

STRONGER

2022 RISE NETWORK
ANNUAL REPORT



TOGETHER

A LETTER FROM THE CO-FOUNDERS

Dear Friends and Partners,

During the 2021-22 school year, we welcomed students and staff back to all RISE high schools for in-person learning and collaboration five days per week. While students, caregivers, and educators showed remarkable resolve, creativity, and resiliency during a remote and hybrid school year, this past year showcased how we are always **stronger together**. Time apart made us value proximity and in-person collaboration in new and profound ways.

While we were physically separated during the pandemic, we adapted to new technologies and virtual coaching and convenings; we made the most out of challenging circumstances because our students always deserve our best efforts. And after too much screen time and time apart, this past year felt like the most joyous series of reunions as we resumed in-person collaboration and learning experiences. We found you simply cannot recreate the energy and positivity at a RISE convening through a Zoom screen!

Our theme for the 2022 RISE Annual Report focuses on how we are **stronger together** -- working across schools, across sectors, and across lines of difference. At a moment when too many communities feel fractured and focused on what divides us, RISE partners choose to come together. We work across lines of difference to advance shared student outcome goals. We know that we can achieve more on behalf of our students when we work together and are united by a bigger shared vision. Please read our 2022 annual report to learn how we are **stronger together** as a growing network, working to maximize student outcomes and close opportunity gaps.

Barbara

Barbara Dalio
Co-Founder and Board Chair

Emily

Emily Pallin
Co-Founder and Executive Director

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to ensure all RISE high school students graduate with a plan and the skills and confidence to achieve college and career success. We partner with Connecticut public high schools to lead statewide networks where school communities work together to use data to learn and improve.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RISE Network Overview	4
The RISE by 5 Framework	8
Data-Driven Educator Collaboration	10
On-Track and Postsecondary Culture	12
Cross-School Learning and Collaboration	14
Continuous Improvement and Change Ideas	18
Expressing Gratitude for our Supporters	20
Financials	21
RISE in Their Words	22

STRONGER THROUGH OUR PARTNERSHIPS

In 2015, public school teachers, counselors, and administrators across Connecticut came together with Dalio Education to launch the RISE Network. Sharing the belief that we can do more to help all students achieve their full potential, RISE’s founding partners aspired to create a community built by educators, for educators to advance shared goals to improve students’ college, career, and life outcomes.

Today, RISE’s core and most comprehensive network represents a collaboration between nine high schools and eight public school districts, reaching over 13,000 students. The majority of RISE high school students identify as Black, Latinx, and/or low-income, and we intentionally partner with historically marginalized communities.

RISE Network Founding Partners

RISE brings together educators across schools and districts who work together to ensure all students experience success as they transition to, through, and beyond high school. As our network expands beyond our core and founding partner schools, we continue to find strength in our community, learning together and using this knowledge to affect positive student outcomes.

In recent years, we have expanded upon existing partnerships in districts such as Hartford and Norwalk; partnered with the State of Connecticut on the Connecticut FAFSA Challenge; hosted a Symposium focused on 9th-grade success for partners within and beyond our network, and recently launched a Freshman Focus Network to promote ongoing learning. Through our core network partnerships, we have identified promising practices, which we are now eager to expand to additional communities.



Our core network partners include:

- Brien McMahon High School, Norwalk Public Schools
- East Hartford High School, East Hartford Public Schools
- Francis T. Maloney High School, Meriden Public Schools
- Hartford Public High School, Hartford Public Schools
- Manchester High School, Manchester Public Schools
- Middletown High School, Middletown Public Schools
- Naugatuck High School, Naugatuck Public Schools
- Orville H. Platt High School, Meriden Public Schools
- Westhill High School, Stamford Public Schools



Our Growing Network

As our cross-school collaborations continue to support meaningful learning and impactful innovations, we endeavor to share learnings and resources with new partner schools and districts, in Connecticut and beyond, through scale partnerships, some of which are summarized below.

This past year, we expanded our partnership with Norwalk Public Schools beyond Brien McMahon High School. RISE now supports three additional Norwalk high schools to extend key Grade 9 and postsecondary strategies, broaden data-driven continuous improvement work, and build the central office’s capacity to design data tools reflective of key performance indicators across the system.

RISE also partnered with Next Generation Learning Challenge’s Planning for Postsecondary Success (PPSS) initiative to foster strong Grade 9 transitions. This cross-state learning community includes high schools from three school districts; Hartford, CT, Portland, ME, and Worcester, MA. Since the beginning of 2022, RISE has completed a seven-part learning series for educators from these school teams.

Worcester and Portland are now engaging in RISE’s Freshman Focus Network, which brings together educators from nine schools across three states, learning together in order to deepen their Grade 9 work.

