

Massachusetts Early Warning System: EWIS

EWIS is an early warning system which relies on available information to predict which students will likely meet or miss key academic goals. EWIS will determine whether student data such as attendance, course failure, and test performance will have an impact on the student's chances of reaching academic goals or milestones such as high school graduation or promotion.

- Grades 1-12
- American Institutes for Research (AIR) is a partnering agency.

Risk Indicators

Transition Indicators

- Rely on data collected from previous full, single school year.
- Used to prepare the needs of the student as they enter school in fall.

Monitoring Indicators

- Rely on data that is available during the school year which relate to student performance.
- Attendance, academic performance and behavior are strong indicators of student success.
- Transition and Monitoring Indicators should be used together.

EWIS Academic Goals

- EWIS levels are connected to academic goals and milestones.
- EWIS levels predict the likelihood a student will or will not meet the academic goal or milestone.
- Students are grouped by age (Early Elementary, late elementary, middle, and high school).

EWIS Risk Levels

Risk levels relate to a student's predicated likelihood for not reaching his or her group's defined academic goal.

- Low Risk: student is on track to meet goal.
- Middle Risk: is on track but questions have been raised.
- High Risk: a student who will not be on track to meeting goal.

EWIS Accessing Data

- Edwin Analytic
- ESE developed district level, school level indicators
- Users can select from one or more monitoring indicators

Implementing EWIS

Step 1: Establish and Maintain EWIS Team

The establishment of the EWIS Team should be composed of staff members who have a diverse knowledge of students in the school, members should understand their roles and responsibilities, and are trained in the use of the tool and implementation steps.

- Teams should meet 20 to 30 days after the school starts.
- Follow-up meetings at grading breaks.
- Additional meetings as needed.

Responsibilities of EWIS Team.

- Conduct well organized and document meetings.
 - Clear agendas.
 - Notes taken and shared.
- Communicating with individuals and groups outside of EWIS Team.
 - Provide updates to teachers.
 - Keep district leadership informed.
- Communicating and collaborating with students and families.
 - Share concerns with a high level of sensitive with parents and students.
 - Sharing the actual levels (low, moderate, high) is not advised.
- Implementing the EWIS implementation cycle.
 - Focus and implement the seven-step cycle (review indicator data, interpret data, assigning interventions, monitoring student performance).
- Meeting regularly to monitor student progress.
 - Develop series of methods to regularly meet and share data on student progress.

School Role

- Use EWIS data and monitoring indicators to support students in their school to meet academic goals and milestones.

District Role

- To support EWIs efforts within schools.
- Facilitate communication across schools.
- Identify and address system wide concerns.

*Recommendation to have school based and district based EWIS Teams.

Step 2: Access EWIS and Monitoring Indicators Data

Early warning systems use readily available student data and validated indicators of risk to identify students who are at risk of not meeting desired goals or milestones.

- **EWIS data and reports**
 - Permission and/or access to Edwin Analytics school- and student level data.
 - Training and instruction in EWIS data and reports use via ESE modules or self-directed study.
- **Monitoring indicators**
 - Research-based monitoring indicators

- Permission and/or access to school- and/or district-based student data and data management systems.
- One member will have proficiency in the following.
 - Accessing EWSI data and using various reporting options for examine student risk information through Edwin and exporting EWIS data to Excel.
 - Have the ability to import, update, and generate reports using monitoring indicators database system or tool.
 - District View (EW301)
 - Graphic View (EW302)
 - Student List (EW601)

Selecting Monitoring Indicators

Each district and school is asked to supplement EWIS data with local monitoring indicators. At the start of the school year, districts and schools will select monitoring indicators they will use to track student progress.

- More than one indicator for academic and non-academic needs.
- Indicator data is available several times throughout the year.
- Monitoring indicators should have a threshold determined through research or by local district.
 - Attendance Locally defined (Threshold indicating at risk)
 - Behavior reports Locally defined (Threshold indicating at risk)
 - Academic performance Benchmark assessments
 - Course credits Failing grade

Step Three: Review EWIS and Monitoring Indicator Data

As the EWIS team begins to explore data, it can be overwhelming as teams start looking at risk levels and the monitoring indicators. During the first year of implementation, this can take a substantial amount of time; after a few years, as teams become familiar with the data and process, this will become more efficient.

- The focus should be on understanding the nature and the scope of the district and schoolwide student EWIS risk Levels.
- Develop and understanding of patterns associated with particular indicators of risk across district, within and across schools, across grades, and sub-groups of students.

Starting the Exploration

Big Picture: Examine EWIS data by broad dimensions and main categories.

- Edwin Analytics district and graphical reports will be most helpful.
- The team will be able to assess the nature and scope of the student risk levels within the overall student population before going deeper into student cohorts and individual students.

