RELATIONSHIP-CENTERED SCHOOLS:

A FRAMEWORK

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PURPOSE

- Reimagining K-12 Education where, along with academic rigor, supportive relationships are prioritized.

- School districts/schools integrate a relationship-centered schools strategy and action plan into their overall teaching & learning strategy for supporting K-12 students.

- This strategy and action plan come out of a consultative process led by MENTOR National & Affiliates.

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ALL YOUTH, GRADES K-12, NEED…

Access to…

- Academic rigor

- Supportive and caring relationships

With both prioritized…

- **ALL Students** are known by at least one adult in school;
- **Families** are being engaged & prioritized by schools;
- **Teachers** are setting high/rigorous academic standards, and building supportive relationships with all students they teach; and,
- **Administrators** are transforming school culture so everyone feels that they belong & are part of a community.

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VISION

- All youth have access to a web of support from caring adults and peers across educational settings, school and after-school environments, and can form empowering relationships which:

  – promote their pursuit of their passions, skills and interests

  – enable their access to and exploration of spaces where these can be pursued

  – help them overcome personal and/or institutional obstacles

  – build their social capital and networks

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RELATIONSHIP-CENTERED

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WHY RELATIONSHIPS?

- All students need:
  - Champions

Students would benefit from strengthening relationship ties an building webs of support that allow them to meet their goals head on.

Every Child Needs a Champion

TedTalk by the late, great Rita Pierson

James Comer: "No significant learning can occur without a significant relationship."

Kids don't learn from people they don't like

Human Connection is key

Teacher: "You were chosen to be in my class!"

Student: "You made me feel like I was somebody"

Teaching and learning should bring joy

TEST 18X 2✓ BRAVO!

Every child deserves an adult who will never give up on them

YOU CAN DO IT!!

This job is tough but we can do it. We're educators and we were born to make a difference.

@sylviaduckworth

MENTORING MINDSET

Intentional: I See You

- Always prioritize youth's needs
- Have a positive and respectful view of youth and their families
- Honor the young person's full self

Developmental: I'm Here to Help

- Consider a goal-orientation
- Honor and strengthen the youth's web of support
- Take a "critical mentoring" approach
- Be willing to grow and learn yourself

Supportive: I Got You

- Commit fully to the relationship
- Be authentic and honest
- Do no harm

Communal: We're In This Together

- Leverage community resources and role models
- Care about all young people's circumstances