Our current and former scale partners include:

- Baltimore City Public Schools
- Bridgeport Public Schools
- Bristol Public Schools
- Connecticut State Department of Education
- Denver Public Schools
- Hartford Public Schools
- Malden Public Schools
- Meriden Public Schools
- Next Generation Learning Challenges
- New London Public Schools
- Norwalk Public Schools
- Office of the Governor of Connecticut
- Portland Public Schools
- Vernon Public Schools
- Waterbury Public Schools
- Worcester Public Schools



EMPLOYING PROVEN PRACTICES TO DISRUPT OPPORTUNITY GAPS

Connecticut maintains some of the nation’s most significant opportunity gaps, which disproportionately disadvantage low-income, Black, and Latinx students; multilingual learners, and students with special needs. The gaps between student aspirations and attainment often become most striking when students enter freshman year and prepare to transition beyond high school.

In an effort to help close these gaps, the RISE Network places a strong emphasis on supporting students through critical moments of transition. Over time, we have adopted five network-wide focus areas — or the RISE by 5 framework — to increase on-track achievement in and beyond high school. These focus areas with aligned strategies are informed by national research, local data, student voice, and educator expertise.

The RISE by 5 framework reflects actionable strategies that partner schools pursue to build on-track and postsecondary culture, support students’ freshman and postsecondary transitions, structure data-driven collaboration and equitable practice among educators, and bring schools together to share learnings and promising practices.

Through these proven practices, RISE schools work together to disrupt opportunity gaps. We have learned that by collaborating to achieve shared goals, we can do more to support our students.



Only **three quarters** of low-income students graduate from high school within four years.



Only **one in four** low-income high school graduates will earn a postsecondary degree within six years of graduating from high school, compared to roughly half of their higher income peers.¹

¹ StudentTracker for High Schools Demographics Report for CSBE, National Student Clearinghouse.

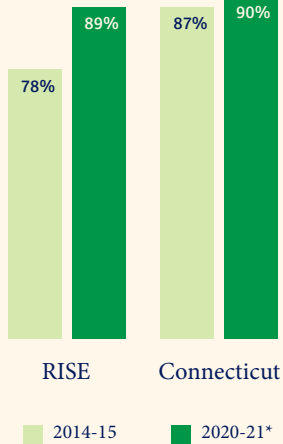
CELEBRATING STUDENT SUCCESS

RISE high schools work together to ensure all students experience success as they transition to, through, and beyond high school by using data to pinpoint needs, form hypotheses, and pursue ideas to advance student achievement. Our focus on key transitions—navigating the middle to high school transition and preparing for postsecondary success—has yielded positive results.

These improvements are especially encouraging, as we recognize that schools and students may still be struggling to recover from pandemic-related learning loss. Our results show that RISE schools are on the right path toward recovery and continuous improvement. We are proud to shine a light on strategies that are working in the midst of trying times: bringing educators together to solve shared challenges, using information-based approaches to improve, and encouraging innovation network-wide.

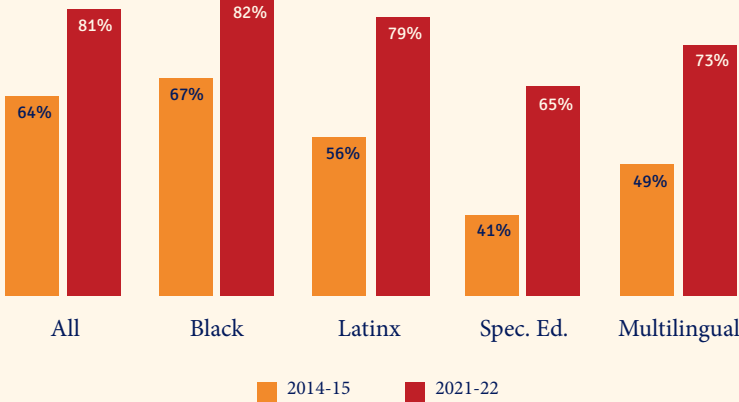


IMPROVED 4-YEAR GRADUATION RATES



*The CT State Department of Education has not yet released official graduation data for the Class of 2022.

INCREASES IN GRADE 9 ON-TRACK RATES IN RISE SCHOOLS



“Much of the support I received, and I feel very thankful for it, kept me on a track as to what I had to do as far as the college admissions process was concerned.”

EYMARD, GRADE 12 STUDENT, BRIEN MCMAHON HIGH SCHOOL

“Coming in as a freshman and joining the RISE program really helped me to maintain my grades, get to class on time, and build strong relationships with my on-track coach. I’m glad to be in the RISE program.”

ARIEN, GRADE 9 STUDENT, WESTHILL HIGH SCHOOL

“The [summer academy counselors] helped me SO much. They gave me advice on what to do, and also how to do it. They walked us through the steps and made sure we knew they were there to help us. My application milestones are complete and I’m feeling really confident.”

