

# Everett Public Schools Focus on SEL Increases Graduation Rates by 65%

WITH NAVIANCE BY POWERSCHOOL



**39%** of students at Everett Public Schools qualify for free and reduced-price lunch and **14%** are English language learners. Since its launch of Naviance by PowerSchool, the district has seen a **65% increase** in graduation rates.

From 2016 to 2019, Everett Public Schools maintained a lower dropout rate than that of Washington state, and has seen a **50% decrease** in its dropout rate overall.

From 2015 to 2018, the district consistently surpassed the state's graduation rate, and saw a **5% increase** in its own graduation rate.

“ Having Naviance’s established CCLR Curriculum made it easy to integrate these [SEL] topics into the overall academic curriculum, so there was one curriculum with two distinct goals.”

**DR. CATHY WOOD**

Director of College and Career Readiness & On-time Graduation, Everett Public Schools



## Challenge

From 2003-2004, only 58% of students in the Everett Public Schools district were graduating from high school on time.



## Solution

By partnering with Naviance, the district was better able to determine its students' needs.



## Results

The district increased its on-time graduation rate from 58% to 95%, representing a 65% increase.

Everett Public Schools is located in Everett, Washington, and serves 21,000 students. Approximately 39% of students in the district qualify for free and reduced-price lunch, and 14% are English language learners. In 2003-04, administrators found themselves facing a graduation crisis. The district understood that it had to take a holistic approach to create change. What began as a movement to increase graduation rates developed into a deliberate focus on social emotional learning (SEL).

SEL encompasses emotional intelligence, grit, self-awareness, the ability to make informed decisions, and an understanding of one's strengths and interests. Students who understand their strengths can begin to build goals toward a future that best fits their interests and skills. When students develop grit and perseverance, they are better able to overcome obstacles they face in school and life.

Since its launch of Naviance and by maintaining a focus on SEL, the district has seen a 65% increase in graduation rates and has remained committed to its goal that all students will graduate college, career, and life ready.

## Challenge



From 2003-2004, only 58% of students in the Everett Public Schools district were graduating from high school on time. Part of the challenge was that although educators knew their students by name and saw them in class, the systems the schools had in place were too focused on numbers and not the individuals behind them. Administrators realized that more emphasis on SEL was needed, and that it should be expanded beyond the realm of just school counselors, who traditionally had been solely responsible for SEL.

## Solution



By partnering with Naviance by PowerSchool, the leading college, career, and life readiness (CCLR) platform, the district was better able to determine its students' needs. Counselors and other student advocates had a fuller view of each student, from their personal and academic goals to the careers and classes they were most interested in. "Educators at all levels moved from numbers to names, working to give each student an individualized college, career, and life readiness plan," says **Dr. Cathy Woods, Director of College and Career Readiness & On-time Graduation, Everett Public Schools.**

Naviance also helped educators identify changes in individual students by revealing any shifts in goals and progress over time. This data gave a clear sense for when SEL intervention may be needed. "If a student was college-bound in middle school and then changed their goals to be more job-focused, it was important to understand why that change took place," says Dr. Woods.

Through Naviance, SEL topics were blended into the entire academic curriculum. "Having Naviance's established College, Career, and Life Readiness Curriculum made it easy to integrate these topics into the overall academic curriculum, so there was one curriculum with two distinct goals," says **High School & Beyond Facilitator Sarah Pewitt.**

“Students understand that if you know their hopes and dreams, then you really know who they are and can tailor advice just for them.”

**DR. CATHY WOOD**

Director of College and Career Readiness & On-time Graduation, Everett Public Schools

SEL has been incorporated into all classrooms throughout Everett Public Schools, from elementary to high school. Naviance activities illuminate goals and performance indicators that students should achieve in each grade level. Students in 7th grade, for example, are required to establish a SMART goal in Naviance, complete the career cluster finder, and complete a reflection activity about what they've learned and how they will apply it. Naviance's grouping feature allows teachers to identify common trends within demographic segments such as gender, race, ethnicity, and age. "If we notice that there's a growing group of girls interested in engineering, we can easily bring in an engineer they can identify with to talk about their path to becoming an engineer," says Dr. Woods.

## Results



Since launching Naviance to prepare students for college, career, and life through a focus on SEL, the district increased its on-time graduation rate from 58% to 95%, representing a 65% increase. "With Naviance, we know we can get laser focused on challenges impacting our schools, develop SEL or other strategies to address those challenges and see the results," says Dr. Woods.

Responsibility for implementing SEL is now shared by all school staff—and the current health crisis hasn't stood in the way of progress, says **Dave Peters, Principal at HM Jackson High School**. "Since integrating Naviance Curriculum, and particularly during the pandemic, we've seen students say they think more positively about their relationship with teachers." **Attendance is also higher than normal in the district, despite its going virtual.**

**Dropout rate has decreased by 50%, and from 2016 to 2019 the district maintained a lower dropout rate than that of the state of Washington.** From 2015 to 2019 the district consistently surpassed the state's graduation rate and saw a **65% increase in its own graduation rate.**

Through its focus on SEL, Everett Public Schools is helping to prepare a new generation of students to be successful in college, career, and life.

## The following strategic goals and key performance outcomes speak directly to Everett Public Schools' commitment to SEL:

- Each student graduates from high school ready for college, career, and life with 21st century skills.
- Students and staff learn and work in an emotionally, physically, and intellectually safe and secure environment.
- District-wide strategic relationships contribute directly to the achievement of district priorities and goals, and improvement on student learning.
- Strategic partnerships (family, corporate, and community) promote the health, well-being, and learning of all students.

[Learn more about Naviance by PowerSchool](#)

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