Open Doors Statewide Youth Reengagement System Theory of Action | September 2022

Focus Population

Open Doors is an option for young people 16-21 who are not enrolled in high school, who are not on track to complete by 21, and/or who may not complete high school with their cohort without intensive supports.[1]

Assumptions

- Youth experience disruptions in their high school education for multiple, complex reasons
- Alternative learning, credit recovery, and online learning programs do not provide sufficient support for all students

Through cross-agency partnerships, youth reengagement programs can offer intensive and varied supports in response to the personal challenges and goals of each student

Resources

Federal: Funding (e.g., WIOA)

State: Legislative support, OSPI funding, required documentation of program practices (e.g., 1:75 ratio for case management, weekly status check, 2 hours of in-person contact monthly)

Community: Knowledge of local assets/gaps

Program: Provider and partner expertise

Participants: Engagement in program

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Strategies

STATE-LEVEL

- Provide training and technical assistance for programs
- Model intra- and inter-agency partnerships beyond K–12
- Use input from steering committee and others to inform guidance for program implementation

COMMUNITY-LEVEL

- Offer and promote multiple pathways to meaningful credentials and career skills and an on-ramp to postsecondary work and education
- Develop innovative partnerships for instruction, wraparound support, and career/community connections that include and go beyond K–12
- Continually improve programming in response to data, student feedback, and community needs

PROGRAM-LEVEL

- Outreach and relationship building
- Case management and wraparound support
- Relevant and flexible learning opportunities that build on student experiences and strengths
- Student voice and choice

Participant

Participant Outcomes

INTERIM OUTCOMES

- Sustain engagement in program
- Demonstrate academic progress
- Increase social and emotional development and well-being
  - Increase skill in self-advocacy and accessing multiple forms of support
  - Increase sense of purpose, agency, and efficacy related to learning
  - Increase positive relationships
- Increase future orientation and career/college skills

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

- Complete secondary education
- Enter the workforce and/or pursue postsecondary learning
- Contribute to community

[1] https://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=392-700-035&pdf=true

Foundational Principles

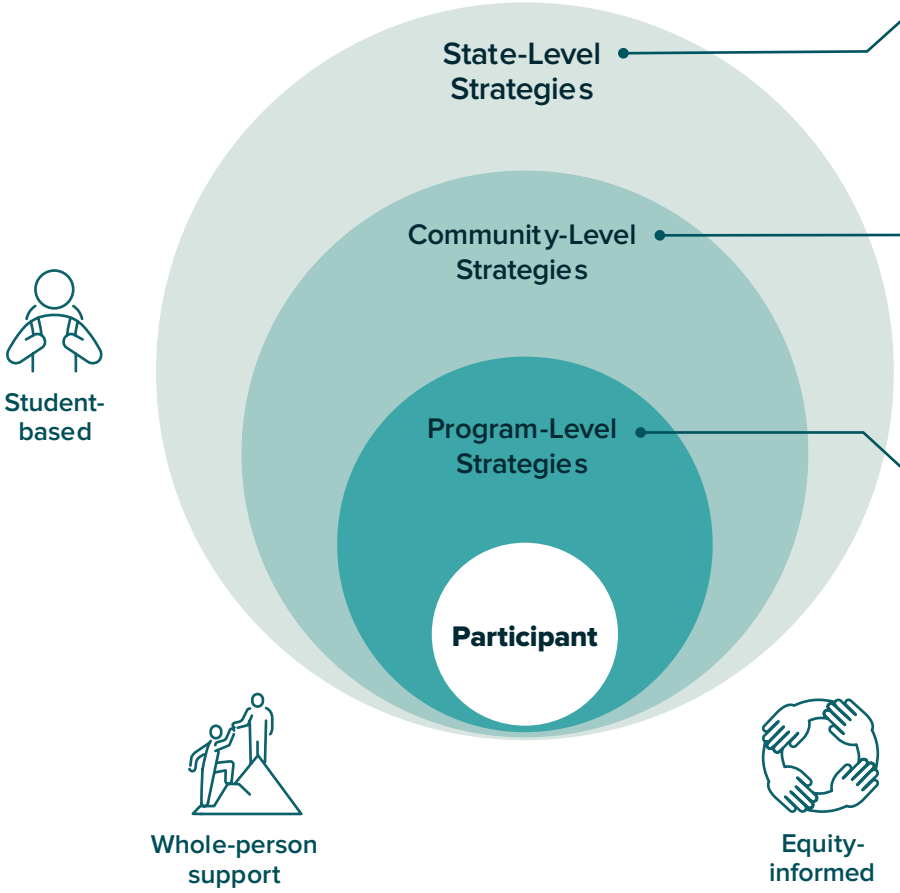
Student-based *programming, services, and supports to fit individual goals, needs, and strengths*