NICK, GRADE 12 STUDENT, MIDDLETOWN HIGH SCHOOL

ACHIEVING SHARED GOALS THROUGH PROVEN PRACTICES

RISE high schools work across five focus areas to promote high school and postsecondary success. The RISE by 5 focus areas support innovation and improvement at the network, school, educator team, individual educator, and student levels. Importantly, each RISE high school pursues the RISE by 5 framework in unique ways to reflect local context and priorities, and variation across schools supports continued learning as a network community.

The RISE by 5 Framework

1 On-Track & Postsecondary Culture

Educators, students, and families work together to keep freshman success, on-track achievement, and college and career readiness at the forefront. Strategies to promote and incorporate on-track and postsecondary culture into our schools include on-track coaches, on-track student conferences, on-track celebrations with families and students, and senior signing days.

2 Targeted Transition Supports

Students benefit from targeted transition supports in Grade 9 and in preparation for postsecondary pathways. Such critical transition supports for students include summer bridge programs for incoming 9th-graders, after-school and Saturday sessions, summer college and career readiness academies for incoming 12th-graders, college application and FAFSA completion campaigns, and summer melt texting for graduated seniors.

3 Data-Driven Educator Collaboration

Teams engage in student-centered team meetings, leveraging data tools, protocols, and educator expertise to take a holistic approach to meet the individual needs of all students. Strategies include Grade 9 and postsecondary data teams, dashboard tools to support on-track efforts and postsecondary planning, strategic data calendars, and data-informed reflection and planning.

4 Equitable Educator Practice

Educators receive coaching, resources, and support to invest in educators as professionals, pursuing evidence-based ideas to create more rigorous, engaging, and inclusive classroom and school environments. Teachers, counselors, and administrators engage in ongoing and personalized coaching with RISE’s Freshman Success and Postsecondary Success Coaches.

5 Cross-School Learning

Network partners come together across schools to learn, grow, and improve. Teachers, counselors, and administrators share successes, challenges, and ideas to advance our shared goals and collective impact. Implementation among schools includes “role-alike” collaboratives and “goal-alike” convenings centered around Grade 9 and college and career readiness, as well as the cross-school research agenda.



Summer Transition Programs for Students

Successful student transitions are a key focus for RISE schools, including as schools design summer programming. Last summer, these programs reached thousands of students, supporting the transition from middle to high school, 11th to 12th grade, and preparing graduating seniors for postsecondary success.

Across our network schools, we were proud of the fantastic participation and enthusiasm of students engaged in these programs.

Hannah, an incoming Middletown High School senior, said of her summer academy experience. “The thing I was the happiest we did was going through all the Common App questions. At first it was overwhelming and then they slowed it down and then I saw that it was not too hard, just a lot of information.”



