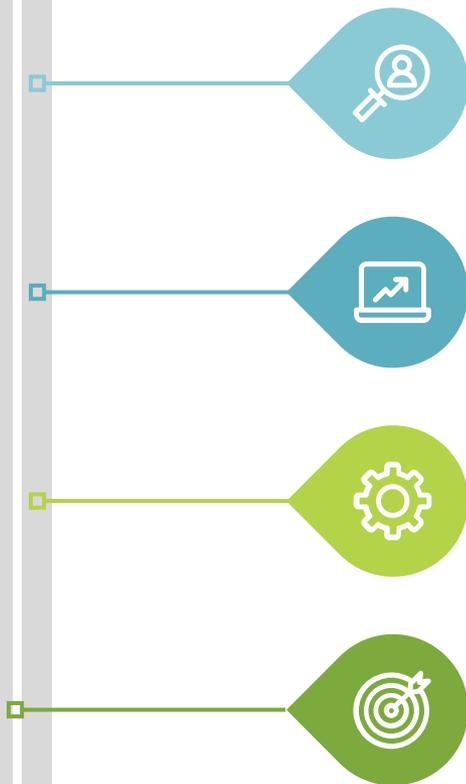


# The Road to Better Retention

ICCB Adult Education Administrator Meeting  
April 5, 2022  
Amber Fornaciari, Dawn Hughes, and Anita Kerr



# Session Agenda



## Introduction & Framing

*What can administrators do about retention?*

## Analyze the Data

*Who are we losing and when?*

## Strategies Across the Student Continuum

*Before they begin, during their time in class, and when they leave*

## Reflection & Action Steps

*What retention strategies might you try?*

# What can administrators do about retention?

How can I support my teachers and their efforts in retaining students?

How can I as an administrator establish programmatic practices that support retention?



**Illinois**  
**Adult**  
**Education**  
YOUR PATH. YOUR FUTURE.

As the statewide outreach campaign continues and your program has new students coming in....

Analyze your program's data to learn about your retention status and needs

# National and State Retention Data

A recurring theme in adult education research is **the crucial importance of the first few weeks**, especially the first class. Kambouri and Francis (1994) reported that most leavers stayed only 2-3 weeks, and Malicky & Norman (1994) also found **the highest attrition rates occurred early in the program.**

<https://www.ericdigests.org/1996-3/adult.htm>

## Illinois Adult Education - DAISI Data

**Duplicated Enrollment (students enrolled and entered in DAISI - may not have attended a class)**

Fiscal Year	ABE/ASE	ESL	Total
2020	29,065	39,449	68,514
2021	27,561	22,442	50,003

