Welcome
In 2003 the PSU Graduate School of Education, in conjunction with the Department of Continuing Education, established the Center for Student Success to provide technical assistance to K–12 schools and districts. Over the past several years, the Center has expanded its expertise and technical services to better meet the needs of K–12 schools and nonprofit organizations.

Our services
- Grant and program evaluations (e.g., Chalkboard CLASS Project, small high school conversion, and alternative education programs)
- Charter school evaluations (e.g., program effectiveness/legal compliance)
- Professional development design and implementation (e.g., Professional Learning Communities training, leadership academies, principal/superintendent training)
- Research (e.g., surveys, focus groups, literature review, synthesis of best practices, development of grant proposals, and design of formative/summative assessments)
- Curriculum alignment and implementation of Common Core Standards
- Evaluation of online learning options
- Ideas for working with marginal employees (e.g., support for plans of assistance)
- Conflict resolution (e.g., district/charter school relationships and school staff/principal issues)
- Ideas for school board/superintendent relations (e.g., operating agreements, superintendent evaluation, and team building)

Sample Projects
- Chalkboard CLASS Project Evaluation - Foundations for a Better Oregon
- Charter School Evaluations – Gresham-Barlow, David Douglas, Oregon City, and Scio school districts
- Teacher and Administrator Evaluation (SB 290) implementation strategies & professional development – Astoria, Clatskanine, Jewell, Knappa, Seaside, and Warrenton-Hammond school districts
- Research and Data Analysis – All Hands Raised, Cradle-to-Career Partnership
- Evaluation Design & Survey Analysis for summer youth programs – City of Portland/Multnomah County/Portland Schools Foundation
- Functional Living Skills Program Evaluation – MESD
- Teaching American History Grant Evaluation – ESD 112, Vancouver
- Professional Learning Teams Training – Centennial, Coos Bay, David Douglas, Gresham-Barlow, Hillsboro, North Bend, Parkrose, and Portland Public school districts
- Restorative Justice in Schools Program Evaluation – Resolutions Northwest
- Student Retention & Completion Study in Online Schools – Gresham-Barlow Web Academy

Our clients include
- K–12 school districts: Beaverton, Coos Bay, David Douglas, Gladstone, Gresham-Barlow, Hillsboro, Lincoln County, Newberg, North Bend, Oregon City, Portland Public Schools, Scio, and Tigard-Tualatin
- The Chalkboard Project/Foundations for a Better Oregon
- City of Portland
- All Hands Raised (formerly Portland Schools Foundation)
- Educational Service District 112 - Vancouver, WA
- Multnomah Education Service District
- Gresham-Barlow Web Academy (charter school)
- Resolutions Northwest

Our rates
Our rates are competitive with other academic and commercial organizations offering educational services. Project cost will vary depending on the services required. Initial consultation and estimates are provided free of charge.

www.pdx.edu/ceed/success

“We have been impressed by the charter school evaluations the Center for Student Success has done at Lewis & Clark Montessori, and the Gresham-Barlow Web Academy. Your process is thorough, thoughtful, comprehensive, and insightful, and we anticipate an ongoing working relationship.”

Tim Drilling
Executive Director of Assessment & Accountability
Gresham-Barlow School District
Our Consultant Cadre includes:

Deborah Sommer, Ed.D. has a rich background of over 38-years in public education, as a staff development specialist, vice-principal, principal, curriculum director, school superintendent, and university faculty. Having worked in large and small school districts, suburban and rural schools, and at an ESD, she has extensive experience in curriculum development, including power standards, curriculum mapping, and program audits. A specialist in team building and conflict resolution, contract negotiations, and building parent and community support for schools, she was the recipient of the Oregon Superintendent of the Year award in 2006, Canby School District.

Rick Dills, Ed.D. has over 30 years of experience as an educational practitioner (teacher, coach, and school administrator). Dr. Dills’ work with the Center has included grant evaluation design and implementation, logic model-based evaluation plans and the use of data to assess and inform educational improvement. Before retiring in 2005, Dr. Dills was the director of student achievement for the Gresham-Barlow School District. In that capacity, he and the district received state, national and international recognition for leadership in using Rasch-based assessment information to study and promote student growth. Dr. Dills has taught classes on performance assessment and educational measurement for Portland State University, and previously worked for the Oregon University System to develop its Proficiency-Based Admission System (PASS).

Linda Jessell’s extensive background in public education in Oregon includes over 40 years of work in schools, school districts, and at the university level. She has been director of the Center for Student Success since 2008 and has also served on the faculty of the Graduate Teacher of Education Preparation Program in the PSU Graduate School of Education. Her current areas of specialization include: program evaluation, charter school evaluation, research and application of research to existing programs, teacher professional development, and school leadership training and development. Jessell’s work in K-12 schools included leadership positions in the Beaverton and Gresham-Barlow school districts including the following positions: assistant principal, principal, director of secondary schools, and K-12 curriculum director. The key areas of focus for her work in schools included: high school improvement, curriculum development and grade level alignment, curriculum alignment with state content standards, teacher and administrator professional development, and school improvement planning and implementation. In 2005, Jessell’s work was recognized by the Business Education Compact and she was selected to receive their annual Education Achievement Award.

Linda Jessell, Director

"The Center has provided excellent third-party evaluation for the CLASS Project for several years. As our work has gained traction and rapidly expanded throughout Oregon, the Center has deepened their qualitative and quantitative analyses. Throughout our collaboration, they have remained supportive, adaptive, rigorous, and ethical. We appreciate their exemplary work."
Dan Jamison
Vice President, Education Policy
Chalkboard Project

"We consistently look to the Center for Student Success for our evaluation and data analysis needs. The Center provides responsive, professional, and thorough services with a keen eye toward understanding and meeting our specific goals. A unique strength is that the Center’s team of professional evaluators and researchers also have a depth of experience as educational practitioners, having served as teachers, principals and district leaders in many Oregon schools. This allows for a pragmatic and efficient approach grounded in on-the-ground realities of teaching and learning, as well as educational theory and research best practices."
Nate Wass Shull
Vice President, Partnerships
All Hands Raised

Contact information
Portland State University
Graduate School of Education
Continuing Education
Center for Student Success
PO Box 751
Portland, OR 97207
Phone: 503-725-9519
Email: centerforsuccess@pdx.edu
Web: www.pdx.edu/ceed/success