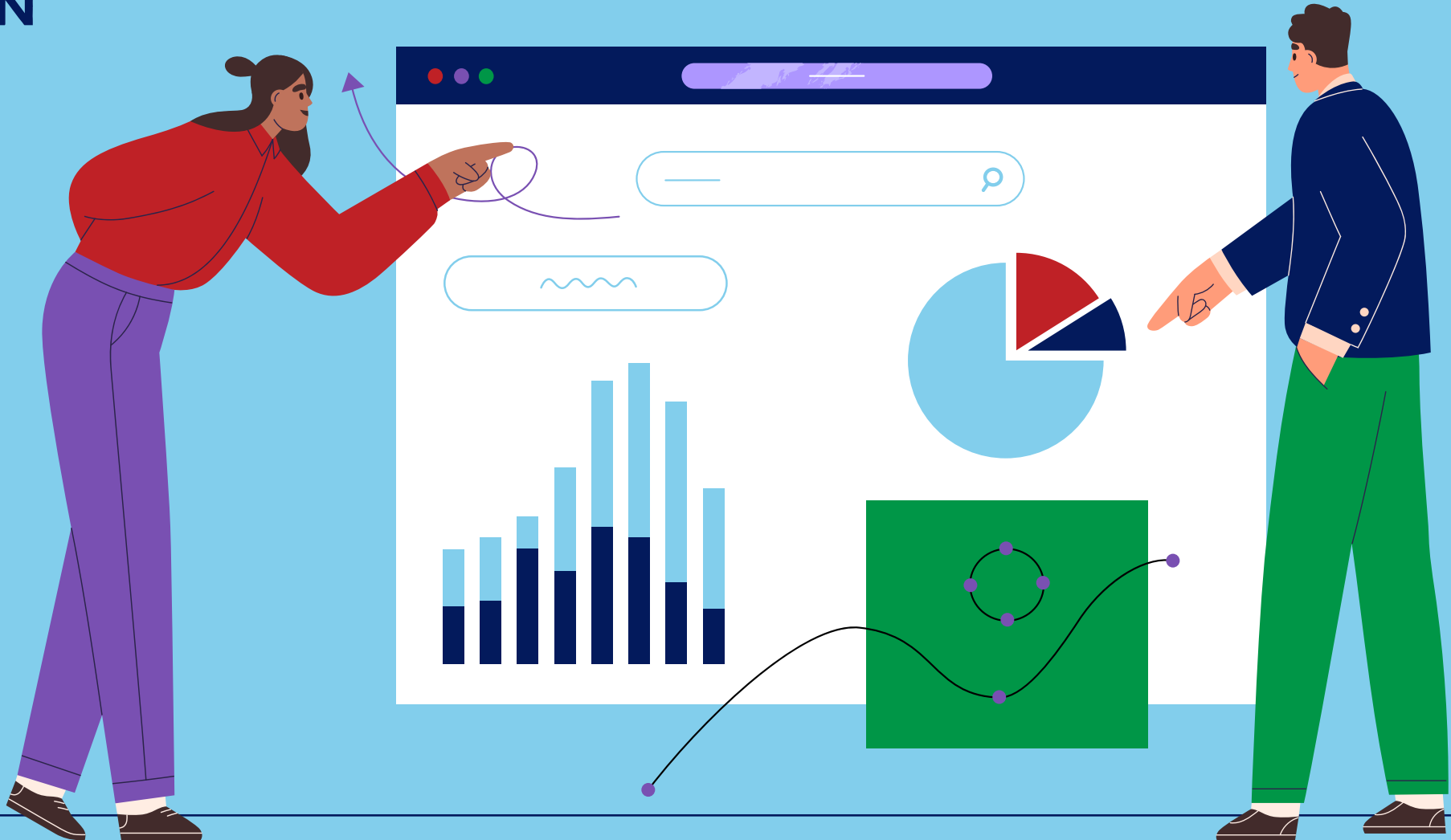
A STUDENT-CENTERED APPROACH TO DATA-DRIVEN EDUCATOR COLLABORATION

Educators across the RISE Network use data in new ways to promote equitable and personalized student support. Teams of educators in RISE high schools engage in student-centered team meetings designed to leverage data and educator expertise, taking a holistic approach to meet individual student needs.

This approach was especially crucial in the past year, as educators and students navigated the “new normal,” coming back to the classroom after nearly two years of remote/hybrid learning. Team collaboration rooted in evidence became invaluable.

RISE data dashboards, tools, and practices enabled educators to identify trends and students for focused support in real-time. They were then empowered to bring this important data together with their own professional expertise and work together with colleagues and RISE coaches to develop student-focused solutions.

For both of our key focus areas — in Grade 9 and around college and career readiness — school teams leveraged innovative data tools, strategic data calendars, and coaching support from RISE staff to ensure student success.



Using Data to Support:

Freshman Success

Grade 9 teams meet on a weekly basis and review targeted data, including attendance, behavior, grades, and assessment records, to help students stay on track. Teams use a combination of data, protocols, norms, and team roles to engage in evidence-based and solution-oriented conversations. Educators share their unique perspectives and experiences in an effort to advance shared student outcome goals.

At Hartford Public High School, Grade 9 data teams, led by Assistant Principal Justin Taylor, have experienced such promising results that they have taken the next step of scaling these practices for 10th graders and beyond.

Postsecondary Success

Postsecondary data meetings focus on Grade 11 and 12 students’ progress in developing postsecondary plans and completing necessary access milestones. Counselors and administrators use the RISE Data Hub to ensure all students pursue and access their college and career goals. The teams use data to identify students needing additional support, as well as milestones that may require school-wide attention.

At Brien McMahon High School in Norwalk, Assistant Principal LaShante James has led her team in utilizing this model to drive broader postsecondary culture and access, supporting not only Grade 12 data teams, but also the FAFSA task force.

“““

”””



RISE provides a lot of really important data that drives the way in which we conduct our meetings, that drives the interventions that we put in place for ninth graders, and that drives the way that we think about the work that we do. They provide support in terms of the protocols and the ability to touch base with those in the RISE Network as we’re looking at the data dashboard, making sense of where our students need some additional support and interventions. The continuity that we have in those relationships has been really important to the success of our freshman on-track work.

JUSTIN TAYLOR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL,
HARTFORD PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL



We’ve been very fortunate to have a tracker system for which the information comes from a survey that students complete starting in their junior year. When I meet with my team, the data is at the center of the conversation. In our district, one of our overarching goals is equity and inclusion, and so we are able to really zoom in and identify areas of disparity with the data and create goals around that. It’s empowering because you have all the information at your fingertips to make meaningful change and impact the students who need it most.

