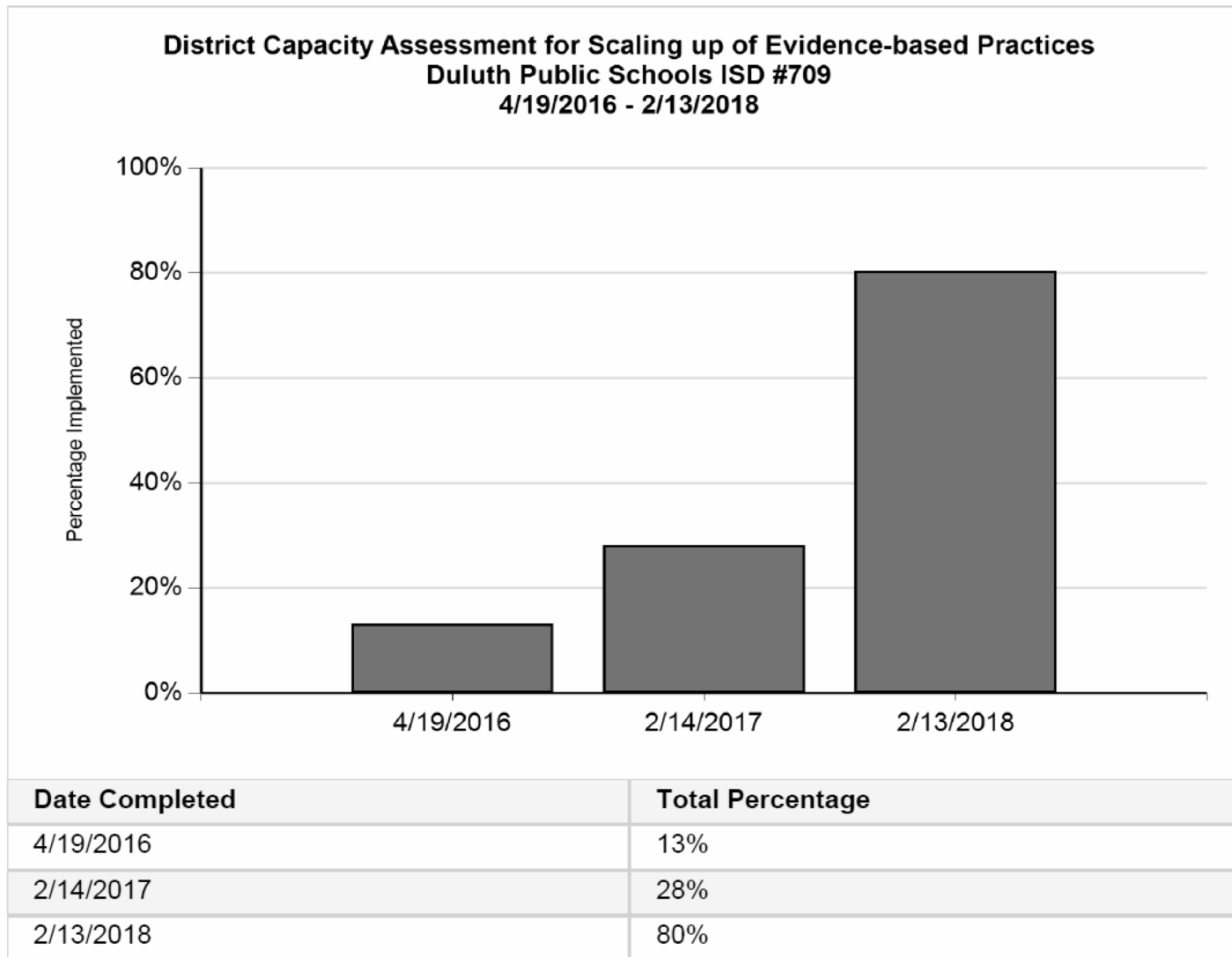
# Key Accomplishments

- Each year, improved our district's capacity to implement evidence-based practice
- Each year, increased the number of students served by Check and Connect mentors (currently 60 students)
- Over two years, 13 out of 14 American Indian & Black students with disabilities graduated on time graduation (one student is continuing)

# Challenges

- Staff turnover (Assistant Superintendent, Check and Connect Coordinator, Check and Connect Mentor)
- Required paperwork, data collection, and coaching to implement to fidelity
- Funding and commitment to support scale up efforts
- Chronic absenteeism