**Students attaining 12+ attendance hours (unduplicated numbers)**

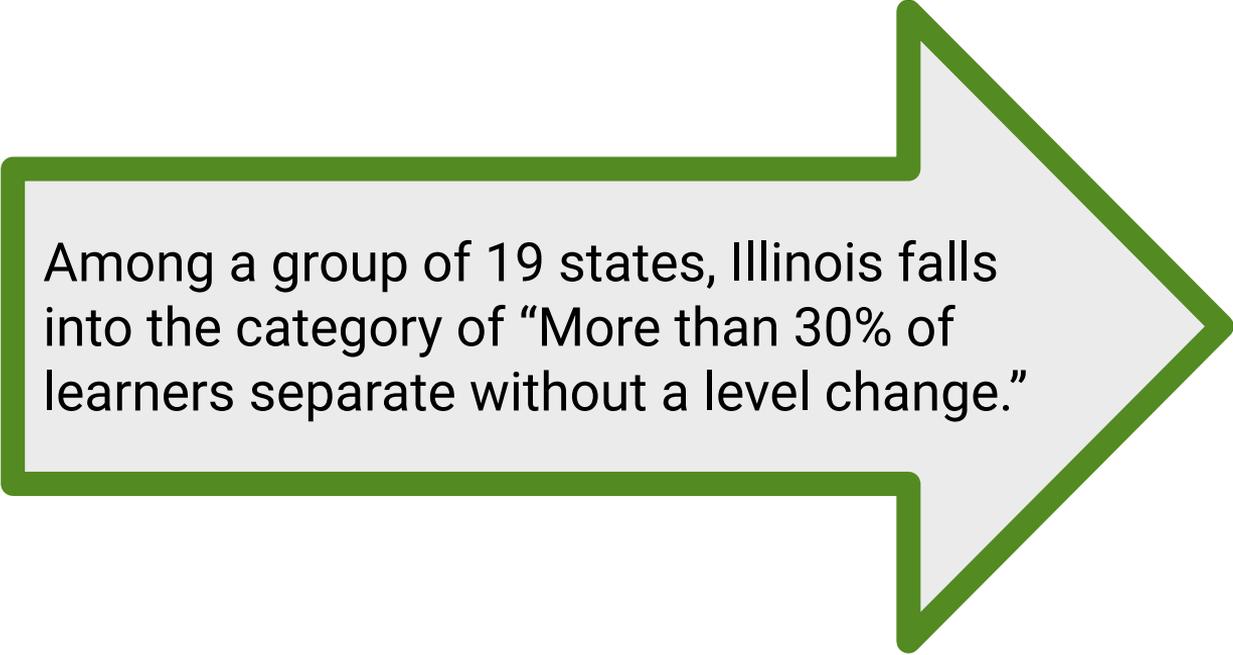
Fiscal Year	ABE/ASE	ESL	Total
2020	17,813	31,934	49,747
2021	13,260	14,495	27,755

# National Data

<b>Year</b>	<b>% of students advanced to next level</b>	<b>% of students remain in same level</b>	<b>% complete and leave</b>	<b>% separate without advancing</b>
2010-2011	26%	24%	17%	33%
2011-2012	27%	23%	17%	32%
2012-2013	26%	22%	17%	34%
2013-2014	27%	23%	16%	34%
2014-2015	28%	25%	15%	32%
2015-2016	26%	25%	16%	32%

Source: Adult Literacy Education Research Journal, Fall 2020

# How does Illinois compare?



Among a group of 19 states, Illinois falls into the category of “More than 30% of learners separate without a level change.”

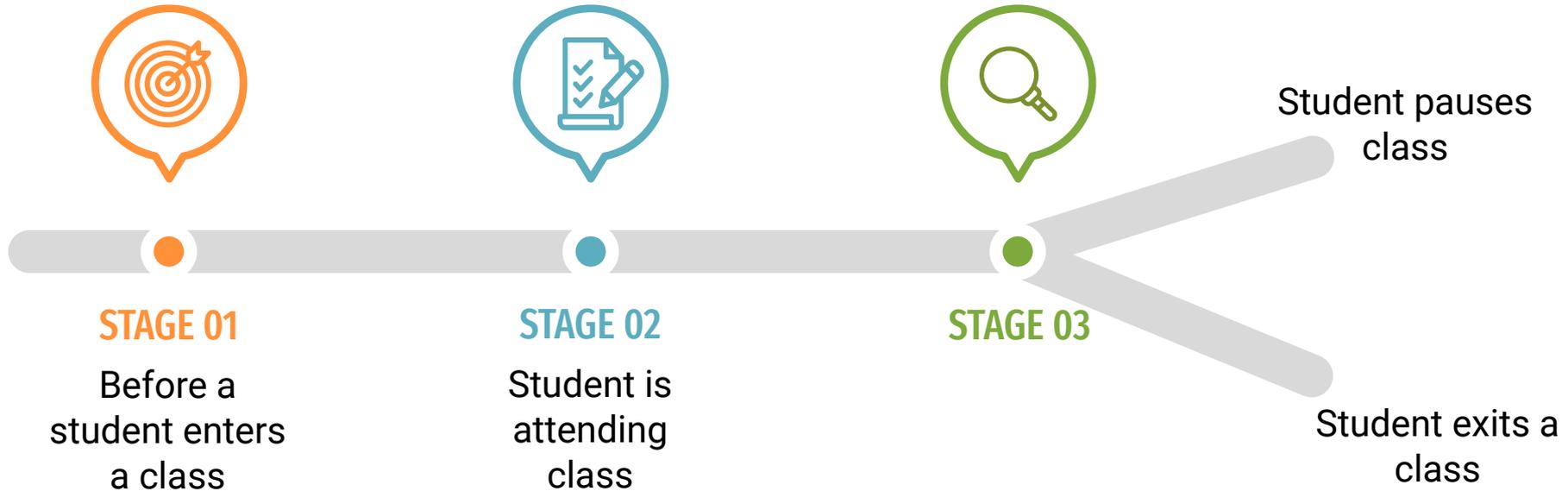
6 states fall into the “Less than 30%” category