Whole-person support *to address barriers to learning and promote overall well-being*

Connections to career and/or postsecondary education *to help students take their next step*

Equity-informed *design and implementation to address disparities and support students furthest from educational justice*

Open Doors Statewide Youth Reengagement System



State-Level Strategies (OSPI)

- Provide training and technical assistance for programs
- Model intra- and inter-agency partnerships beyond K–12
- Use input from steering committee and others to inform guidance for program implementation

Community-Level Strategies (Local Education Partnerships)

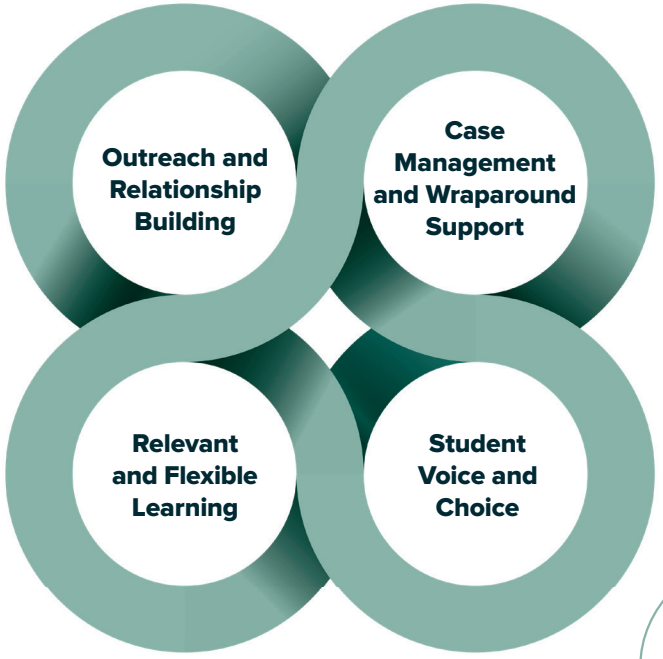
- Offer and promote multiple pathways to meaningful credentials and career skills and an on-ramp to postsecondary work and education
- Develop innovative partnerships for instruction, wraparound support, and career/community connections that include and go beyond K–12
- Continually improve programming in response to data, student feedback, and community needs

Program-Level Strategies

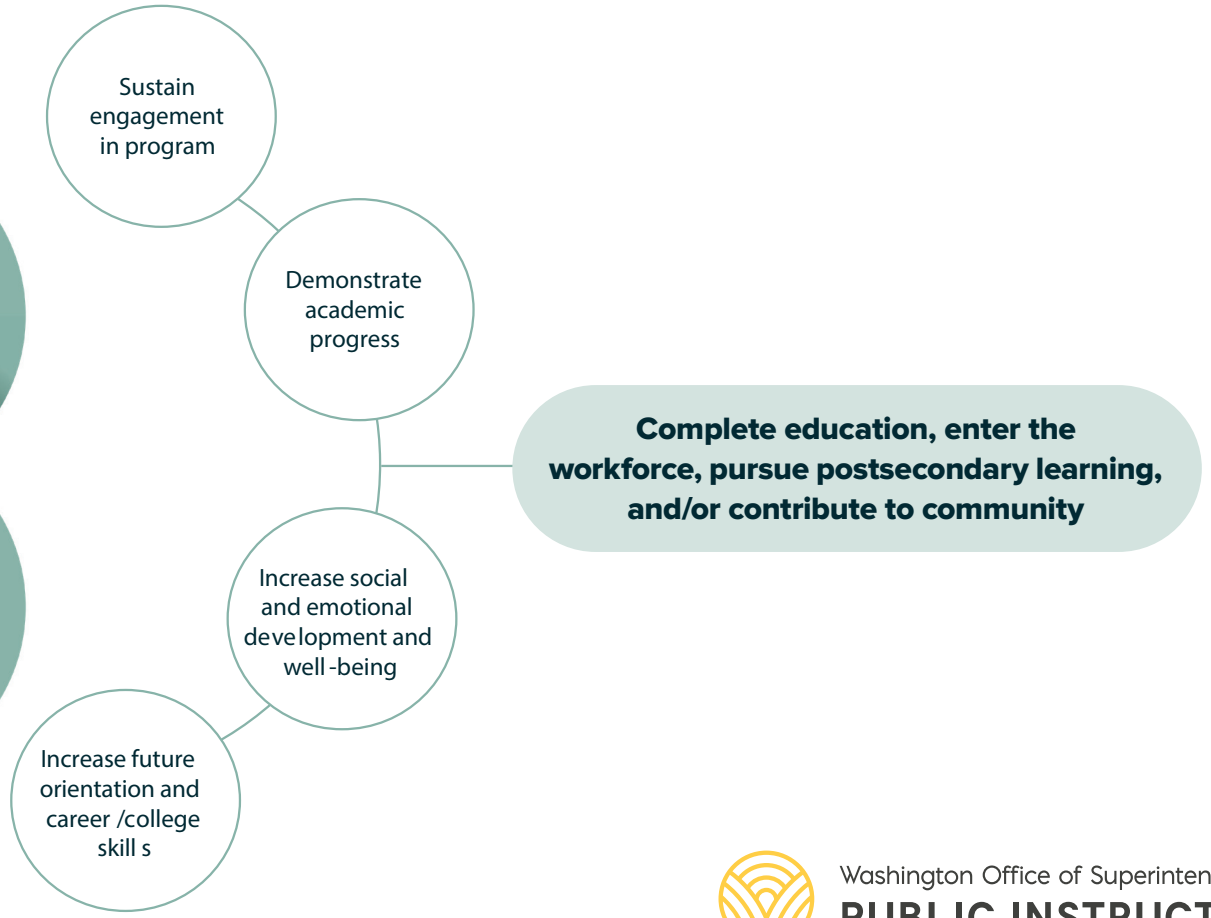
- Outreach and relationship building
- Case management and wraparound support
- Relevant and flexible learning opportunities that build on student experiences and strengths
- Student voice and choice

