



Translating Best-Practice Research into Action in Your District

Tailored services to improve student success, enhance the employee experience, and increase community confidence



EAB Research Advisory Services

Take the Guesswork Out of Progress

EAB's Research Advisory Services are designed to help your team make faster progress on issues that matter most through translating best-practice research into action in your schools. Your Dedicated Advisor can build a tailored schedule of interactions with EAB Subject Matter Experts, connecting members of your district leadership team with evidence-based solutions and prioritized guidance on how to tackle the problems keeping them up at night.

Our Research Advisory Services are provided in the following formats:



Onsite Presentation (1 per year of partnership)

Delivered in-person by an EAB Subject Matter Expert. Typical duration = 2-3 hours
These landmark events are designed to help your team lift up from daily district management and engage in deep exploration of single systemic challenge. Ideal for centering your entire district leadership team or school board around a new strategic focus or regrouping to address a longstanding but persistent issue. EAB's Onsite Presentations will equip your team with the following:

- Contextual data on a key challenge facing your district
- Insight into the root causes of the challenge and why districts struggle to make progress
- Proven, replicable practices that address those root causes
- Understanding of the steps other districts have taken to implement those practices in their schools

Use these presentations to align your team around what your district is doing well today, where you see opportunity for improvement, and the steps your team will take over the coming months to improve outcomes in your district. Please see the pages (6-17) for currently available EAB Onsite Presentations.



Virtual Consultation (Up to 4 per year of partnership)

Delivered virtually by an EAB Subject Matter Expert. Typical duration = 1-2 hours
Available for individual leaders and/or small groups (such as an initiative task force), EAB's expert consultations are designed to help you dive further into one specific aspect of EAB's research on a topic, build or validate a plan of action, and prioritize next steps. Partners often use virtual consultations for:

- A guided walkthrough of an EAB implementation guide
- Timely discussion around which research-based practices might help address an emerging challenge in your schools
- Crafting a strategic roadmap for the introduction of new practices in your district

These can be scheduled at any time throughout the school year so that we can remain responsive to your district needs.

Proven Solutions to Critical Challenges Across 3 Terrains

Student Success

Embracing the Science of Reading to Improve Student Outcomes

- ▶ A proven roadmap for improving district-wide early literacy, rooted in reading science

Responding to the Adolescent Mental Health Crisis

- ▶ Essential practices to improve student outcomes while reducing strain on staff

Closing the College Access Gap: Hidden Opportunities to Boost Postsecondary Success

- ▶ A district-leader's guide to helping all students navigate today's complex college landscape

Meeting the Career Readiness Imperative

- ▶ Best practices for scaling career awareness and exposure for all students

Employee Experience

Preparing Your Principals to Lead

- ▶ Learn the competencies of high performing principals, and gain professional development tools to aid the development of those competencies in others

Principal Design Lab

- ▶ A system of best practices for supporting sustainable, strategic school leadership

Designing for Continuous Progress Toward DEIJ

- ▶ A suite of services that walk leadership teams through every step needed to move from discussion to action and drive continuous improvement in diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice

How School Districts Can Improve Teacher Morale

- ▶ Diagnose causes, prioritize threats, and co-design solutions to systemically improve teacher morale

Community Confidence

Navigating Divisive Conversations and Preventing District Flashpoints

- ▶ A framework and strategies to help district leaders efficiently and effectively manage community flashpoints

Anticipating Disruptions: Why and How Your District Should Build a Risk Register Today

- ▶ Identify and prioritize top flashpoint risks and compile best- practices for public statements and press responses



Student Success

SECTION

1

Embracing the Science of Reading to Improve Student Outcomes

Students becoming proficient readers by third grade is one of the most important milestones in K-12 education as it marks the critical transition between learning to read and reading to learn. With the ramifications of pandemic-related missed learning now becoming fully realized, learning to read has never been more important.

