

Theory of Change

Program aim

Perfect Presence aims to support students showing early signs of, or actual disengagement from school, so that they feel stronger connections to school and learning and are supported to build on personal and social capabilities, to increase student level attendance rates and reduce days lost to suspension.

Program description

Perfect Presence provides funding through a program for external providers to support schools working with students who demonstrate early signs of, or actual, disengagement from school. The program will reach its aims through a strong partnership between schools and a qualified external provider who delivers an agreed appropriate individualised program to at-risk students. Each provider is required to work collaboratively with schools, students and parents/carers to develop individualised goals for students, evaluate the success of the goals through a rigorous evidence-based evaluation plan.

Beneficiaries

Year 8, 9, 10 students in targeted schools who demonstrate early signs of, or actual disengagement from school. Specific targets for this group have been set at students who had 70-90% attendance rates in 2020 with 2 – 4 suspensions from school. Schools should have attempted to address engagement issues through other school-based support, before referring those students into the program.

Intended impact

To support the Department's strategic priorities of:

- Strong foundation in literacy and numeracy, deep content knowledge, and confidence in ability to learn, adapt, be responsible citizens.
- Students finish school well prepared for higher education, training, and work.

Program timeframe definitions

- Short-term: Improved student outcomes during the program
- Medium-term: Improved student outcomes in the period after program completion (e.g. 6 months)
- Long-term: Improved student outcomes 2 years after program completion – to be in line with DoE targets

INPUTS Resources, tools, capabilities we have in the system	ACTIVITIES Key actions and services to meet the customers needs	OUTPUTS Tangible outputs and visible signs of delivery	OUTCOMES Expected outcomes for students (Short-Medium-Long term)	IMPACT Ultimate goals we're helping students achieve	
<p>Program & Design Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program guidelines (including timing, roles and responsibilities, focus cohorts, best practice examples etc) - Outcome measurements framework - Measurement tools such as ISD Wellbeing Tool (pilot) and existing measurements in Scout. - Training to use tools effectively - Streamlined services –integrate program with other DoE priorities and make services easy for schools to navigate - Communications - each actor in the system understands what is required of them <p>Commissioning approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective procurement process to identify best providers and support a healthy provider market in the future - Outcomes-based contracts with providers - Ongoing contract and program management 	<p>Providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborate with schools to design programs based on students’ needs, context, and program guidelines - Provide authentic learning experiences that instil curiosity and create pathways to meaningful transitions - Explicitly teach the General Capabilities identified in the program design - Create safe spaces for students to try new things and develop self-confidence - Develop individualised learning goals in collaboration with schools and students - Monitor and report on student progress regularly - Create meaningful links between program, the school and local community - Celebrate students’ successes <p>Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify appropriate students, manage group size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of students from the target cohort successfully completing program - Number of targeted schools engaged - Number of Providers delivering a successful program - Number of facilitators running programs that meet the outcomes and requirements 	<p>Short – Medium Term Goals</p> <p>Behavioural</p> <p>Student shows <u>improved attendance and suspension rates</u> during program</p> <p>Student independently demonstrates improvements in ability to <u>express emotions appropriately</u> (Self management)</p> <p>Student develops and/or maintains <u>positive relationships</u> with others (Social awareness)</p> <p>Cognitive</p> <p>Student demonstrates <u>deeper engagement with learning</u></p>	<p>Long Term Goals</p> <p>Behavioural</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An increase in the percentage of students from targeted schools to attend school at least 90% of the time where the targeted students have 70-90% attendance with 2-4 suspensions - A reduction in days lost to individual suspension <p>Cognitive</p> <p>Increase the proportion of recent school leavers from the targeted schools (who left school the previous year) transitioning to higher education, training or work from 89.6% to 91.6% by 2022</p> <p>Emotional</p>	<p>Strong foundation in literacy and numeracy, deep content knowledge, and confidence in ability to learn, adapt, be responsible citizens.</p> <p>Students finish school well prepared for higher education, training and work.</p>

<p>- Approach and support from Commissioning NSW</p>	<p>and program duration based on need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribute to discussion around targeted General Capabilities for identified students - Monitor and evaluate student engagement and behaviour changes (including through data and dashboards) 		<p>Emotional</p> <p>Student reports increased and/or sustained feelings of <u>personal wellbeing</u></p> <p>Student reports greater sense of belonging and improved <u>connections to school, culture and community</u></p>	<p>Increase the proportion of NSW public school students reporting a sense of belonging, expectations for success and advocacy at school from 65% to 69% (secondary students) by 2022.</p>	
---	--	--	--	--	--

