



# 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

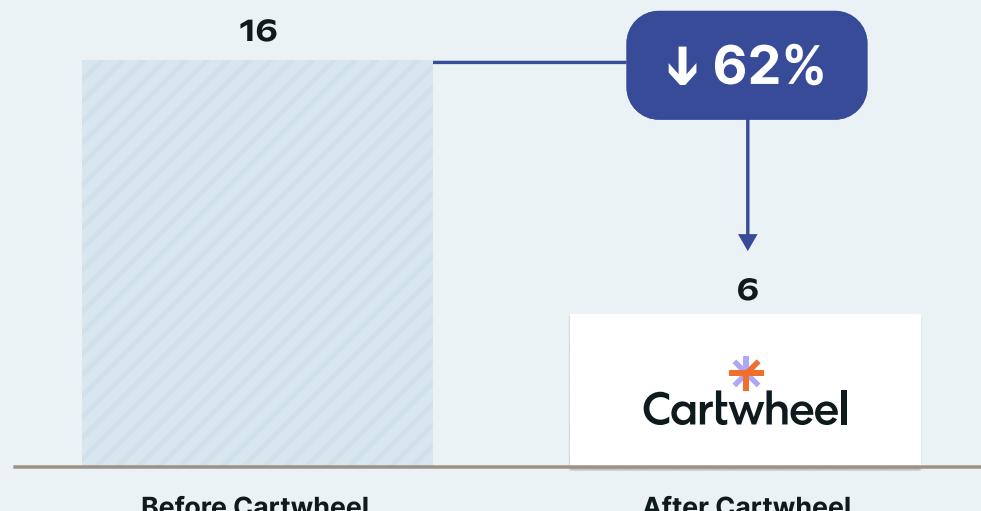
12,600 students  
across 32 schools

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.

## Cartwheel

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

[www.cartwheel.org](http://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