



PARTNERSHIP FOR  
*Student Success*

# Welcome!

## Community Collaboration Challenge Info Session

January 7th, 2025

# **2026 Community Collaboration Challenge is Accepting Applications through January 16th, 5 pm ET!**



## **2026 COMMUNITY COLLABORATION CHALLENGE**

WITH SUPPORT FROM THE  
LEON LOWENSTEIN FOUNDATION



PARTNERSHIP FOR  
*Student Success*

# Partnership for Student Success

The Partnership for Student Success is a coalition of nonprofits, higher education institutions, and school districts working to enable all students to get the evidence-based supports they need to succeed.

**Local determination of student needs and collaboration**

Schools & Districts

+

Nonprofits

+

Colleges & Universities

+

Evidence-Based,  
Relationship-  
Driven Supports



TUTORS



MENTORS



POSTSECONDARY  
ADVISORS



SUCCESS COACHES



WRAPAROUND  
SUPPORTS

# The Challenge

Supported by the Leon Lowenstein Foundation, the 2026 Community Collaboration Challenge aims to:

- Support pilots or scaling of evidence-based K-12 student supports in the form of PSS aligned roles—tutors, mentors, student success coaches, wraparound/integrated student support coordinators, and/or post-secondary transition coaches—in communities across the country
- Support local collaboration
  - community-based organizations, K-12 public school districts, higher education institutions, youth development/national organizations, and more
- Awards range from \$5,000-\$10,000; the amount will be determined based on the scale and scope of the proposed activities
- All deliverables must be complete no later than October 2026
- Funds disbursed in 3 payments upon completing vendor registration on JHU's 3rd party payee system (~March, June, September)

# The Challenge – additional points

The 2026 application scoring process offers additional points for applicants:

- Provide evidence-based support to K-12 students while also providing intentional career-connected/work-based learning experiences to **people serving** in student supports
- Engage high school students in PSS-aligned roles supporting their peers (e.g. high school students supporting other high school students or younger peers as tutors, mentors, etc.)
- Indicate on application that matching funds from other sources will be used to also support the efforts outlined in the application

# Common FAQs

**How many awards are given each year?** It varies year to year, but the range has been 20-24 awards in one cycle.

**Is this challenge primarily focused on funding new strategies or does it also fund the expansion of the scope of currently implemented strategies?** The Challenge is designed to support both pilots and expansion efforts (think new, innovative, expansion) of evidence-based K-12 support strategies within a community.

**Does the program have to partner with schools/school districts to be eligible?** It is encouraged the proposed activities are part of a coordinated community effort, with diverse community stakeholders, including schools/school districts.

**Can funds be used for any of the following purposes?**

- **Paying for a for-profit tech service related to tutoring, mentoring, etc.**
- **Paying an external partner to provide tutoring, mentoring, or similar student supports**
- **Paying youth peer mentors**
- **Paying staff**
- **Covering transportation costs for students or people in student support roles**
- **Covering food costs for events or tutoring/mentoring sessions**

Each of the above items are allowable uses of Community Collaboration Challenge funds.

# Common FAQs, cont

## What limitations are there on the allowable uses for the funding?

- Expenses related to convening stakeholders, piloting or expanding student supports are the allowable uses of this funding.
- Funding can be used to expand an existing program, but it cannot be used simply to fund an existing program. We're looking for catalyzing opportunities so the application should explain how the funding will be used to do that. If it's simply to hire X amount of people to support Y more students, it likely won't score well. Additionally, an agreement does not already need to be in place but the ability to build these types of relationships will need to be demonstrated in the application.
- Funds may not be used for any of the following purposes: to attempt to influence legislation or the outcome of any specific public election; to carry on, directly or indirectly, any voter registration drive; or to undertake any activities for a non-charitable purpose.
- Funds may not be used for purchases of alcohol or first or business class travel.

## My national organization has multiple affiliates/sites/regions that are interested in applying for the award. Can more than one apply?

- Yes, a national organization or its regional affiliates may apply for more than one site.  
**It is unlikely that a single organization will receive more than one award.**

## Can one organization submit more than one application?

- Yes, the same organization can submit more than one application as long as the scope is different.  
**It is unlikely that a single organization will receive more than one award.**

# What We Ask

Entities that are awarded funding will commit to:

- **Complete deliverables by October 30, 2026**, that bring together diverse stakeholders in the awardee's community to collaborate, and pilot or expand programs to bring people-powered and evidence based supports to K-12 students;
- **Participate in 2 virtual meetings (kickoff, and wrap-up) and one optional mid-point session** for all awardees, as well as a **one-on-one check in meeting** via Zoom with PSS staff during the stipend period;
- **Share information with PSS** on progress, events and lessons learned, as well as barriers and opportunities for increasing people-powered and evidence-based student supports in their communities.

# What PSS Offers

## Funding

- Support collaborative efforts designed to convene, expand, or pilot evidence-based PSS aligned student supports—tutors, mentors, student success coaches, wraparound/integrated student support coordinators, and post-secondary transition coaches—in their communities.

## Guidance

- A cohort model including virtual sessions with other awardees.
- Access to an event toolkit including sample agenda, proposed activities, etc. to support the planning process.
- Access to FREE technical assistance, resources, and networks necessary to facilitate identification of quality, PSS-aligned supports and connections to other schools and districts doing this work.

## Networks

- Access and introductions to a network of communities also doing this work and access to the coalition of more than 200 PSS Supporting Champions.

# 2023-25 Awardee Examples

- NYC District 26 pilots summer mentoring opportunities by partnering with higher education institutions in their community.
- Bay Area Tutoring hosts the first-of-its-kind catalyzing convening to bring together diverse stakeholders invested in high-impact tutoring opportunities to promote quality and resource sharing among attendees (what's working, what are evidence-based practices, etc.).
- Girls Inc. of Chicago provided near peer mentoring to 8th grade girls as they prepared for the transition to high school.
- Victoria College piloted intensive support to local high school students taking dual credit courses by utilizing VC college students as tutors and success coaches.

# What's Next?

- Application is due January 16, by 5 pm ET, 2026
  - Please note: the application does not save while in progress; we encourage drafting responses in a word doc and pasting them into the form
- Awardees will be notified early-mid February 2026
  - Emailed confirmation required within days of receiving award notification - make sure the email provided is checked regularly

## Questions?

- Email [PS\\_Success@jh.edu](mailto:PS_Success@jh.edu)
- January 14th Office Hours – 12 pm ET, [register here](#).

# Thank You!



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