LASHANTE JAMES ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL,
BRIEN MCMAHON HIGH SCHOOL

LEVERAGING ON-TRACK AND POSTSECONDARY CULTURE TO SUPPORT STUDENTS

As a network, we invest in school communities that share a singular focus on results by keeping freshman success, on-track achievement, and college and career readiness at the forefront. At the school level, we focus on building a culture where school community members understand, value, and pursue on-track achievement and postsecondary success.


RISE high schools implement specific strategies to build strong cultures. For example, schools implement on-track conferences to engage students in quarterly, one-on-one conversations with a caring adult, offering a safe space for students to discuss their progress, difficulties, and goals. Schools also embrace traditions to recognize Grade 9 on-track achievement and to celebrate graduating students' postsecondary plans. These celebrations have become important validators for our students and help to reinforce our shared values around freshman and postsecondary success.

RISE and school partners also recognize that families play a key role in creating a positive culture. Every spring, schools begin outreach to Grade 8 families to support strong high school transitions and to begin sharing on-track language. Similarly, the college and career planning process is daunting and complicated for many families, and schools partner with families to help students develop and pursue personalized postsecondary plans through workshops, targeted communication, and resources.


We are proud of the progress we have made in building a strong foundation for Grade 9 students, and building upon that success, we have increased our efforts to promote college and career readiness for Grade 12 students. As network partners, we want all of our students to graduate from high school on time and with a meaningful and well-matched postsecondary plan.

BEING ON-TRACK


A GUIDE TO BECOMING A SOPHOMORE




- COME TO SCHOOL ON TIME EVERY DAY
- AVOID TARDIES
- STAY IN CLASS ALL PERIOD



- PASS ALL CLASSES
- SUBMIT ALL ASSIGNMENTS - NO ZEROS!
- AIM FOR B'S OR BETTER!



- STAY OUT OF TROUBLE
- AVOID DETENTIONS
- AVOID REFERRALS



- CREATE GOALS
- STAY ORGANIZED
- ASK FOR HELP!

Celebrating On-Track Achievement at Manchester's Grade 9 Awards Night



Manchester High School (MHS) hosted its first-ever Grade 9 Awards Night in spring 2022 to celebrate the accomplishments of 135 freshman students, thereby reinforcing their progress and on-track achievement, a key tenet of the RISE by 5 framework.

This event represented a new approach to on-track celebrations because it involved students' families and produced a true end-of-year event to mark the milestone of 9th-grade completion and promotion to 10th grade.

Taylor McGloin, Freshman Seminar teacher at MHS and one of the event leads, said that the planning team "wanted to engage families and provide positive reinforcement for students, motivating and inspiring them to finish the year strong."

The students – who were nominated by their 9th-grade teachers – received awards in categories such as classroom excellence, performing arts, improvement, self-discipline, leadership, and core values.

The fantastic turnout, smiling faces, and overall feeling of pride encouraged event and school leaders, who plan to make the Grade 9 Awards Night at MHS an annual one.

Recognizing Students' Postsecondary Plans at Maloney and Platt Senior Signing Days

Nearly 600 seniors graduated from Meriden's Platt and Maloney high schools this past spring, with postsecondary plans ranging from four-year and two-year colleges to immediately entering the workforce or enlisting in the military. The RISE Network is proud to celebrate all postsecondary pathways, and RISE schools like Platt and Maloney recognize students through exciting Senior Signing Days each year.

At these joyful events, students are invited to wear clothing representing their chosen pathways and are welcomed with an energetic drum line performance into an auditorium packed with school staff and 11th-graders, all cheering them on. Students cross the stage while teachers call out their names and their chosen programs or pathways.

The goal of these events is to ensure that 100% of seniors graduate high school with fully-formed plans. Following the RISE by 5 framework for promoting postsecondary culture, planning for this starts during freshman year and continues throughout high school. Educators and RISE staff remain focused on making sure their students are supported in making their plans.

Senior signing days represent the culmination of these efforts for hopeful students, supportive families, and the many educators who are dedicated to helping students to achieve their dreams.



EXPANDING THE CROSS-SCHOOL LEARNING MODEL NATIONALLY

As a network community, we have the unique opportunity to work together across schools to learn and grow by sharing successes, challenges, and ideas to improve student outcomes and broaden our collective impact. Core cross-school learning activities include role-alikes, convenings and conferences, and improvement cycles. Through our network learning and research agendas, we embrace the network as the unit of change, allowing for scalable innovations and learning across schools.

Increasingly, RISE is working to share research and promising practices with educators beyond our core network. Using principles of adult learning, RISE now facilitates multiple network learning communities and offers standalone professional development.

Learning Together Through RISE’s First-Ever Grade 9 Summer Symposium

This past summer, RISE hosted its first-ever Grade 9 Summer Symposium in New Haven. The event brought together 65 participants from districts across Connecticut, Colorado, and Maryland.

The goal was to help educators transform high school experiences and student outcomes through replicable and impactful strategies shared throughout the Symposium’s various sessions.

