

# Increasing High School Success

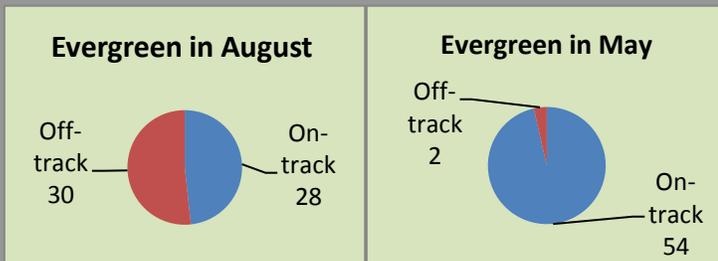
Empowering students and parents to stay on-track with new communication tools

## Our Mission

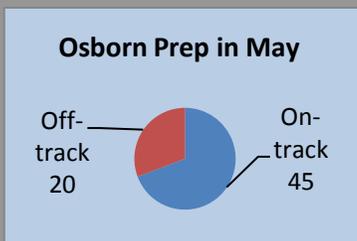
- To **reframe schools** as centers of their communities, with positive, family-centered learning environments.
- To **strengthen student achievement** by drawing on parents and community as resources and creating more positive school climates.
- To **build community leadership** by opening doors to the talents and visions of parents.

## Data from Osborn

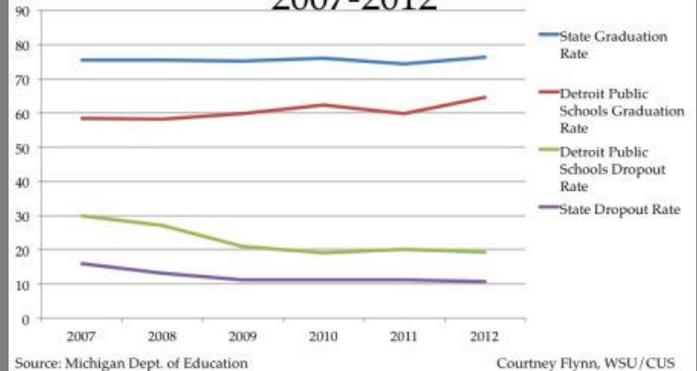
At **Evergreen Academy**, the most current data shows that **96%** of twelfth graders will graduate compared to **52%** at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year.



At **Osborn Prep**, the most current data shows that **69%** of twelfth graders will graduate in June.



## Graduation and dropout rates Detroit Public Schools v Michigan 2007-2012



## Off-Track Students

Administrators and Parent Mentors have identified **low graduation numbers** and **high numbers of students who are “off-track”** to graduate.

The Parent Mentors have identified a few **issues that being “off-track”** have caused for students:

- Despite school efforts, Students say they did not know or did not understand that they were required to “make-up” a class if failed.
- Parents’ awareness of their student’s academic progress has been an issue.
- A student’s lack of organization impacts their ability to keep up with the rigor that high school demands.
- There has not been enough collaboration between students, teachers, parents, school counselors and administrators.

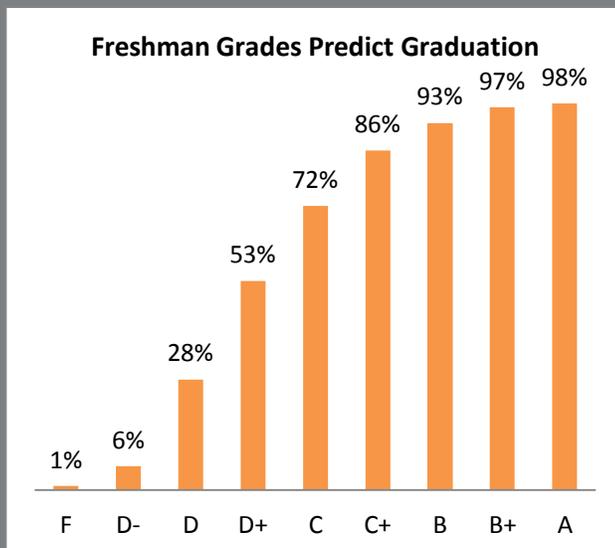
**“Students who end their ninth-grade year ‘on-track’ are almost four times more likely to graduate from high school than those who are ‘off-track’.”** The University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research

## What the Research Says

Researchers at the University of Chicago and The Consortium for Chicago School Research have found that the ninth grade year is the “Make it or Break it Year”.

- “More than 95% of students with a B average or better in their freshman year graduate.”
- “Ninth graders who earn a B average or better have an 80% chance of graduating with at least a 3.0 GPA.”
- “Ninth graders with a C average are more likely to drop out than graduate.”

Effectively, ninth grade is a fresh start for many students; students who have struggled in the past can turn things around but strong students can fall off-track if they neglect the new demands of high school. Attendance, communication between home and school and an academic focus and organization are paramount for success in this school year.



## Policy Recommendations

### Student Tracker

#### Elements

- A **user-friendly format** that is easy to understand.
- Parents and students can track academic progress, especially “on-track” and “off-track” status.
- **Additional student information;** attendance, student goals and ACT scores.
- **Visual representation** and interactive component.
- **Training** for parents and students on how to **use student tracker to communicate** with school on a regular basis.

### Academic Planner

#### Elements

- **Requires** parent, teacher and student **signatures** increasing **communication** about **student progress**.
- Framework for students to **keep track of short and long-term assignments**, foster time management skills and **hold students accountable**.
- **Training** for students and teachers on how to **use planners on a daily basis**.

These policies will:  
Increase student **academic success**,  
parent **involvement** and  
**communication**.  
Bolster **supportive environment**,  
**collaboration** and **college readiness**

“I love planners. I think they are at their best when they help students in three ways; **organization, goal setting and communication with families**. The organization piece is easy to see. It is clear and in writing if a student is **accomplishing daily goals or not**. In the past our school has required a home signature every night but now we do it on a weekly basis. This really helps with **consistent communication** with home in a way that **fits the school and students best**.” – Peter Marsden, 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, Cesar Chavez Prep, Washington, D.C.