When compared to paper records, student information systems (SISs) are effective at capturing student data, documenting academic progress, consolidating records, and reducing data replication. In a value-based student engagement model, however, a documentation solution isn’t enough—schools need a way to reach and impact their entire student population.

Because SISs are falling short on functionality and not fully meeting the needs of students, dissatisfaction with SISs is high. In one survey, only 23% of 1,010 teachers described their SIS as helpful in preparing for classroom activities, and 71% stated it did not help solve important classroom problems.

In contrast to SISs, a customer relationship management (CRM) solution gives schools the tools they need to better serve their students. With the right CRM solution, educational institutions can access data that facilitates engagement across the student life cycle and impacts both the student and teacher experience.

Here are some ways that CRM solutions can help educational institutions empower their departments and improve outcomes:

1. **Configuring intervention plans**
   With a CRM solution, advisors can build a comprehensive graduation plan and then monitor student progress weekly or daily.

2. **Personalizing the learning experience**
   CRM solutions go further, offering a comprehensive profile of a student’s academic status, goals, and living situation. This high-level overview helps teachers identify risk factors and deliver services more proactively.

3. **Engaging students**
   CRM solutions encourage students to provide feedback and self-manage their academic progress. Moreover, the data that students submit helps teachers monitor students’ progress between advising appointments. This personalized learning can help reduce avoidable remediation and associated costs.

4. **Coordinating services**
   Effective support also means bringing together faculty and staff across departments and potentially family members to support the graduation plan. CRM solutions offer the ability to coordinate the efforts of multiple parties. As a result, support can extend beyond the four walls of the school.

5. **Targeting specific student groups**
   Schools using a CRM solution can identify a target population; analyze the group’s academic, demographic, and social data; and contact members with a specific message or set of services.

6. **Sustaining relationships**
   CRM solutions help manage the student relationship over time and support schools’ efforts to maintain ongoing relationships with their students and alumni.