Participants engaged in two days of interactive content, reflecting on research around the critical importance of the Grade 9 transition, exploring data-driven practices to promote freshman success, planning improvements to enhance the

freshman experience in their schools and districts, and connecting with a community of fellow educators also working to promote success as students transition to, through, and beyond high schools.

“Over the past seven years, we’ve experienced the power of bringing together educators across schools and districts to advance shared goals,” said Emily Pallin, Executive Director at the Connecticut RISE Network.

“We were thrilled to partner with talented and passionate educators from 15 schools and three states during the Symposium, and hope this experience is just the beginning of an improvement journey to support all students in achieving high school and postsecondary success.”



Highlighting Educator Perspectives Through the Symposium Panel

On the second day of the Grade 9 Summer Symposium, educators from the RISE Network’s core partner schools shared inspiration with school teams seeking to reimagine and transform the freshman experience.

The panel, moderated by Sam Purdy, RISE’s Deputy Director of Engagement, featured Dr. Dawn Brooks, Assistant Principal, Middletown High School; Peter Civitello, Supervisor of Data Integration and Postsecondary Planning, Meriden Public Schools; Jennifer Straub, Principal, Maloney High School; Phillip Mitchell, Grade 9 Team Leader and Social Studies teacher at Hartford Public High School; and Sharina Jimenez, Senior On-Track Coach, Brien McMahon

High School. During the panel, the school leaders shared their experiences launching freshman success efforts and offered key learnings. They also discussed strategies, such as on-track data teams and summer bridge programs, for schools to consider.

“The individualized attention they (the students) get from On-Track Coaches is very important,” said Jimenez. “We provide them with a safe space and bridge the connection between teachers and students. Not every plan will work with every student – it is important to keep an open mind.”



Hearing from Symposium Attendees

Following the Grade 9 Summer Symposium, participants enthusiastically expressed a 100% satisfaction rating for their experience. They commented that the event was thought-provoking, highly relevant to their work in schools, and allowed for purposeful collaboration.

Here is some of the feedback we received from Symposium attendees:

“I learned about the importance of 9th grade and had a chance to reflect on strategies that have worked for other schools and districts, before working with my team to plan for the next academic year. I had a TON of fun!”

BALTIMORE EDUCATOR

“It was a great opportunity to look at the different ways to improve on the ninth-grade experience not only for students but also for us as teachers. It gave us the ability to think about what we wanted the Freshman Academy to look like and plan how we were going to get there.”

WATERBURY EDUCATOR

“I loved having the RISE NETWORK employees at our tables helping to facilitate. Also, the ability to ask questions and get their consultation feedback right at our table was very helpful.”

NORWALK EDUCATOR



PURSUING MEANINGFUL COLLABORATION THROUGH NETWORK CONVENINGS



The RISE Network provides myriad opportunities for cross-school collaboration, including through convenings of administrators and educators across our core network. This past year, RISE held two network-wide convenings in the fall and spring, monthly role-alike sessions, and retreats in the summer. RISE’s focus on cross-school collaboration allows educators to come together around a common purpose, sharing learnings and making valuable connections.

The fall convening, a two-day virtual event that took place in November of 2021, centered activities for participating educators around our commitment to continuous improvement. Freshman and postsecondary educators engaged in a process to identify school strengths and growth areas, and pinpointed initial change ideas to help them reach their student outcome goals. Teams also conducted a review of data and formalized improvement plans for the next quarter of the school year.

Following the Fall convening, school teams translated their ideas into action, and the spring convening in April of 2022 offered a forum to spotlight the work that teams were leading. Through network sharing of improvement efforts, protocolled data reviews, and time for school team reflection, participants assessed the success of our efforts and leaned into opportunities for further change.

These collaborative sessions served as an important launch point for continuous improvement efforts during the 2021-22 school year, enabling teams to have a foundational understanding of the importance of this work and the tools to assist them, utilizing RISE support when necessary and documenting their progress along the way.



Supporting Educators Through Cross-School Learning

“”

The best part about the RISE Network is that it allows for a lot of collaboration. There’s a lot of opportunity to convene and thought partner with staff at different schools. There’s role-alike conferencing that happens on a regular basis, which is a really great space to brainstorm and see what’s worked for certain leaders at different schools. It allows for a lot of brainstorming and collaboration. The opportunity to come together in the conferences has been really, really meaningful.

CHAD SOUTHERLAND, SCHOOL COUNSELOR,
BRIEN MCMAHON HIGH SCHOOL



These collaborative sessions served as an important launch point for continuous improvement efforts during the 2021-22 school year, enabling teams to have a foundational understanding of the importance of this work and the tools to assist them, utilizing RISE support when necessary and documenting their progress along the way.