Expected activities for the Department of Education, to enable the program Theory of Change:

- Develop a way to identify schools most in need of support, guided by data and School Success Model
- Give schools and providers clear guidelines and expected outcomes, along with appropriate flexibility to operate best for their context
- Give guidance on expected activities for schools and providers (e.g. administrative tasks, coordination, student progress and evaluation)
- Employ and develop tools for schools to better monitor student engagement (including student voice)
- Administer an efficient procurement process
- Connect schools to qualified local providers who are able to deliver effective programs
- Support schools in managing provider performance and accountability (including active contract management)
- Share data to providers and schools to support continuous improvement of service delivery and achieving outcomes, through an evidence-based evaluation process
- Share best practice and promote ‘what good looks like’ to schools and providers
- Provide a framework for schools to access wellbeing and engagement support services (including this program and others)

Our pathway to measuring outcomes is multi-pronged, using a combination of:

1. **Monitoring existing school data (school and department-led)**
Tracking data in school dashboards: Scout and other appropriate tools, monitored (a) centrally by DoE for system performance and (b) locally by program coordinator in schools. Performance data regularly shared with providers to drive outcomes.
2. **Recorded observations (provider-led)**
Student Individual Learning Plans (ILP) and progression in students' Personal and Social capabilities (part of General Capabilities framework). Students' progress and "wins" in program to be regularly recorded in ILP.
3. **Self-reported responses (provider-led)**
Surveys with students pre, during, and post program – to be administered at key points in the program.
4. More details in the following outcome measures and evaluation plan.

Outcome Measures & Evaluation Plan

Intended outcomes

Short-Medium term outcomes	Long term outcomes
Behavioural outcomes	
<p>Student shows <u>improved attendance and suspension rates</u> during program delivery</p> <p>Student shows <u>improved attendance and suspension rates</u> 6 months after program delivery</p> <p>Student independently demonstrates increased ability to <u>express their emotions appropriately</u> (Self-management)</p>	<p>An increase in the percentage of students from targeted schools to attend school at least 90% of the time Where the targeted students have 70-90% attendance with 2 suspensions</p> <p>A reduction in days lost to individual suspension</p>

<p>Student forms and/or maintains <u>positive relationships</u> with others (Social awareness)</p>	
<p>Cognitive outcomes</p>	
<p>Student demonstrates <u>deeper engagement with learning</u></p>	<p>Increase the proportion of recent school leavers from the targeted schools (who left school the previous year) transitioning to higher education, training or work from 89.6% to 91.6% by 2022</p>
<p>Emotional outcomes</p>	
<p>Student reports increased and/or sustained feelings of <u>personal wellbeing</u></p> <p>Student reports greater sense of belonging and increased positive social and emotional <u>connections to school, culture and community</u></p>	<p>Increase the proportion of targeted NSW public school students reporting a sense of belonging, expectations for success and advocacy at school from 65% to 69% by the end of 2022.</p>

Outcome Measures Framework

Outcome	Success Criteria	Improvement Measures	Method/Source	Details
Behavioural outcomes				
<p><u>Student shows improved attendance and suspension rates during program delivery</u></p> <p><u>Student shows improved attendance and suspension rates 6 months after program delivery</u></p>	<p>Student understands regulations around attendance and suspension</p> <p>Student understands the impacts from low attendance and suspension</p> <p>Student attends school regularly, including days that are independent of the engagement program</p>	<p>Improved student attendance rates and/or levels over the course of the program Minimum increase of 5% increase for individual student.</p> <p>Decrease in suspension rates over the course of the program and at 6 months from end of delivery: 2 suspensions reduced to 1 or 0 suspensions.</p>	<p>Collect pre and post attendance and suspension data: -During the delivery of the program -6 months after program delivery [excluding students in the 2nd semester of Year 10]</p> <p>Collect suspension data Pre- and post-delivery, and at 6 months after delivery</p>	<p>Compare rates of pre and post attendance and suspension data</p>
<p><u>Student independently demonstrates increased ability to express their emotions appropriately (Self-management)</u></p>	<p>Student develops improved general capabilities: Personal and Social Capabilities:</p> <p>Students recognise their emotions</p>	<p>Notable improvements in student behaviour referrals</p> <p>Increased willingness to positively engage in school functions e.g., assemblies, carnivals</p>	<p>ILP improvement : achievement of personal learning goals</p> <p>Survey: Pre & post self-reported improvement [self-management of emotions]</p>	<p>Ongoing, recorded within the student individual learning plan (ILP)</p> <p>Student personal learning goals to align with the Personal & social capabilities –</p>