This presentation equips school and district administrators with the insights necessary to move beyond unproductive debates about the “reading wars” and lead informed conversation about how to improve early literacy in their schools. This presentation will distill lessons from districts that have successfully improved reading outcomes, even for the most vulnerable student populations. It will also provide practical strategies for leaders to build and sustain literacy expertise within their district.

During this presentation, participants will:



Develop neuroscientific insight into how our brains learn to read and why that information should inform the choices teachers make each day in their classroom



Identify actionable strategies to improve reading outcomes in their district.



Learn how leading districts have successfully aligned school and district systems with best-practices without simply forcing a new curriculum on their staff

▶ Suggested Audiences

- Superintendent
- District Leadership Teams
- Directors of Curriculum and Instruction (or equivalent)
- Chief Academic Officers (or equivalent)
- Principals
- Elementary Teachers

Responding to the Adolescent Mental Health Crisis

In a recent nationwide poll of 200 superintendents, more than 90% of superintendents reported an increase in students experiencing mental health crises since the pandemic. These increases compound a nationwide epidemic of adolescent mental health challenges that has been growing for a decade. School based care is often the only option for students: Across much of the country, local community providers either don't exist or the next available appointment is months away. As a result, 75% of students receiving mental health care receive that care in a school setting.

But schools were not designed to be mental health care providers and hiring sufficient staff to support the number of students needing care is difficult – or even impossible – for most districts today.

In this presentation, EAB provides a roadmap for how to effectively meet the rising demand for mental health support in schools – leveraging practices that will improve student outcomes while reducing strain on district staff and budgets.

During this session, participants will:



Develop a deeper understanding of the barriers that districts must overcome to address student mental health challenges in their schools



Identify ways to reduce stigma around mental health in their community to increase self-referrals



Build a list of ways to improve their districts system of support, including how to identify and respond to mental health concerns at the earliest possible stage, and how to reduce the need for 1:1 intervention while meeting the needs of more students

▶ Suggested Audiences

- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services (or equivalent)
- Director of Counseling and School Psychology (or equivalent)
- Principals

Closing the College Access Gap

Hidden Opportunities to Boost Postsecondary Success

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated nearly all barriers high school students face to postsecondary success. Today, students must navigate a rapidly changing college landscape— from a more complex admissions process to rising tuition costs. While higher education certainly has a role in minimizing hurdles to college access, EAB research has found K-12 district leaders and counselors have the unique opportunity to mitigate nearly 80% of the top postsecondary success barriers facing students today.

This presentation equips district teams with pertinent updates on the changing college landscape and its implication for students and schools. Participants will learn strategies that prepare students to overcome the postsecondary challenges ahead and receive ready-made resources that help students get to and through higher education.

During this session, participants will:



Learn high-impact strategies every district leader and counselor should use to boost postsecondary success, including FAFSA support, equitable grading, etc.



Identify the new and hidden barriers preventing qualified students from enrolling and completing college

▶ Suggested Audiences

- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services (or equivalent)
- Director of Counseling and School Psychology (or equivalent)
- College and Career Counselors (or equivalent)
- Secondary Principals
- Secondary Teachers

Meeting the Career Readiness Imperative

Most K-12 students do not receive the career development they need to be successful in the labor market. In fact, 62% of students rate their counselors “fair” or “poor” in helping them explore and plan for careers. As a result, they make uninformed decisions about their next steps after graduation—costing them time and money in the long run.

This presentation teaches district leaders and staff how they can help students better understand their career options and successfully transition into the labor force after high school graduation. It teaches cost-effective strategies to ensure there are opportunities for all students to explore and prepare for careers within the academic environment of their district. This presentation shows how to integrate academic and career development into a continuous, coordinated strategy that relies on academic enrichment (including experiential learning and reflection activities) and in-school services (e.g., counseling and advising).