19 states fall into the “More than 30%” category

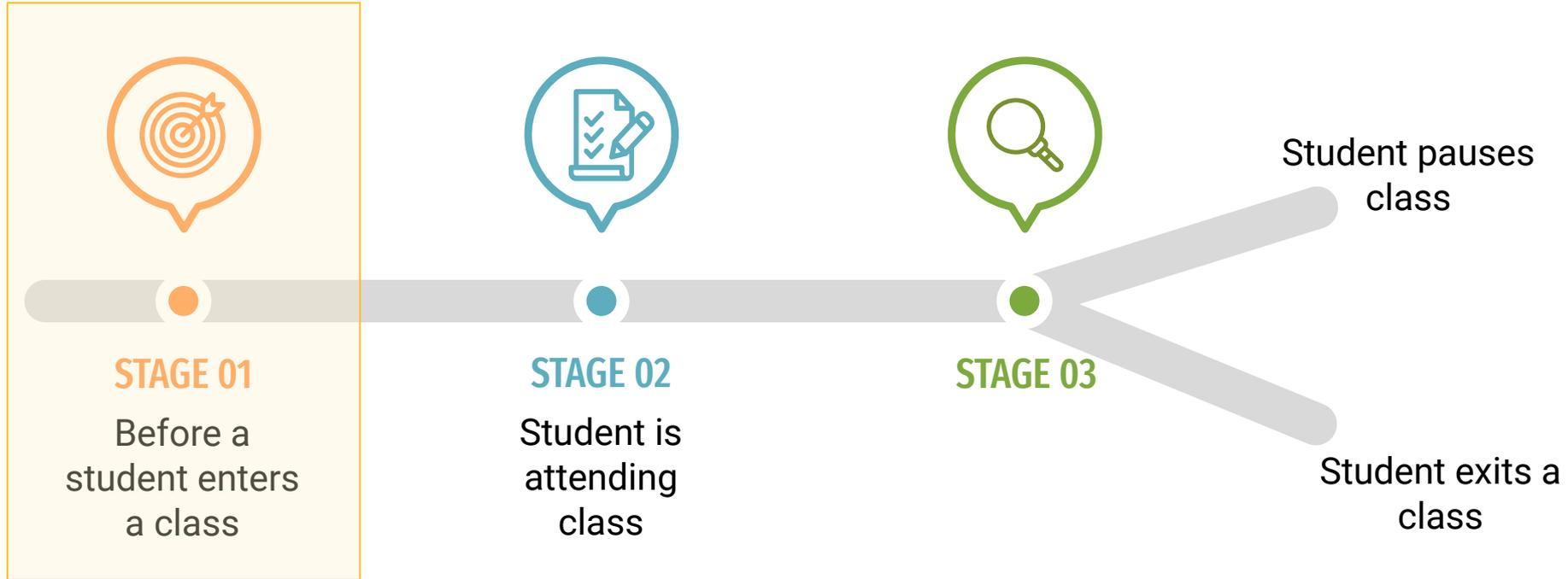
16 states fall into the “More than 40%” category