	<p>Student appropriately adjusts emotions and responses</p> <p>Student actively uses supports and tools to aid the emotional adjustment</p> <p>Student maintains positive behaviours in a variety of school settings</p> <p>Student recognises the shift in ability to manage emotion and responses</p> <p>Student practices resilience, empathy, and respectfulness</p>		<p>Data from student behavior referrals [if available]</p>	<p>General capabilities scaffold</p> <p>ILP developed at start of the program, monitored regularly and adjusted to suit the needs of the student, evaluated at the end of the program.</p>
<p>Student forms and/or maintains <u>positive relationships</u> with others (Social awareness)</p>	<p>Student actively uses supports and tools to aid the emotional adjustment</p> <p>Students understands the levels and types of positive relationships available to them</p> <p>Student understands their level of responsibility in</p>	<p>Increased levels of self-reported improvement in the number of positive relationships developed and maintained over the course of the program</p> <p>Notable improvements in student behaviour referrals</p>	<p>ILP improvement : achievement of personal learning goals</p> <p>Survey: Pre & post self-reported improvement [positive relationships]</p>	<p>Ongoing, recorded within the student individual learning plan (ILP)</p> <p>Student personal learning goals to align with the Personal & social capabilities – General capabilities scaffold</p>

	<p>developing and maintaining positive relationships with others</p> <p>Student develops improved general capabilities: Personal and Social Capabilities:</p> <p>Student forms and maintain positive relationships with peers and staff</p> <p>Students act in a way that benefits others</p> <p>Students are able to work through difference of opinion and develop solutions with others</p>		<p>Data from student behavior referrals [if available]</p>	<p>ILP developed at start of the program, monitored regularly and adjusted to suit the needs of the student, evaluated at the end of the program.</p>
<p>Cognitive outcomes</p>				
<p>Student demonstrates deeper engagement with learning</p>	<p>Student can explain the significance of what they are learning</p> <p>Student can articulate learning growth and work</p>	<p>Increased levels of self-reported improvement in engagement with a range of school activities</p>	<p>ILP improvement : achievement of personal learning goals</p> <p>Survey: Pre & post self-reported improvement</p>	<p>Ongoing, recorded within the student individual learning plan (ILP)</p> <p>Student personal learning goals to align with the Personal &</p>

	<p>towards their educational goals</p> <p>Student can articulate and work towards their career and life pathways such as continuing school, higher education, apprenticeships, workforce</p> <p>Student actively engages with and adjusts their ILP</p> <p>Student actively uses supports & tools to reach their learning goals</p> <p>Students develop a sense of pride in their achievements</p>	<p>Achievement of personal learning goals</p> <p>Identification of career and life goals</p> <p>Self-reported increase in enthusiasm towards expectations of success and advocacy</p>	<p>[career and life aspirations]</p> <p>Data from student behavior referrals [if available]</p>	<p>social capabilities – General capabilities scaffold</p> <p>ILP developed at start of the program, monitored regularly and adjusted to suit the needs of the student, evaluated at the end of the program.</p>
Emotional outcomes				
<p>Student reports sustained feelings of <u>personal wellbeing</u></p>	<p>Student understands levels and types of wellbeing</p> <p>Student recognises changes to levels of their own well being</p>	<p>Increased levels of self-reported improvement in well being</p> <p>Improvements in student behaviour referrals</p>	<p>ILP improvement : achievement of personal learning goals</p> <p>Survey: Pre & post self-reported improvement</p>	<p>Ongoing, recorded within the student individual learning plan (ILP)</p> <p>Student personal learning goals to align with the Personal & social capabilities –</p>

	<p>Student actively engages with supports/tools that support improving wellbeing</p>	<p>Improved student attendance rates and/or levels</p>	<p>[ISD Wellbeing tool data] Data from student behavior referrals [if available]</p>	<p>General capabilities scaffold ILP developed at start of the program, monitored regularly and adjusted to suit the needs of the student, evaluated at the end of the program. Student pre and post survey</p>
<p>Student reports greater sense of belonging and improved connections to school, culture and community</p>	<p>Students understands that a positive connection to school, culture and community leads to an improved sense of belonging</p> <p>Student understands their level of responsibility in developing positive connections to school, culture and community</p> <p>Student recognises changes to levels in their sense of belonging</p>	<p>Student's report increased positive and respectful relationships (WBF – Connect)</p> <p>Students report an improved sense of belonging to their school and community (WBF – Connect)</p> <p>Students feel respected, valued, encouraged, supported and empowered to succeed (WBF – Succeed)</p>	<p>ILP improvement : achievement of personal learning goals</p> <p>Survey: Pre & post self-reported improvement [ISD Wellbeing tool data]</p> <p>Data from student behavior referrals [if available]</p>	<p>Ongoing, recorded within the student individual learning plan (ILP)</p> <p>Student personal learning goals to align with the Personal & social capabilities – General capabilities scaffold</p> <p>ILP developed at start of the program, monitored regularly and adjusted to suit the needs of the student, evaluated at the end of the program.</p>