Dig Deeper: Uncover patterns of risk by each sub-group of students.

- Use student demographics.
- Student language and learning needs.
- Each grade, grade by grade category, or cluster.
 - **District Level Subgroups:** Looking at EWIS risk levels across schools, across grades.
 - **School Level Subgroups:** Looking at characteristic of students who have been identified as at risk.

Deep Dive: The team must look beyond the risk factors to examine factors that may contribute to the risk level.

- The deep dive requires the EWIS Team to begin to propose hypotheses and gather additional data to improve the team's diagnosis of the reason a student is at risk.

Step 4: Interpret EWIS and Monitoring Indicators

This point in the process is about uncovering the reason(s) why students are at risk for not meeting academic goals or milestones.

- Additional data may be addressed at this step.
- Develop a better understanding and added evidence to discern the underlying reasons that a student or group of students may be at risk.
- Initiate ideas related to the nature or types of interventions and supports needed.
 - Factors to Explore
 - Cognitive
 - Physical
 - Emotional/Psychological
 - Social

Additional Sources

- School Data
- Subgroup Data
- Individual Student data
 - Classwork
 - Teacher Interviews
 - Parent Interviews
 - Student Interviews

Interpreting Data

- No easy task, until educators can systematically and thoroughly interpret the risk data and develop a better understanding of the underlying cause's appropriate interventions, and supports cannot be devised.
- During this step the team should develop new ideas for the underlying causes. Of why a student is at risk.
- There should be an identification of common and individual needs exposed.

- There should be some interventions or supports identified.
- There should be a collection of evidence to support findings.

Step 5: Assign and Provide Interventions and Supports

Using the evidence collected the team will identify support goals for student(s), group of students, and/or schools.

- There will be a need to have a compiled inventory of academic and nonacademic interventions and supports available to students and districts.
- In many schools and districts, interventions for students are available but could be systematically delivered and better coordinated.
- EWIS Team will need to identify interventions and supports currently offered and better understand how to match interventions and supports to the EWIS data collected.
 - Tier 1 Supports are focused for all students to create a strong rigorous core education.
 - Tier 2 Supports are moderately more intensive and are target toward small groups of students with similar needs.
 - Tier 3 Supports are most intensive and are provided to individual students.

Providing Interventions and Supports

After the inventory is developed, the EWIS team needs to prepare to take action.

- Review how the students' needs were identified.
- Decide on how the needs can fit into the continuum of existing interventions and supports.
- Rely on data collected during steps 3 and 4 to drive decision making.
- Start with Tier 1 unless interventions and supports have already been in place.
- Develop a method of documentation of interventions and supports provided.

Step 6: Monitoring Students and Interventions

The EWIS team will develop methods to monitor to students at risk and their progress. The EWIS team should review the effectiveness of interventions and supports being offered and make adjustments in needed. The goal of the EWIS team is to bring awareness of how well interventions and supports are working, based on monitoring of students participating in each program.

EWIS Team Strategies to Monitoring Student Progress

- Generate up-to-date Information on Risk
 - EWIS Team needs current monitoring indicators and data before meeting to monitor student progress. A system to monitor and a person who will do the monitoring must be in place.
- Review current monitoring indicators data on students participating
 - This can be incorporated as a part of regular EWIS team meetings.
 - How monitoring is conducted will depend on the level and nature of interventions and supports that were implemented.
 - The EWIS team may want to identify which indicators or data sources will be used to track to student progress.

Identify needs not being met.

- Even with interventions and supports a student may not show progress.
- With regular monitoring issues preventing progress may be identified and additional information may drive different supports for the student.

Assign new or additional interventions or supports to meet student needs.

- The EWIS Team may need to identify new or additional interventions or supports that are not currently available to students identified as at risk.
- To do this the team may have to practice the same activities outline in Steps 4 and 5 of the process and look for next steps to ensure student success.

Examine the effectiveness of the intervention and supports.

- During this step the EWIS team will work toward developing a better understanding of the interventions and supports being offered to students at risk.
- The EWIS team will focus on what interventions and supports are working for at risk students and which are not.
- Long term goal is to develop a better understanding of what a student at risk needs to improve.

Communicate with educators, specialist, and families.

- The effectiveness of the EWIS team will lie in its ability to communicate results with all stakeholders.
- This work of the EWIS team will be wasted if not shared effectively and to all the stakeholders influencing a student's progress.

Step 7: Evaluate and Refine EWIS Process

The EWIS team should reflect on the EWIS implementation process at least once a year. There should be ongoing discussion about what worked, what should be modified, and what should be saved as best practice and what should be replaced.

Evaluating and Refining the EWIS Process

- Review all aspects of the implementation process.
- Review organization of team.
- Review function of team.
- Review with a lens toward student progress.