During this session, participants will:



Identify ways to maximize career development opportunities for students, even those early in their education



Develop a plan to effectively provide personalized and frequent career decisions support to students



Learn how to lower access barriers for students seeking career experiences

▶ Suggested Audiences

- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services (or equivalent)
- Director of Counseling and School Psychology (or equivalent)
- College and Career Counselors (or equivalent)
- Secondary Principals
- Secondary Teachers



Employee Experience

SECTION

2

Preparing Principals to Lead

What makes a successful school principal? Principals and superintendents agree that principal preparation programs aren't preparing them to be successful in today's schools. Sixty-nine percent of principals say their preparation programs were out of touch with the realities of the job today and 70% of superintendents report feeling dissatisfied with the training new principals receive.

EAB conducted meta-research confirming the overarching core competencies that most improve academic outcomes, but most ed-leadership programs have a limited focus on these core competencies.

In this presentation, you will learn the core competencies that consistently have the greatest impact on school outcomes and the 15 best practices to ensure that all principals have the knowledge, skills, and support they need to lead successful schools, despite constant change.

During this session, participants will:



Describe which set of leadership skills and competencies have the greatest impact on teaching and learning



Learn how to screen and test for these competencies when hiring new school leaders



Create a plan for how to scale ongoing opportunities for principals to develop and hone their ability to strategically problem solve and build trust among their teams



Outline how to help principals maximize their time on high impact activities

▶ Suggested Audiences

- Superintendent
- District Leadership Teams
- Chief Talent Officer (or equivalent)
- Human Resources
- Elementary or Secondary School Principals

Principal Support Design Lab

Seventy-five percent of principals report that their work has become too demanding and unsustainable. Forty-five percent of principals are considering leaving the profession sooner than previously planned. Principals are critical to school success, but the demands on leaders and challenges facing schools have proliferated, making the role increasingly complex and unmanageable at times. As a result, principals either leave the role or struggle to make a significant impact on teaching and learning.

This presentation will teach cutting- edge, leadership strategies from beyond the education industry that can better equip principals to navigate today’s complex landscape. It will allow districts to adjust and prioritize these practices based on the needs and resources of the principals in their district with goal of creating sustainable and strategic school leaders.

During this session, participants will:



Audit current principal development practices and develop a roadmap for strengthening principal support programming in their district



Identify the barriers to effective school leadership



Learn the cascade of strategies that enable effective, sustainable principal leadership including just-in-time training and support, 1-on-1 coaching, and ongoing skill development

▶ Suggested Audiences

- Superintendent
- District Leadership Teams
- Chief Talent Officer (or equivalent)
- Human Resources
- Elementary or Secondary School Principals

Designing for Continuous Progress Toward DEIJ

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice: four interrelated imperatives that are individually complex and collectively daunting. As a system-wide challenge, teams struggle to know where to start and are discouraged when progress in one area leads to new problems in another.

To help partners achieve and sustain meaningful progress toward DEIJ, EAB is providing a suite of services to walk leadership teams through every step needed to move from discussion to action and drive continuous improvements that last for historically marginalized students and staff.

Audiences and outcomes vary by experience. Work with your Dedicated Advisor to create a DEIJ experience that is right for your district.



Embody the Hallmarks of an Anti-Racist Institution

Students and communities across the country are demanding that districts meet this historic moment and commit to embracing truly anti-racist policies and practices in schools. This presentation is designed to educate district leaders on the behaviors and actions needed to move from equity to justice in their schools.



Systems Thinking Workshop

The traditional approach to solving problems in K-12 education is by breaking down complex issues into discrete, isolated units. When addressing structural racism, this approach fails to account for the interconnected nature of institutions and the dynamic impacts that elements have on each other in a system. By using systems thinking, this workshop will equip you and your cabinet with the tools to analyze how units across your district must work together to amplify and scale the impact of racial justice efforts



Pitfalls for Designing and Writing Your DEIJ Plan

This presentation will help your district leadership write your DEIJ plan with confidence, saving yourself time and future headaches. EAB will provide a DEIJ plan writing starter kit and conduct a plan audit, rooting our advice in research-based recommendations.