	Student actively engages with supports/tools that support their sense of belonging and positive connections			Student pre and post survey
--	---	--	--	-----------------------------

Appendix

NSW Department of Education

There are three main components of student engagement

	<h3>Behavioural engagement</h3>	<p>Students' participation in learning. Includes the extent to which students follow rules and adhere to classroom norms, participate in extracurricular activities, and exhibit behaviours such as skipping school or "getting into trouble". <i>Measurements: Attendance, absences, suspension</i></p>	<p><i>Students go to school because they want to, not because they have to</i></p> <p>School Based Apprenticeship Officer</p>
	<h3>Cognitive engagement</h3>	<p>Students' investment in learning. Incorporates thoughtfulness and willingness to exert the effort necessary to comprehend complex ideas and master difficult skills. <i>Measurements: Value-added growth, NAPLAN results, HSC attainment and results</i></p>	<p><i>Kids disengage a lot because they don't get the literacy or numeracy component. They can't see any point in what they're learning</i></p> <p>High School Principal</p>
	<h3>Emotional engagement</h3>	<p>Students' positive and negative reactions towards learning, school, peers and school staff (e.g. level of interest, boredom, happiness, sadness and anxiety). Influenced by a student's overall wellbeing and relationships with people at school. Creates ties to a school and influences willingness to do work. <i>Measurements: Tell Them From Me survey (data not provided)</i></p>	<p><i>It's about the relationships. Students are not going to learn if they don't have good relationships, but instead are stuck in fight or flight mode.</i></p> <p>Complex Behaviour Coordinator</p>

Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris 2004

NSW Department of Education

The causes of student engagement are complex and inter-related

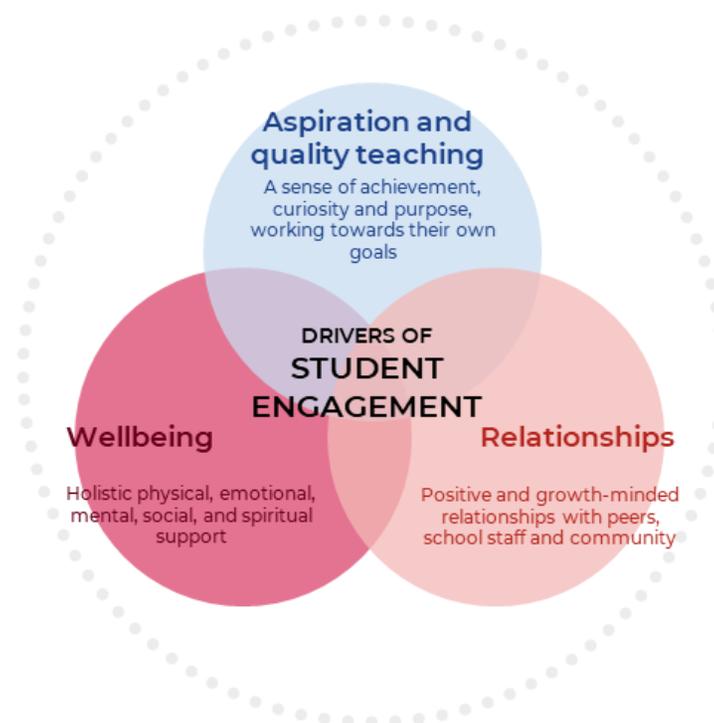
Drivers of student engagement

Through our research and interviews, we encountered three drivers of student engagement:

(1) aspiration and quality teaching, (2) relationships, (3) wellbeing.

Drivers are what support students to be engaged in their learning. To tackle disengagement, we need to ensure these drivers are in place for each student.

These drivers are in line with key pillars of the Wellbeing Framework for Schools (Connect, Succeed, Thrive)¹ as well as other models of engagement and wellbeing such as PERMA (Positive Emotion; Engagement; Positive Relationships; Meaning; and Accomplishment) by Martin Seligman².



Future exploration is required to better understand drivers and validate this model

1. <https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/whole-school-approach/wellbeing-framework-for-schools>

2. Seligman, M. (2011). Flourish. Sydney, New South Wales, Australia: William Heinemann Australia.