Open Doors Program Strategies and Participant Outcomes

Program Strategies



Participant Outcomes



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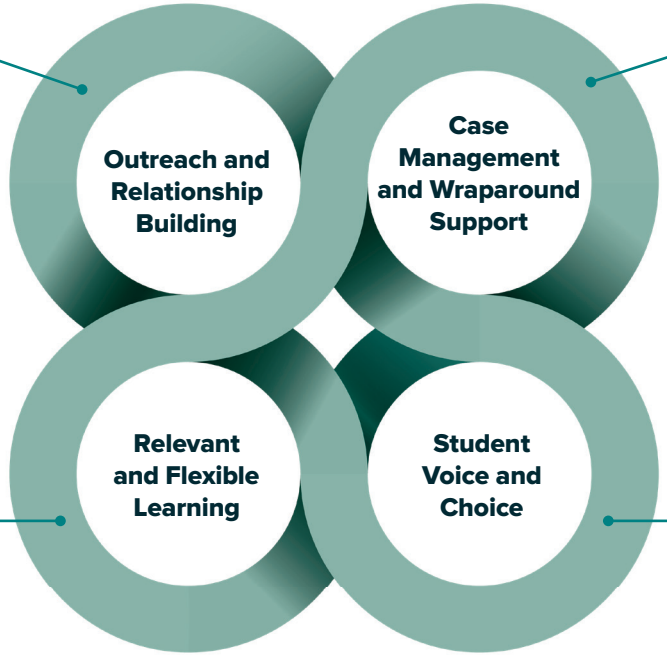
Examples of Open Doors Program Strategies and Practices



- **Communicate with youth** frequently via multiple methods (e.g., text, phone, email, street outreach)
- **Cultivate a sense of community** among students through informal spaces, interest-based clubs, collective learning opportunities, and peer supports
- **Implement equity-focused practices** (e.g., culturally responsive practice, trauma-informed practice, restorative practice, strengths-based approach)

- **Meet individually with each student** on a regular basis to identify needs, set goals, and track and celebrate progress
- **Provide comprehensive student support** with resources and referrals for wraparound services (e.g., housing, food, transportation, mental health) to help students meet their basic needs so that they are ready to learn
- **Coach students** to develop the knowledge and skills they need to advocate for themselves

- **Provide personalized instruction** based on student strengths and aligned with student goals (e.g., curriculum adjusted to student needs and interests, academic coaching and tutoring, individualized plans, flexible schedules, small-group instruction)
- **Integrate social and emotional learning** and support with academics and offer additional workshops on these topics
- **Offer work-based learning,** including offering credit and/or stipends for jobs or programs that help build job skills
- **Offer competency-based instruction** and pathways

- **Elicit youth input and interests** via surveys or interviews
- **Enable students to make ongoing choices** regarding their pathways, goals, and learning activities
- **Engage current and former participants** as peer mentors, interns, and advocates
- **Provide opportunities** for student leadership

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