



# STRATEGIC IT LEADERSHIP

BUILDING SYSTEMS OF STUDENT SUPPORT

# From infrastructure to impact

IT leaders are uniquely positioned to shape how effectively schools support their students. This resource lays out the problems student support teams face, the workflows that rely on technology, and the policy choices that shape how those systems function.

It also provides frameworks for evaluating technology so IT leaders can turn complex choices into clear action. By championing tools that give student support teams the right information at the right time, IT professionals become strategic partners in student success.



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# The problem

## Scattered systems and missed signals

Schools have skilled professionals (e.g., nurses, counselors, athletic trainers, administrators) working hard to support students, but their tools are disconnected.



### Key insight

When student information is split across systems, no one sees the full picture.

- Nurses document in outdated electronic health record platforms.
- Counselors write in paper notebooks.
- Learning specialists log notes in spreadsheets.
- Athletic trainers use a separate platform entirely.
- Leadership keeps information in post-it notes on their desk.

### The impact

Because the data is fragmented, no one can connect the dots. Patterns go unseen, interventions come late, and students fall through the cracks.

# The vision

## Connected systems that see the whole student

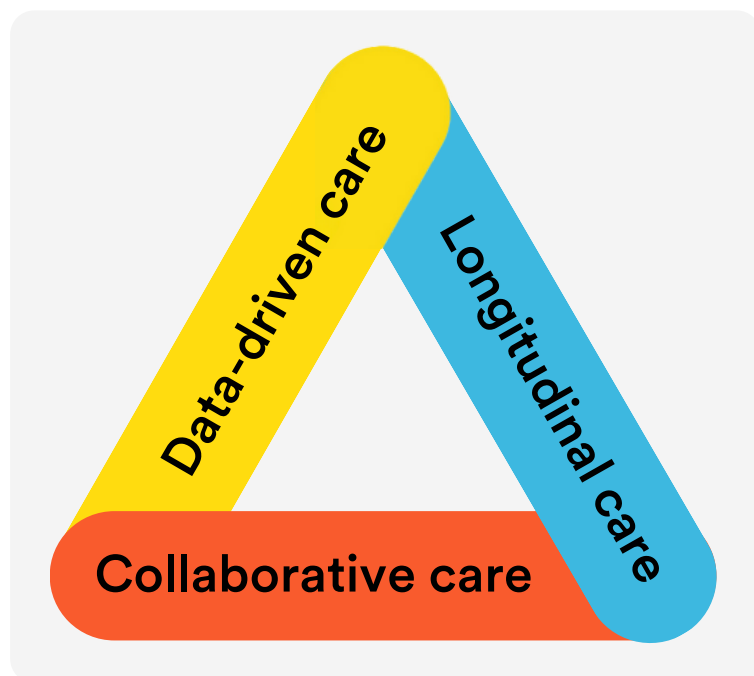
Leading schools aren't just adding more tools. They're redesigning how systems work together. Every adult who supports a student can see what matters, when it matters. Connectivity replaces silos, and coordinated care replaces isolated efforts.



### Case study

Dr. Long, the Head of Lower School at Ranney School, noticed a student repeatedly visiting the nurse during a specific academic block. Since the nurse, counselor, and leadership were all documenting in August Schools, she was able to see that the visits were related to trauma triggers in that class. A counselor check-in right before the academic block resolved the issue. *The unified platform implemented by their IT team made that connection possible.*

# The three components of effective student support systems



Effective systems deliver three things: **longitudinal care**, **collaborative care**, and **data-driven care**. These pillars ensure that a student's story is preserved, the adults around them are connected, and early warning signs are visible before crises emerge.

## A. Longitudinal care

**A student's story should follow them across years and divisions.**

When staff turn over or students transition from one division to the next, history often gets lost. Systems that protect continuity allow new school staff to support with context instead of starting from scratch.



### Case study

At Howe, a school in Texas, nurses serve students from kindergarten through graduation. By creating care plans and charting visits in August Schools, the nursing team created a shared record that followed each student across campuses. When a student moved from 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> grade, the new nurse could instantly see past care plans and daily visit patterns. That continuity meant no information was lost in transition, and care stayed consistent.

## B. Collaborative care

**Every adult who supports a student needs to see updates, securely and quickly.** Counselors, nurses, and teachers see relevant updates, flag concerns, and act together.



### Example

A nurse records anxiety symptoms and tags a counselor. That same day, the counselor follows up, preventing a crisis.

### Policy to practice:

- **Policy:** Protect confidentiality → **Technology:** Role-based permissions
- **Policy:** Families need timely updates → **Technology:** Automated alerts
- **Policy:** Staff need awareness, not detail → **Technology:** Internal referrals

## C. Data-driven care

**Patterns and risks must surface early enough to act before crises unfold.**

Attendance, academic, and wellbeing data are connected so that patterns are visible in time to intervene.



### Case study

Two years ago, Michelle Hirschy, Director of Wellness at La Jolla Country Day School, noticed a spike in anxiety-related visits in her August Schools analytics. She realized that spike occurred the week before college applications were due. This year, in anticipation of the spike, she brought in therapy dogs for that same week. The result was a measurable drop in anxiety-related visits. *By connecting the right people to the right data, IT teams make proactive support possible.*

# A framework for choosing the right systems

Every decision should be tested against four qualities: continuity, collaboration, clarity, and configurability. If a platform fails on any of these, it will limit how well teams can support students.



## Key insight

### Continuity

*Does the system preserve a student's history over time?*

### Collaboration

*Does the system enable secure collaboration across teams?*

### Clarity

*Does the system make the important things easy to see?*

### Configurability

*Does the system adapt to your school's policies and work with existing systems?*

## Implementation steps for IT leaders

1



### Audit existing infrastructure

- Where is student data stored?
- Are systems interoperable?
- Who has access/visibility to what?

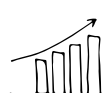
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### Convene key stakeholders

- Include counselors, nurses, athletics, and leadership
- Discuss collaboration versus confidentiality priorities

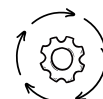
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### Invest in scalable platforms

- Avoid niche, single-use tools
- Choose user-friendly, integrated systems

4



### Enable insights, not just storage

- Go beyond storage: enable data-driven action
- Implement tools that empower support staff with insights

# Empowered IT, stronger schools

## IT as a champion of student support

To be a true partner in student wellbeing, IT must be seen, and must see itself, as a strategic leader in student support. That means:

- Match system design to real student and staff needs
- Ensure records follow students across years and roles
- Design infrastructure that supports human connection

The ripple effects:

- Families feel supported
- Staff feel connected
- Students get support they need earlier

What does this look like in practice? Austin Ewachiw, Director of Technology and August Schools user, shares how he thinks about building strong systems of student support.

“ This really is the next evolution of school systems and what they can do. We spent the last decade unifying our various departments to a single point of truth, eliminating silos and gaining efficiency along the way. As we turn this data driven focus to student health, it becomes abundantly clear that unifying the work of a school’s Health Suite, Counselors Office, and Athletic Trainers will have a similar impact. New tools that have the potential to improve body, mind, and performance. ”



**Austin Ewachiw**  
Director of Technology  
Calvert Hall College High School

# Conclusion

## The future you help build

By connecting data, enabling collaboration, and unlocking early intervention, you create environments where no student slips through the cracks. You empower the people who care for students to do their best work. You turn good intentions into real impact.

The future of student wellbeing isn't just about having the right people. It's about giving them the right tools, at the right time, with the right context. And that's the future you help build.