Metrics Selection Workshop

DEIJ plans rightly focus on ambitious goals, but these can be hard to track through specific outcomes over time. This workshop will help district leadership teams define what success looks like and select appropriate KPIs to track and communicate progress.

How School Districts Can Improve Teacher Morale

Teacher morale is at an all-time low, causing disruptions in pandemic recovery initiatives, teacher absenteeism, and decreased quality in instruction. And districts' current investments to improve morale—such as expanding wellness programs and increasing teacher appreciation efforts—have not worked. But low teacher morale—even during challenging times—isn't inevitable.

EAB has uncovered outlier organizations across industries that dramatically improved employee morale despite challenging circumstances. Their success was not defined by a one-size-fits all or predetermined set of ideas for morale. Their success shared one common ingredient: all outlier organizations diagnosed the evolving needs of employees and co-developed and adjusted morale improvement solutions in collaboration with employees. EAB has distilled this process into the teacher morale momentum loop.

During this presentation, participants will:



Challenge conventional beliefs about how districts can improve teacher morale



Deconstruct the process successful organizations leverage to raise and sustain employee morale



Define the concrete steps that district leadership teams can take to diagnose the causes of low morale, prioritize threats to low morale, and co-design solutions with their teachers

▶ Suggested Audiences

- Superintendent
- District Leadership Teams
- Chief Talent Officer (or equivalent)
- School Principals
- Teachers and Union Representatives



Community Confidence

SECTION

3

Navigating Divisive Conversations and Preventing District Flashpoints

District leaders are spending twice the time combatting political and social flashpoints at a time when student outcomes and morale are at all-time lows. Eighty percent of superintendents say managing divisive conversations is now the hardest aspect of their role. Most districts haven't changed their response processes in years, even when the flashpoints of today are entirely different – namely, they are multi-faceted and comprised of factors that regularly go unaddressed.

This presentation will teach the decision-making framework employed by other high-stress professions to manage the complexity of today's environment. This framework will help district leaders quickly diagnose an optimal solution strategy for the different types of problems that comprise flashpoints today.

During this presentation, participants will:



Identify ways to adapt their leadership style based on the type of flashpoint situation



Learn the problem-solving framework that allows district leaders to quickly diagnose the type of flashpoint and align an appropriate response



Choose how to assemble a rapid response team to deploy flashpoint responses efficiently and effectively

▶ Suggested Audiences

- Superintendent
- District Leadership Teams
- Chief Talent Officer (or equivalent)
- Chief Risk Officer (or equivalent)
- Director of Marketing/Communications (or equivalent)
- Communication Teams

Anticipating Disruptions

Why and How Your District Should Build a Risk Register Today

This interactive workshop will address two critical pieces of flashpoint management - identifying and prioritizing flashpoint risks before they occur, and proactively preparing flashpoint communication.

In the first part, participants will customize EAB's Risk Register, a tool that allows district leaders to compile potential risks in one location while categorizing, evaluating responses, and assigning scores to each risk based on objective criteria. This process will help district leadership determine which risks need immediate responses without overlooking potential risks.

In the second part, participants will tailor best-practice communication strategies for navigating divisive conversations with the public and within their district leadership team – no matter the topic.

This experience will help district leaders craft communication in advance to save time and avoid additional controversy when a flashpoint occurs.

During this session, participants will:



Customize EAB's flashpoint Risk Register to their district's community context



Assess a compilation of resources that help district teams identify new and evolving flashpoint risks to their district



Develop message maps with organized repository of information available to support districts messaging to staff, parents, and the public following a flashpoint incident

▶ Suggested Audiences

- Superintendent
- District Leadership Teams
- Chief Operating Officer (or equivalent)
- Chief Risk Officer (or equivalent)
- Director of Marketing/Communications (or equivalent)
- Communication Teams