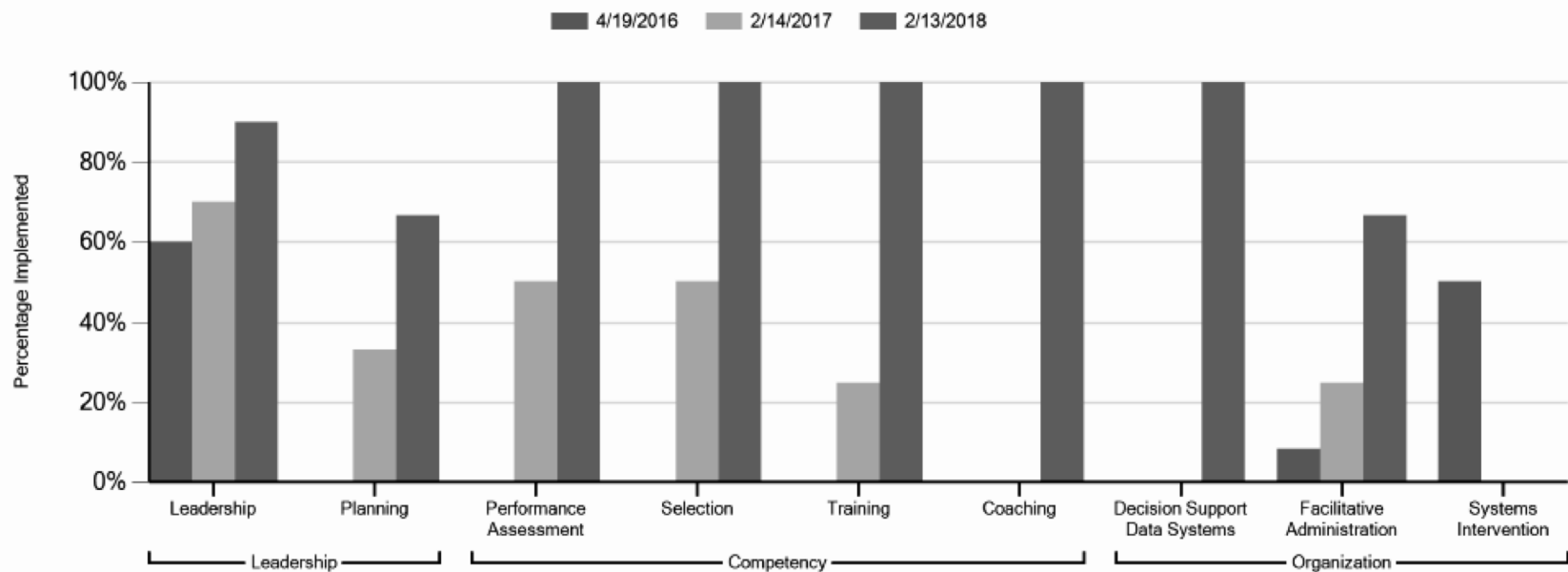
# Results: District Capacity Assessment



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Duluth Public Schools ISD #709  
Duluth, Minnesota