10 states fall into the “More than 50%” category

# Retention Strategies Across the Student Continuum



# Retention Strategies Across the Student Continuum



# STAGE 1 - Before a Student Enters Class

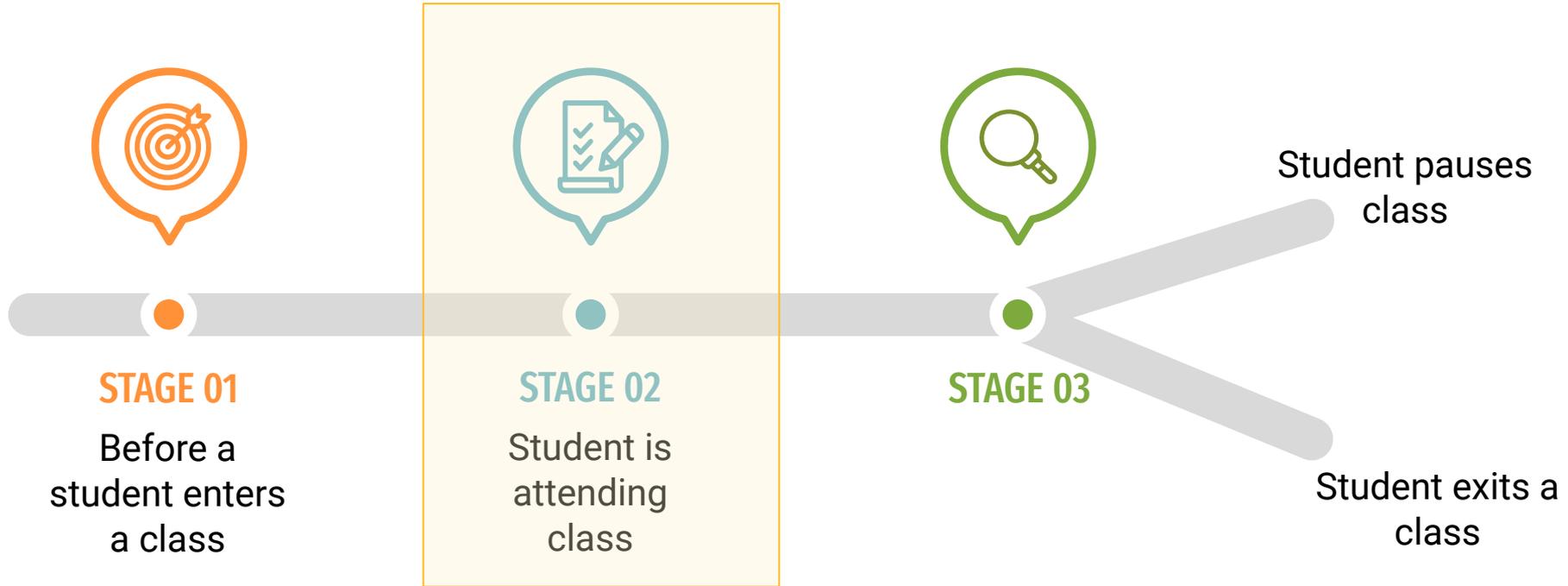
## COMMUNICATION

- Follow up with interested students via email, text, or personal phone call
- Manage a live chat feature, or social media live chat
- Ask teachers to send welcome email/text or do welcome calls

## CONTENT BEFORE CLASS

- Orientation / Goal Setting / Time Management workshops or bootcamps
- Provide online curriculum for students to work in while waiting for the start of a new term

# Retention Strategies Across the Student Continuum



# Retention Virtual Learning Community for Teachers

VLC titled “**Helping Students Stay**” was developed and piloted Fall 2021  
The next Retention VLC cohort will be scheduled for Fall 2022.

In early May 2022, watch for a new PD event to help teachers build up their retention efforts.

Administrators can:

- ★ Encourage teachers to register and participate in retention-related PD
- ★ Facilitate ongoing discussion about retention among staff after that PD
- ★ Request a closed cohort of the Retention VLC for their staff

