

Peoria Public Schools Reduces Student Absences by 62% with Cartwheel Partnership

44% reduction in chronic absenteeism. 68% fewer suspensions.

Measurable results for students and schools.

Like many urban districts, Peoria faced serious challenges: rising absenteeism, frequent behavioral incidents, months-long waitlists for mental health care, transportation and language barriers, and school staff overwhelmed by daily crises.

The district needed a partner who could expand access quickly, deliver high-quality care, reduce burden on school teams, and provide data to understand impact. Cartwheel delivered.

“Cartwheel has become a key part of our student support infrastructure—expanding access to care and improving attendance and behavior.”



Dr. Alexander U. Ikejiaku
Associate Superintendent, Peoria Public Schools

District Spotlight



Peoria, Illinois

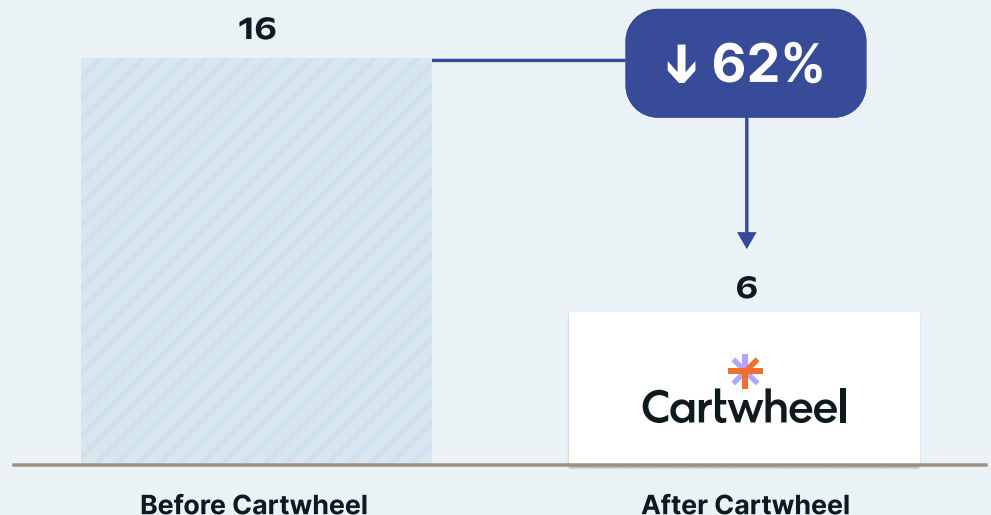
12,600 students
across 32 schools

79% free/reduced
lunch

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

Sample size: n=141 students who engaged in Cartwheel telehealth services in a 12,600 student urban district (79% free/reduced lunch) during the 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 school years. First bar shows the % of students receiving Cartwheel who were chronically absent in the year they were referred for services. For the same cohort, the second bar shows the % who were chronically absent in a subsequent school year. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent of school days within an academic year.

Absences per Student Before vs. After Cartwheel



↓ **44%**
Reduction
in chronic
absenteeism

↓ **68%**
Fewer
suspensions

↓ **90%**
Reduction in
depression/
anxiety symptoms

Clinical Outcomes That Support Academic Success

↑ 5 point

Improvement

In depression symptoms

2x

Engagement

Versus other teletherapy programs

96%

Satisfaction

Reported by students

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.



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

www.cartwheel.org

What Educators Are Saying

“Since partnering with Cartwheel, we have observed a noticeable shift away from externalizing behaviors. Aggression against staff has decreased.”



Dr. Ann Bond

Assistant Superintendent of Student Service, Peoria Public Schools

“Cartwheel has been a blessing, especially to families in our lowest-income neighborhoods. It’s an extension of me, and I am grateful.”



Bria Scott

School Social Worker, Peoria Public Schools