HARNESSING THE POWER OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT & CHANGE IDEAS

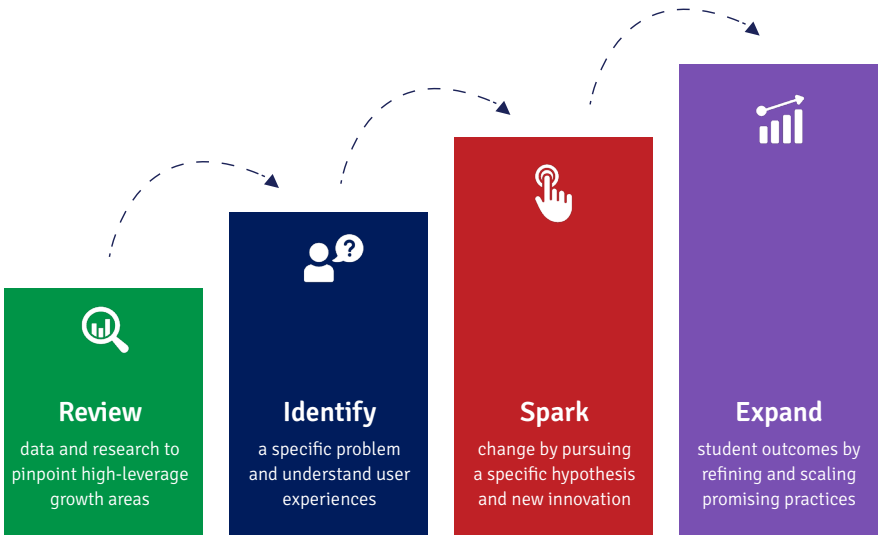
The strategies set forth in the RISE by 5 framework serve as the foundation for our school partnerships as we work to help improve student outcomes. We also seek to refine our efforts based on new data and needs through a commitment to continuous learning and improvement.

It's not enough to repeat the same playbook each school year. Instead, we as a learning community must look for ways to learn and grow based on what's working and what's not.

We believe that navigating this improvement journey is a shared endeavor, and the continuous improvement efforts that schools pursue are intended to complement existing efforts, allowing teams to have an additional layer of support for addressing key barriers to student success. By scaffolding RISE support through our cross-network learning opportunities, we are encouraging schools to be leaders of their own improvement.

Our 5-year grant partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Networks for School Improvement (NSI) initiative has allowed us to develop a more disciplined process around continuous improvement and change ideas to accelerate student outcomes. This past year, each RISE Network school reviewed data points to identify specific challenges they were facing and then worked together to develop specific strategies to tackle these issues.

Schools implemented a variety of change ideas, which were pressure tested throughout the year. Some did not produce the desired results and were therefore adjusted, and others were successful in addressing challenges and have become codified practices. For example, to improve grade 9 on-track rates, Platt High School initiated "Team Elite" on-track conferences to partner with students in their success plans, as well as "Team GOAT" conferences with bilingual teachers who worked on teaching materials specific to multilingual learners. Additionally, to encourage FAFSA completion for seniors planning to attend 2-year colleges, Platt strengthened their FAFSA task force and incorporated additional training for FAFSA coaches.



Implementing Change Ideas to Support Transfer Students

As a networked improvement community, we are committed to pursuing new innovations, hypotheses, and change ideas informed by growth opportunities revealed by the data. When we commit to continuous improvement, exciting new strategies take root.

Several years ago, a network-wide data analysis indicated that transfer students were far less likely to be on-track than their peers. Too often when new students enroll in a school midyear, there is very little fanfare or transition support. At East Hartford High School (EHHS), educators were inspired by this data to act, and a change idea was born. EHHS implemented a new Hornet Induction Program to celebrate and welcome new students to the school community.

At the induction ceremony, students watch a school overview video, Summer Leadership Institute student leaders talk about the importance of being involved in the Hornet Community, and inductees cross the auditorium stage and receive a hornet pin from one of their grade-level peers. These students are also paired with mentors to help them get acclimated to their new school. Several years later, this innovative strategy is still going strong!



Demonstrating RISE Network Change Ideas on the National Stage

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Networks for School Improvement (NSI) initiative supports organizations that bring groups of middle and high schools together to advance high school graduation and college success rates for Black and Latinx students and students experiencing poverty. These organizations - the RISE Network among them - serve as intermediaries for the school networks they bring together, each of which decides its own approach.

Through our 5-year grant partnership with the Gates Foundation, RISE staff have the opportunity to participate in a variety of learning activities throughout the year. This past spring, several of our staff members traveled to an NSI gathering in Baltimore to attend and present during two sessions. Deputy Director of Freshman Success Nichelle

Woodson and Engagement Manager Peter Lorinser shared information about our school coaching and change idea model.