# Moraine Valley Retention VLC

## Teacher quotes...

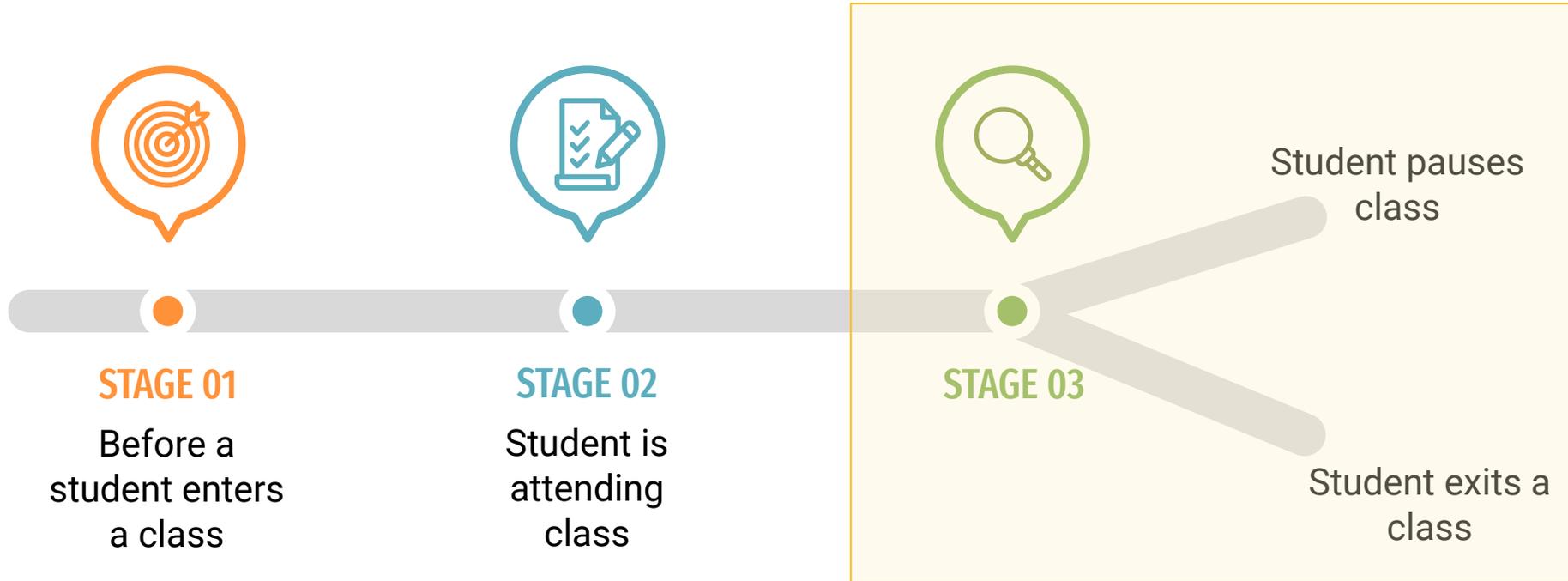
*This cohort has been a good way to interact with our colleagues that we don't see very often.*

*I want to try the "check-in" strategy for retention. I believe that this will be the most effective retention strategy, because it puts the instructor in a position where he/she can actually help. If we don't know the challenges students face, we can't help them to overcome them.*

*Implementing a strategy of setting goals and continually reminding students of these goals throughout the semester is an effective method of motivating students to continue on their academic journey because they will see evidence of their progress towards previously set goals.*

*I'm interested in developing bite sized goals for students to achieve through the semester. I often encourage students to reflect and see how far they've come, but I can be more methodical in how I show students they are making progress.*