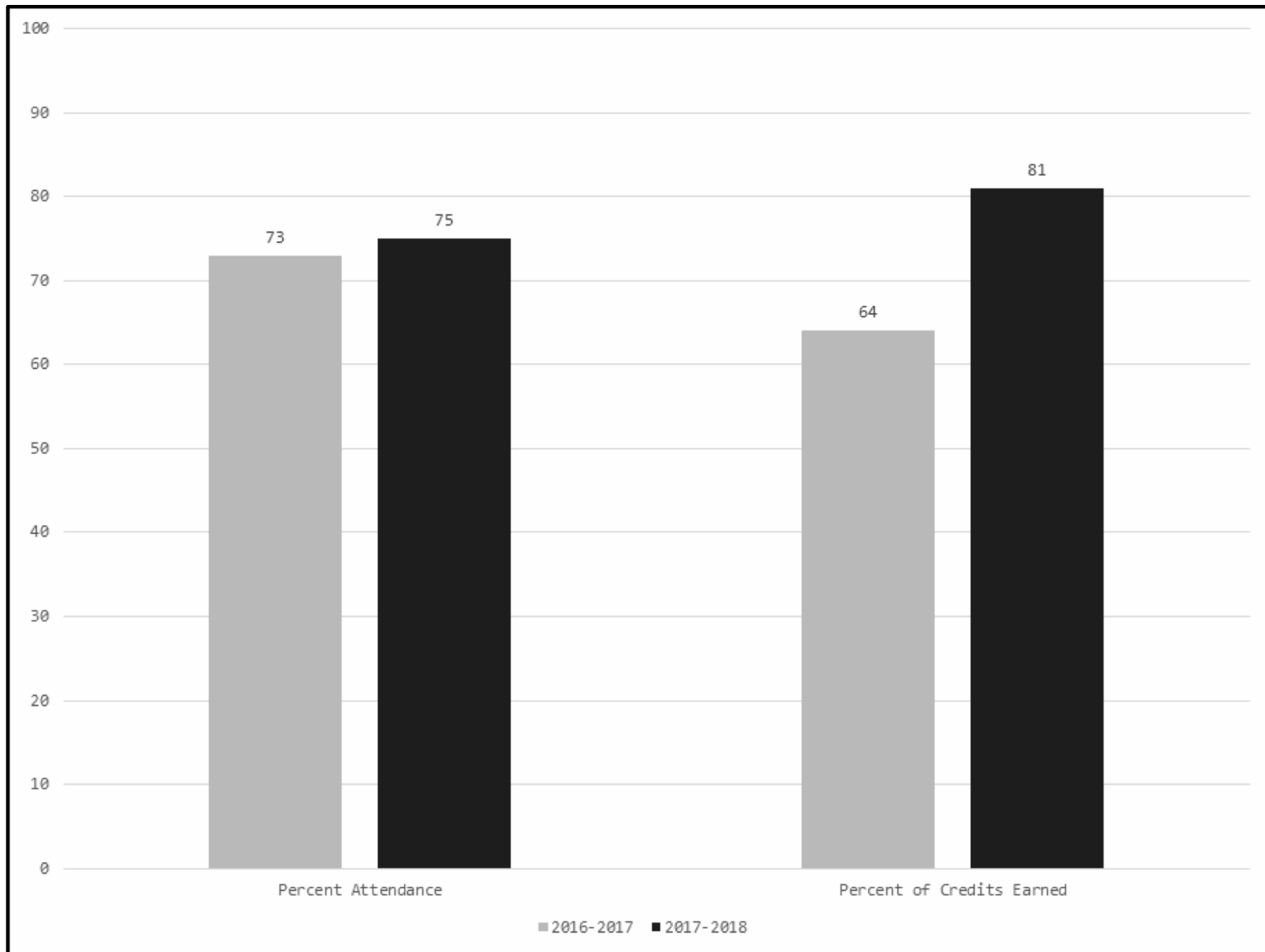
District Capacity Assessment for Scaling up of Evidence-based Practices  
Duluth Public Schools ISD #709  
4/19/2016 - 2/13/2018



Date Completed	Leadership		Competency				Organization		
	Leadership	Planning	Performance Assessment	Selection	Training	Coaching	Decision Support Data Systems	Facilitative Administration	Systems Intervention
4/19/2016	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%	50%
2/14/2017	70%	33%	50%	50%	25%	0%	0%	25%	0%
2/13/2018	90%	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	67%	0%



# Results: Student Attendance and Credits



# Results: Graduation Rates - Denfeld

Four-Year, On-Time Graduation Rate						
	2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
All Students	73.42	174/237	73.86	178/241	80.36	180/224
American Indian	30.00	3/10	35.00	7/20	73.33	11/15
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	72.73	8/11	*	*	*	*
Black	57.14	8/14	42.86	6/14	55.56	10/18
White	77.37	147/190	80.66	146/181	84.66	138/163
Two or More Races			71.43	10/14	71.43	10/14
Special Education	45.00	27/60	33.33	18/54	61.82	34/55
Free/Reduced Priced Lunch	62.42	93/149	62.07	90/145	72.55	111/153

# Results: Student Impact



**"Kim and Deb are nice."**

**"Being here makes me feel like I'm at home."**



**"If it wasn't for Deb, I probably wouldn't come to school. She motivates me."**



**"If Deb wasn't here, I wouldn't graduate."**



# Next Steps Towards Full Implementation

- Increase mentor caseloads to 35
- Continue working to increase district capacity to support initiative
- Expand use of Check and Connect at Denfeld
  - » Mentor volunteers with Denfeld's Community Schools program
  - » Volunteer teachers during WIN
- Explore ways to sustain programming at Denfeld post grant
- Provide information to other schools to encourage expansion beyond Denfeld

# Questions