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RELATIONSHIPS IN SCHOOLS: CREATING A WEB OF SUPPORT

Mentoring in school-based programs

Mentoring outside of school-based programs

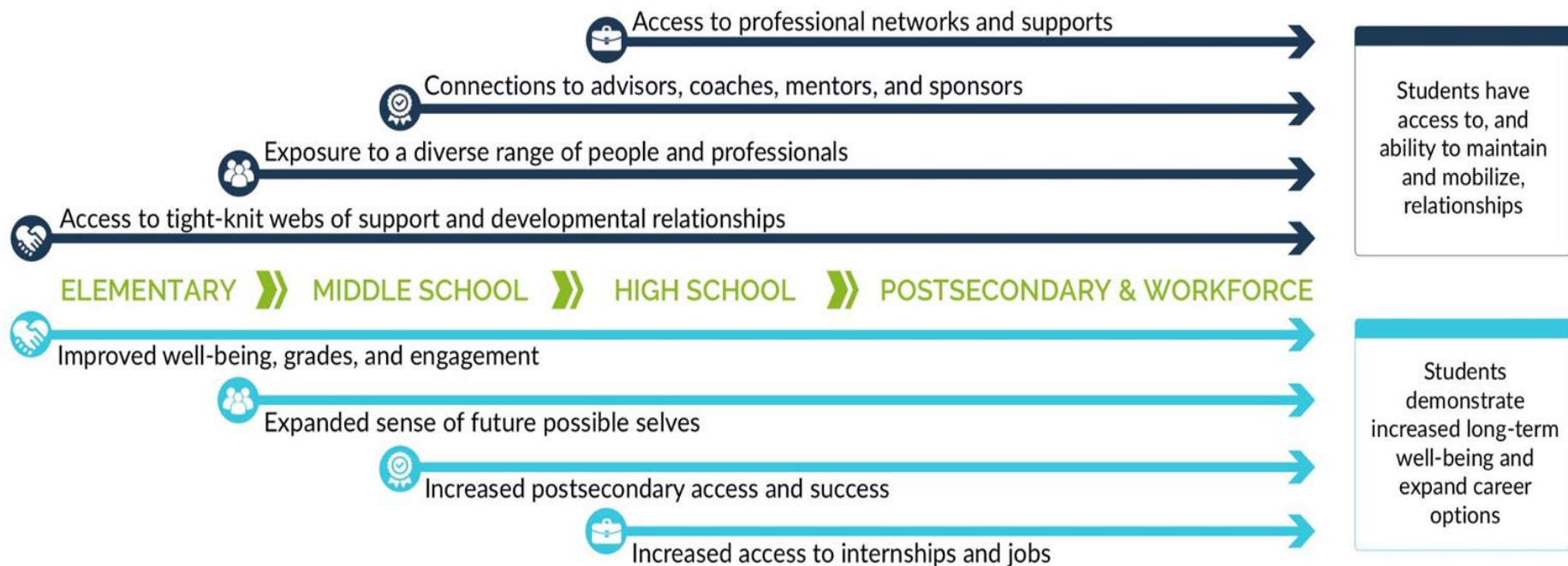**Formal group relationships**

Connecting/networking relationships

Learning relationships

Access to professional networks and supports

Connections to advisors, coaches, mentors, and sponsors

Exposure to a diverse range of people and professionals

Access to tight-knit webs of support and developmental relationships

Students have access to, and ability to maintain and mobilize, relationships

ELEMENTARY ›› MIDDLE SCHOOL ›› HIGH SCHOOL ›› POSTSECONDARY & WORKFORCE

Improved well-being, grades, and engagement

Expanded sense of future possible selves

Increased postsecondary access and success

Increased access to internships and jobs

Students demonstrate increased long-term well-being and expand career options

Copyright: The Christensen Institute

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FRAMEWORK

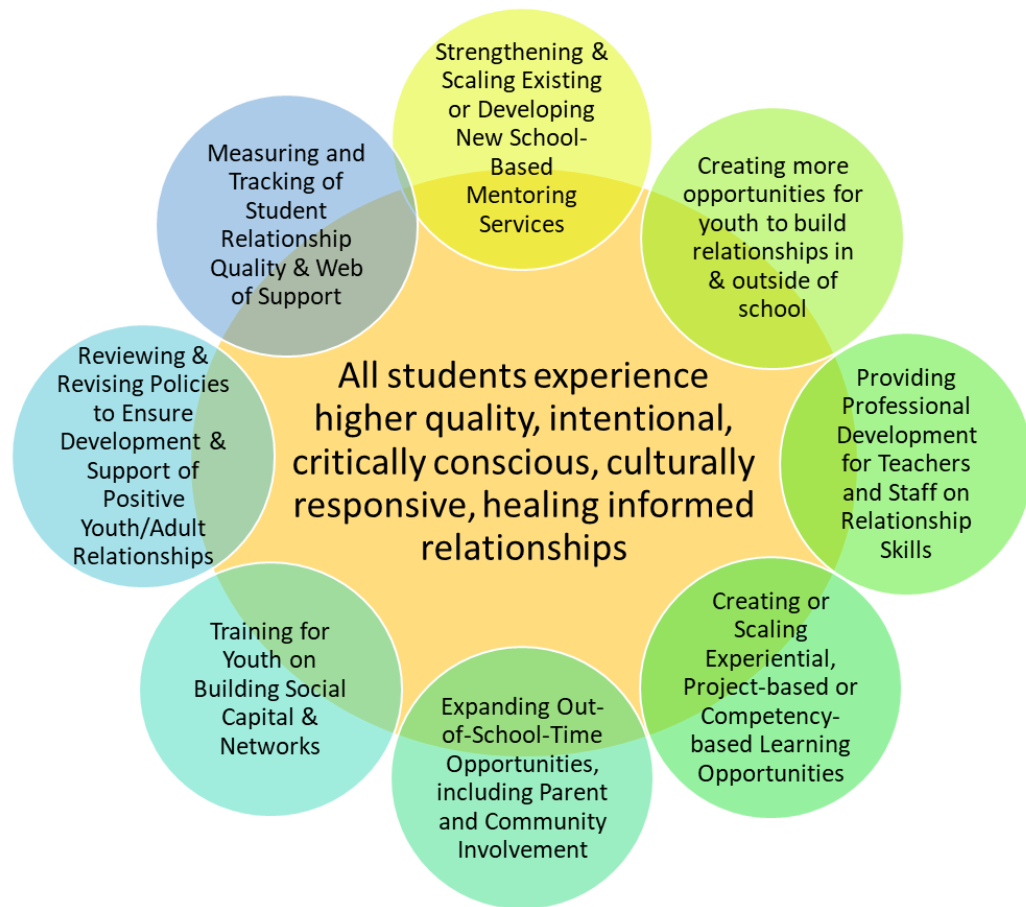# RELATIONSHIP-CENTERED SCHOOLS FRAMEWORK

Data Driven

Relationship-Rich

Exposure to People, Places, and Environments

Experiential Learning

Youth Centered

SUGGESTED RELATIONSHIP-CENTERED COMPONENTS

Strengthening & Scaling Existing or Developing New School-Based Mentoring Services

Creating more opportunities for youth to build relationships in & outside of school

Measuring and Tracking of Student Relationship Quality & Web of Support

All students experience higher quality, intentional, critically conscious, culturally responsive, healing informed relationships

Providing Professional Development for Teachers and Staff on Relationship Skills

Reviewing & Revising Policies to Ensure Development & Support of Positive Youth/Adult Relationships

Training for Youth on Building Social Capital & Networks

Expanding Out-of-School-Time Opportunities, including Parent and Community Involvement

Creating or Scaling Experiential, Project-based or Competency-based Learning Opportunities

OUTCOMES

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SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

- **Quantity of relationships** measures who is in a student's network over time.