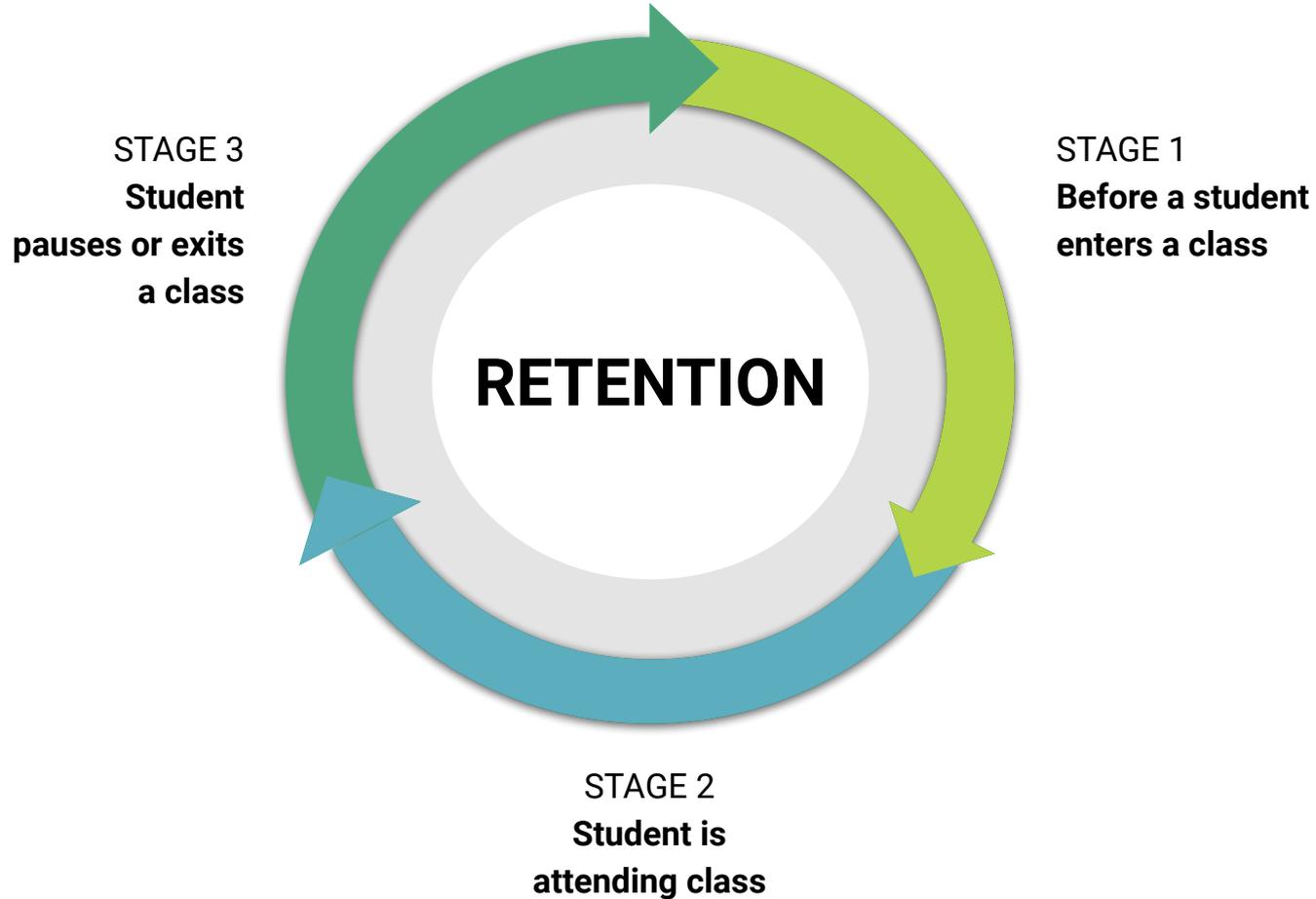
# Retention Strategies Across the Student Continuum



