



Lowell Public Schools Students See 61% Drop in Suspensions with Cartwheel Partnership

34% reduction in chronic absenteeism. Measurable results for students and schools.

Lowell Public Schools is a 14,000 student district in Lowell, Massachusetts, serving a diverse community where 29% of students are multilingual learners representing over 70 languages. After the pandemic, rising mental health needs created 6+ month waitlists with community providers, leaving students without timely care.

Lowell needed a partner who could expand access quickly, deliver care in multiple languages, reduce burden on school staff, and provide data to demonstrate impact. Cartwheel delivered.

"We didn't set out to reduce suspensions—we set out to get kids the mental health support they needed. The fact that suspensions dropped by 61% tells you that behavior is downstream from overall wellbeing."



Drew Rosenshine
Director of Mental Health/SEL and Behavior
Lowell Public Schools

District Spotlight



Lowell, Massachusetts

14,000 students
across 27 schools

29% of students
multilingual learners

69% families low income

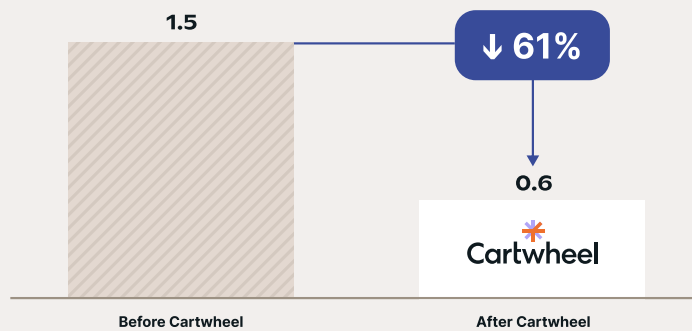
Comparison group: Students who did not receive Cartwheel services did not see improved attendance

Sample size: n=263 students who were referred to Cartwheel telehealth services in a 14,000 student suburban district (69% families low income) during the 2023-24, 2024-25, and 2025-26 school years.

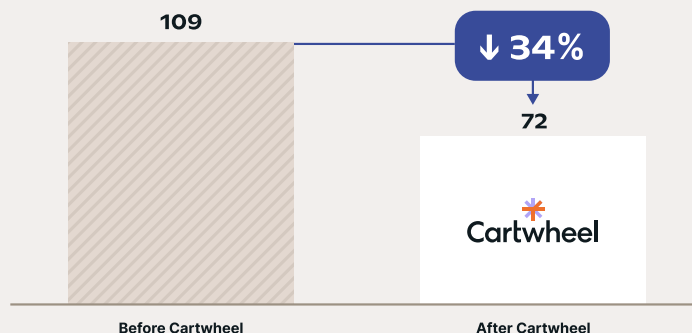
First chart: First bar shows average number of suspensions per student per year for students that received at least one suspension before starting Cartwheel services. Second bar shows the average number of suspensions per student per year after starting Cartwheel services for that same cohort of students.

Second chart: First bar shows number of students who were chronically absent in the school year they started therapy, and for whom we have data in at least one subsequent school year. For the same cohort, the second bar shows the number of students who remain chronically absent in at least one year after starting Cartwheel services. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent of school days within an academic year.

Suspensions per Student per Year Before vs. After Cartwheel



Number of Chronically Absent Students Before vs. After Cartwheel



Clinical Outcomes That Support Academic Success

Over The Course Of The Cartwheel Partnership

↑ 4 point

Improvement

in depression and anxiety symptoms (PHQ-9 and GAD-7)

1,000+

Students

referred across 22 Lowell schools since the start of the partnership

11

Sessions

Average therapy sessions completed per student

86%

Students

receiving services are uninsured or on Medicaid—served at no cost to families

What Makes Cartwheel Different



Specialized for school outcomes

Therapy, psychiatry, and family support focused on school avoidance, anxiety, depression, and behavioral challenges.



Rapid access to care

Students are matched with clinicians in 7–10 days instead of waiting months.



Integrated with school teams

Ongoing collaboration with counselors and social workers, shared strategies, and real-time progress updates.



Sustainable through insurance

No costs for families on Medicaid; in-network with military and commercial insurers.



Multilingual care

Students are matched with a clinician who speaks their native language.

Cartwheel

Learn more about how Cartwheel can help your district measurably improve attendance, behavior, and academic engagement.

www.cartwheel.org

What Educators Are Saying

*Chronic absenteeism is often a symptom, **not the problem.***

*When kids aren't coming to school, there's usually something harder going on underneath. **Cartwheel gave us a way to address that and the attendance data followed.***

*What's made this work is that **Cartwheel doesn't operate separately from us, they operate as an extension of us. Our social workers trust them and our families trust them.***



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Director of Mental Health/SEL and Behavior
Lowell Public Schools