- **Quality of relationships** measures how students experience the relationships they are in and the extent to which those relationships are meeting their relational, developmental, and instrumental needs.

- **Structure of networks** gauges the variety of people a student knows and how those people are themselves connected.

- **Ability to mobilize relationships** assesses a student's ability to seek out help when needed and to activate different relationships.

** These are based on measurement outcomes proposed by The Christensen Institute's Julia Freeland Fisher and Dr. Mahnaz Charania, They authored the following paper: The missing metrics: Emerging practices for measuring students' relationships and networks.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

- Schools have a relationship-centered culture.

- Schools dedicate resources (financial, physical plan, human) to relationship strategy.

- Students graduate from school with robust, supportive networks & social capital.

- Students graduate with high levels of social and emotional well-being

- Students graduate at higher rates than previous cohorts.

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MENTOR'S ROLE

ACTS AS A CONSULTANT

- MENTOR and MENTOR Affiliates consult school districts and/or schools

- Working with district and school champions, MENTOR:

  - ✓ Conducts a Landscape Analysis
  - ✓ Facilitates a Design Lab
  - ✓ Develops an Action Plan
  - ✓ Provides Coaching and TA
  - ✓ Assists in creating assessment & evaluation plan

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REQUIRED: YOUTH VOICE

- Hear from youth during Landscape Analysis
  - Focus Group Discussions
  - Student surveys
  - Interviews

- Youth participate in Design Lab

- Youth actions are included in Action Plan

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COACHING & TA

- Coaching and Technical Assistance, which will incorporate relationship-based strategies into the school culture and system, will include:

  - ✓ Training for district/school staff and mentors
  - ✓ Program Development, including assisting with relationship mapping, as well as with the assessment and evaluation during the first year of implementing the Action Plan.
  - ✓ Leverage partners, connecting school districts and schools to possible partners.

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