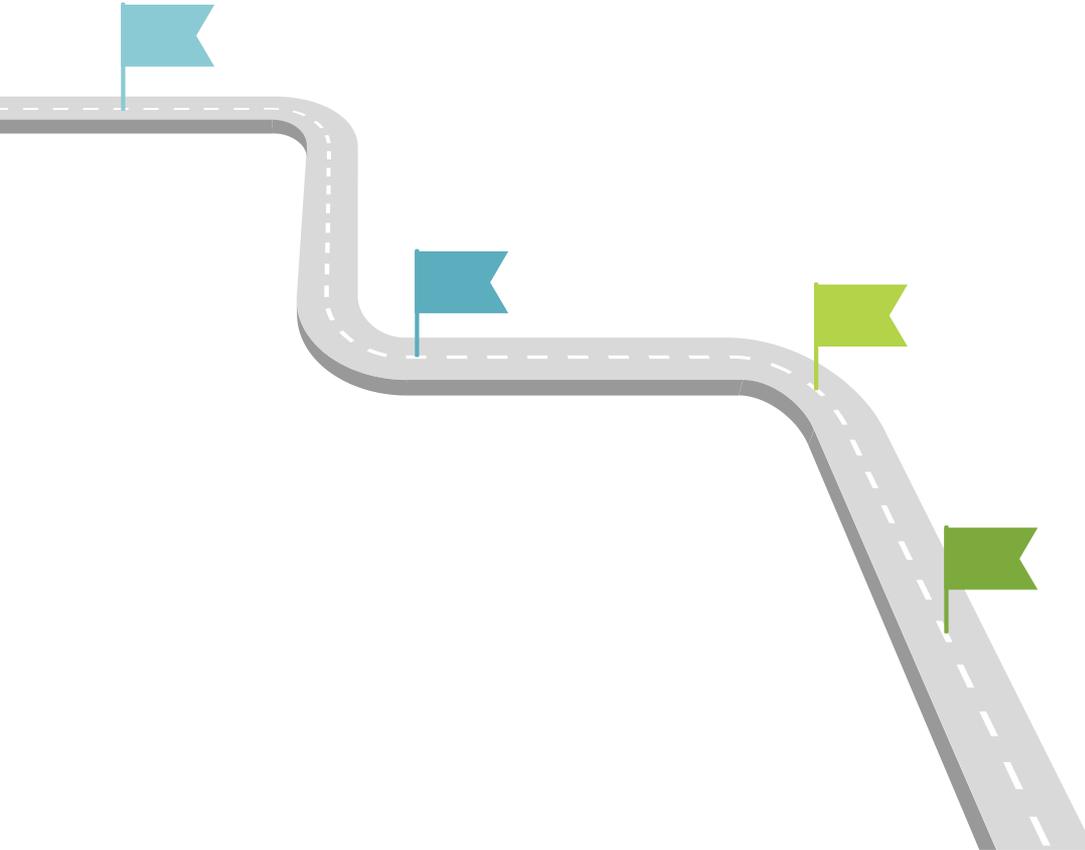
# STAGE 3 - Student Stops Out or Exits a Class

COMMUNICATION	CURRICULUM OUTSIDE OF CLASS	SUPPORTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Outreach (determine what type, how often, and who)</li><li>● Follow up when next registration period begins</li><li>● Presentations from transition personnel to higher level classes about Bridge / ICAPS programs</li><li>● Honest conversations conveying realistic student goals and timeframes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Provide free online resources to keep students active and engaged (Khan Academy, i-Pathways, Burlington English)</li><li>● Summer / transition-time boot camp for digital literacy, LMS, classroom orientation, or other topics</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Enable re-enrollment before their current class ends</li><li>● Refer students to partners for continued support (childcare, transportation, counseling, OneStop)</li><li>● Technology and digital literacy help available (video tutorials, tech support hotline)</li></ul>

# It's a continual process...



# Tap into Institutional Resources



Strengthen existing  
partnerships and systems

You don't have to build it  
from scratch

# Pause and Reflect



How can you establish programmatic practices that support retention?



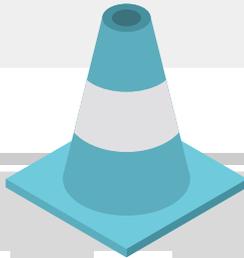
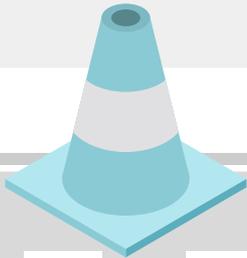
Which stage of the retention effort does your program do well?



Which stage of the retention effort could be strengthened?



What resources do you need or could you tap into for help?



# GET ON THE LIST!



Subscribe to the Professional Development Network's email list to find out about great PD opportunities for Illinois adult educators!

<https://rebrand.ly/pdnlist>

We do not share our email list and promise not to fill your inbox!



# Thank you!

Contact Dawn Hughes at [dj-hughes2@wiu.edu](mailto:dj-hughes2@wiu.edu) with questions/comments or if you are interested in a closed cohort Retention VLC

