

# Great Stories about Getting Students Caught Up

## Building relationships

By learning more about one of her students' situations, this fellow was able to identify why the student was struggling and what kind of support he needed to succeed. The positive relationships that she then helped him build with his teachers and herself proved to be instrumental in getting him back on track.



*When I told him that we would be working together he gave me little response but seemed curious. I later pulled him out of his elective and walked around the building with him to tell him what my role was in the school. We eventually sat down and worked on his Personal Learning Plan. **We talked for a long time and it was the longest I had seen him sit without fidgeting.** He told me about his family, how early he had to wake up every morning for school, and how he had to go to additional hours of class every day after school. He also said some pretty insightful things and set a realistic goal to get Bs or Cs in his classes.*

*I told him that it is hard for anyone, especially someone his age, to focus on school work for so many hours a day with little sleep and exercise. I **also told him that now that I knew his situation, he could take a break and walk around school with me if he needed to.** In the following weeks he took me up on it a few times and I used that time to talk about study habits and how his teachers and I would be happy to work with him to catch him up on assignments.*

***His confidence grew after we talked to a few teachers to get missing assignments and I worked with him in his science class. Soon he was volunteering to go in at lunch a few days a week to work on assignments and get help from his teachers.** He was working harder and able to focus more. A teacher even called him a "rock star" for his improved engagement. Most recently, he spent a whole period taking notes on a film when most of the other kids in class were distracted and busy chatting.*

*Just by letting him know there were adults looking out for him at school and also holding him accountable for his work, this boy has taken so much initiative and has begun taking advantage of the resources given to him.*



## Listening to New Voices: Youth Voices on Staying in School & Dropout Prevention in Minnesota (2009)



[Click here for the full report.](#)

"At setting after setting, students could name those particular teachers whom they respected and spoke about them with enthusiasm and praise. The students singled out those educational professionals who demonstrated care, believed in their ability to learn, and made allowances for their individual circumstances.

Several rural high school youth spoke with enthusiasm for one teacher who 'brings it down to our level' and with praise for another teacher who prints reports to let students know what they are missing so they can get caught up. Students valued after school sports and extracurricular activities, access to the library, and extra help with study skills and homework; these were all motivators to stay in school. To them, these resources demonstrated that school personnel cared about their progress and believed they could succeed." (p. 6)