

March Care Package

Ninth Grade Success and High School & Beyond Planning

This Care Package supports schools in examining how ninth grade systems, data, and adult routines keep students on track and help them build, understand, and update their High School & Beyond Plans (HSBP). Activities can be used in staff meetings or for personal reflection.

Bite (5-10 minutes)

Why “On Track” in Ninth Grade Matters for the High School & Beyond Plan

With your team:

1. Start with the state-level understanding of Ninth Grade On Track.

In Washington, Ninth Grade On Track is a state measure reported on the [OSPI Report Card](#).

A first-time ninth grader is on track if they earned credit for all attempted courses.

2. Check your local data.

Open the [OSPI Report Card](#) and view your district or school’s Ninth Grade On Track results.

- Look briefly at trends over time and differences by student group.
- What’s one pattern or gap that stands out?

3. Connect On-Track Status to HSBP Options.

Ask: How does being off track early limit students’ High School & Beyond Plan options?

- Access to advanced or honors courses
- CTE pathway sequencing
- Dual credit opportunities
- Graduation pathway timing

Snack (30 minutes)

Using Ninth Grade Early Warning Indicators to Activate HSBP

Step 1: How do we know if a student is at risk of being off track?

Reflect as a team:

- What information helps us notice early warning signs (gradebooks, attendance, referrals, teacher/advisor check-ins)?
- How often is this information reviewed for ninth graders?
- Who typically notices first when concerns arise?

Quick Map: How do early warning signs surface across attendance, course performance (ELA/Math), credit accumulation, and adult observations?



Step 2: Building an Early Warning System (EWS) Routine

As a team, decide:

- What existing time can we use to review ninth grade early warning information?
- What minimum information do we need to review consistently?
- Who needs to be involved?

Step 3: Identify students and use EWS to shape HSBP

Use the information you currently rely on: Identify three ninth graders recently flagged for concern or off-track

For each student, discuss:

- What early warning indicator(s) surfaced the concern?
- What does this signal mean for the student's current High School & Beyond Plan?
- What immediate action can support the student in staying aligned to their academic, pathway, or postsecondary goals?

When used intentionally, EWS ensures ninth grade supports and HSBP stay aligned.

Meal (90 minutes)

Integrating the Ninth Grade Success Roadmap with High School & Beyond Planning

Step 1: Review the Ninth Grade Success Roadmap (15-20 minutes)

Washington's Ninth Grade Success work uses the [Center for High School Success Roadmap](#) to guide systems, data routines, and adult practice. These structures can help students build, understand, and revise their HSBP.

As a team: Spend 15–20 minutes reviewing the [Roadmap](#). Consider how each component shapes a ninth grader's ability to plan, make informed course decisions, and adjust their HSBP.

Prompts:

- Which components feel strongest in our current practice?
- Which need more attention or development?
- How do our routines help ninth graders stay aligned to their HSBP?
- What questions does the Roadmap raise about our supports overall?

Step 2: Reflect on all five Roadmap Components through HSBP Lens (45 minutes)

As a team, review all five [CHSS Ninth Grade Success Roadmap](#) components and use the prompts below to explore how each component currently shows up in your school and how it can better support ninth graders with their High School & Beyond Plans.

Universal Prompts for Each Component

1. Current Practice: How does this component show up in our school right now?
2. HSBP Support:
 - Does this structure help students understand their progress?
 - Does it help adults connect student data to course-taking, pathways, or graduation options?
 - Does it create opportunities for students to revise or clarify their HSBP?

Component-Specific Discussion Prompts

- **DATA:** When we review EWS/On-Track data, how do we capture “HSBP implications” and flag students needing updates after progress checks?
- **TEAMS:** Would adding an HSBP check-in to agendas and including a counselor/advisor ensure timely plan revisions?
- **INTERVENTIONS:** When we assign an intervention, how can we clearly connect it to the student’s HSBP or pathway?
- **TRANSITIONS (8→9):** How do we ensure students’ eighth grade HSBP exploration informs their ninth grade schedules and is communicated to the teachers and advisors who support them?
- **INSTRUCTION:** What simple routines could help students connect classroom performance to their long-term goals and pathways?

Step 3: Review Course-Taking Data & Equity of Access (45 minutes)

This activity helps teams assess whether ninth graders, particularly those off track or at risk, have equitable access to courses and pathways that support their High School & Beyond Plans.

Gather and Review Data (15 minutes)

1. As a team, examine course-taking patterns for your current or most recent ninth grade class.
2. Pull course-taking data: required credits, support classes, advanced course access, and CTE sequences.
3. Disaggregate enrollment by student groups (race/ethnicity, language status, disability, income, migrant status, etc.).
4. Identify trends related to access, placement, and opportunity that influence students’ ability to pursue or revise their HSBP goals.

Discuss Access, Alignment, and impact (20 minutes)

Use the questions below to guide your team’s reflection:

- How does course access in ninth grade support or limit students’ HSBP pathways?
- Which students appear to have fewer opportunities, and why?

- How do our current forecasting, counseling, or advisory processes reinforce or address these patterns?

As a team, identify 1–2 next steps to improve equitable course access and strengthen HSBP alignment as you plan for next year.

Examples may include adjusting forecasting guidance, adding structured HSBP check-ins, reviewing scheduling practices, or connecting course requests with early warning data.

Capture your team’s next steps, timeline, and leads.

Ninth Grade Success Resources:

- [OSPI Ninth Grade Success webpage](#)
- [Freshman On-Track Toolkit | Network for College Success | The University of Chicago](#)
- [Center for High School Success](#)
- [CHSS Roadmap for Ninth Grade Success](#)