They described how the approach of the Freshman Success Team has evolved over the past two years, as they have created and implemented a model of our work that not only builds capacity among educators and administrators, but also improves student outcomes. They challenged participants to consider how they determine what data to present to schools, provide internal coaching to educators, and build a strong investment in Grade 9 work; and went on to explain the ways in which the RISE team has addressed these very questions.

"Sharing our learnings with our colleagues across the NSI community not only allows us to shine a light on the work we are so very proud of, but it also offers us the opportunity to learn from others as they bring in their own perspectives and organizational experiences as well," says Woodson. "These experiences allow our team to continually improve on our practices and work with our school partners."

We are deeply grateful for our philanthropic supporters' generosity and partnership as we work together to help all students achieve success. We appreciate their leadership and all that they do in service of Connecticut communities, students, and educators.

Dalio Education
Bill & Melinda
Gates Foundation
BeFoundation

The Ritter Family
Foundation
Per & Astrid Heidenreich
Family Foundation

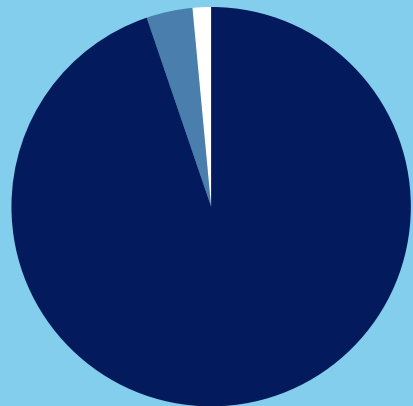
With gratitude, we recognize the contributions of the RISE Board of Directors, whose stewardship and steadfast commitment to student success guide us as we work collectively to advance our mission.

BARBARA DALIO, CHAIR
RODGERS HARPER, TREASURER
ERIN BENHAM, SECRETARY

NATALIE GORDON
NATE QUESNEL
DIANNA WENTZELL

RISE Financials, Fiscal Year 2022²

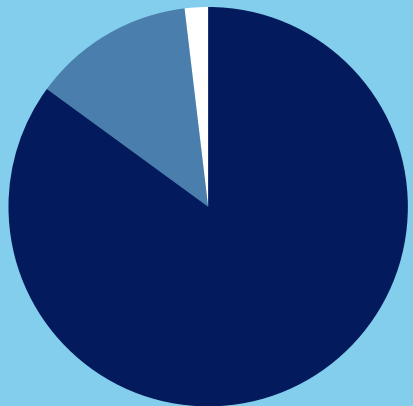
Support and Revenue



CONTRIBUTIONS	\$5,585,208
PROGRAM SERVICES	\$387,902
OTHER INCOME	\$16,476

TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE: \$5,989,586

Operating Expenses



PROGRAM SERVICES	\$4,318,272
MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL	\$532,540
FUNDRAISING	\$221,818

TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES: \$5,072,630

85% of contributions go directly towards supporting program services.

² Unaudited financials for fiscal year ending June 30, 2022.

Investing in the Future

We can do more for young people when we work as a team. Join us as we make a difference for thousands of Connecticut youth. Together, we can and will help all students realize and achieve their full potential. Get involved:



DONATE

to RISE at ctrise.org, helping us, increase our impact in support of students, educators, and public high schools in Connecticut.



EXPLORE

our resource portal at ctrise.org/resources, where you can access actionable ideas and tools for improving student engagement, on-track achievement, and postsecondary outcomes.



CONNECT

with us by signing up for our quarterly newsletter at ctrise.org and by following us on Twitter and LinkedIn [@ctrisenetwork](https://twitter.com/ctrisenetwork) to stay up to date on our latest news, photos, and videos.

RISE IN THEIR WORDS

At the very heart of the RISE Network, driving all of the work that we do, is our strong commitment to excellent and equitable student experiences. Our strategies are meant to empower students, giving them the tools and confidence they need to chart a path for success. RISE students inspire us every day with their determination to achieve their goals, and their resolve and enthusiasm only make our community stronger. Looking back on the past year, our students reflect on their experiences and the connections made through the RISE Network.



CHRIS, GRADE 9 STUDENT,
WESTHILL HIGH SCHOOL

“ RISE has helped me to be a better person and they have motivated me to pursue my dreams and work on my future.

Having the support to back me up in going forward with this process was the biggest thing that gave me the assurance that I could do really well in college.

ROJA, GRADE 12 STUDENT,
BRIEN MCMAHON HIGH SCHOOL

The 4-year college workshop and completing my Common Application helped me reflect on my past four years at Naugatuck as I prepare for what’s next.

JACK, GRADE 12 STUDENT,
NAUGATUCK HIGH SCHOOL

RISE has helped me build my social-emotional skills. Before, I feel like I didn’t have anyone to talk to, and now I talk to my coach.

ANGEL, GRADE 9 STUDENT,
WESTHILL HIGH SCHOOL

”



STRONGER TOGETHER

2022 RISE NETWORK
ANNUAL REPORT

