



Reducing Chronic Absence

Why does it matter? What can Senior Corps do?





About Us

Attendance Works is a national and state initiative that promotes awareness of the important role that school attendance plays in achieving academic success starting with school entry. We are an implementation partner for attendance with the Campaign for Grade Level Reading.

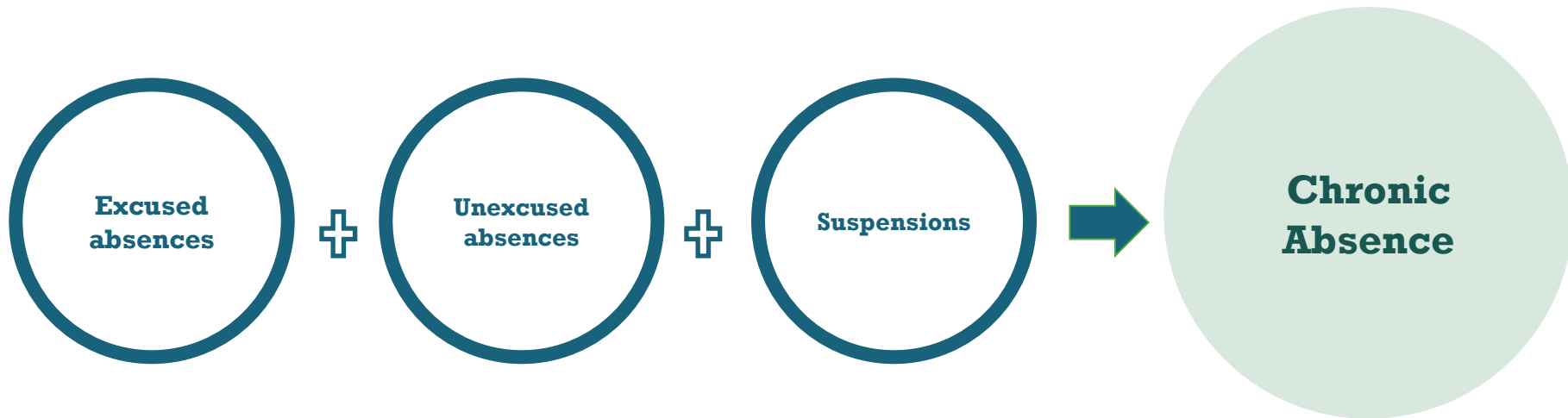
Our three focus areas to improve student attendance are:

- ✓ Build public awareness and political will
- ✓ Foster state campaigns
- ✓ Encourage local practice



What is Chronic Absence?

Chronic absence is missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at risk. Attendance Works recommends defining it as **missing 10% or more of school for any reason.**



Chronic absence is different from **truancy** (unexcused absences only) or **average daily attendance** (how many students show up to school each day).



Multiple Measures of Attendance

Average Daily Attendance

How many students show up to school every day? The percent of enrolled students who attend school each day. It is used in some states for allocating funding.

Truancy

Who is missing school without permission? Typically refers only to unexcused absences. Each state has the authority to define truancy and when it triggers legal intervention.

Chronic Absence

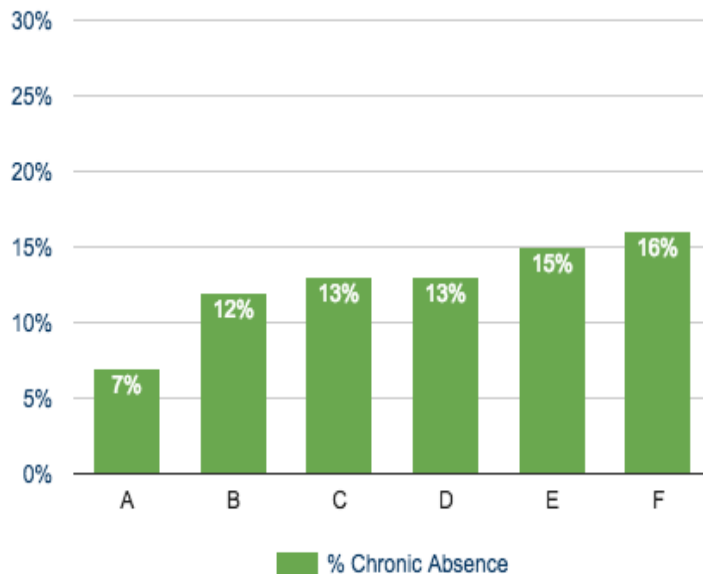
Who is missing so much school they are academically at risk? Broadly means missing too much school for any reason -- excused, unexcused, etc. Researchers commonly define it as missing 10% of school. OCR currently defines it as missing 15 days. Chronic absence is a required reporting metric in ESSA.



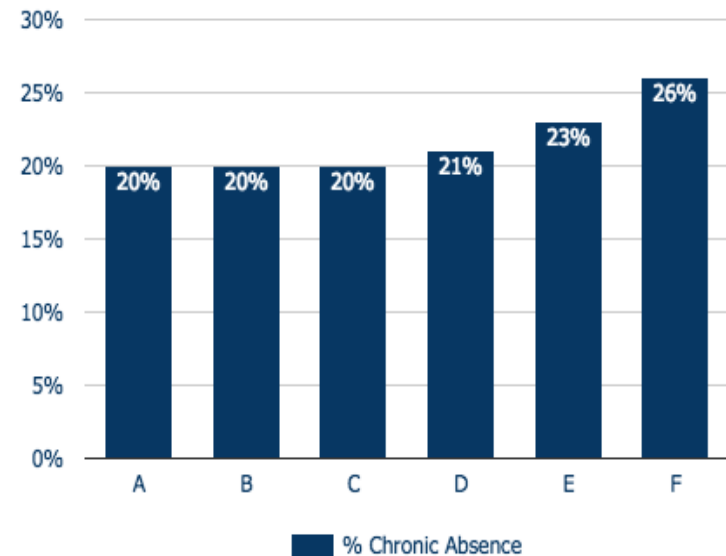
Average Daily Attendance (ADA) Can Mask Chronic Absence

90% and even 95% \neq A

Chronic Absence For 6 Elementary Schools in
Oakland, CA with 95% ADA in 2012



Chronic Absence for 6 Schools in New York
City with 90% ADA in 2011-12



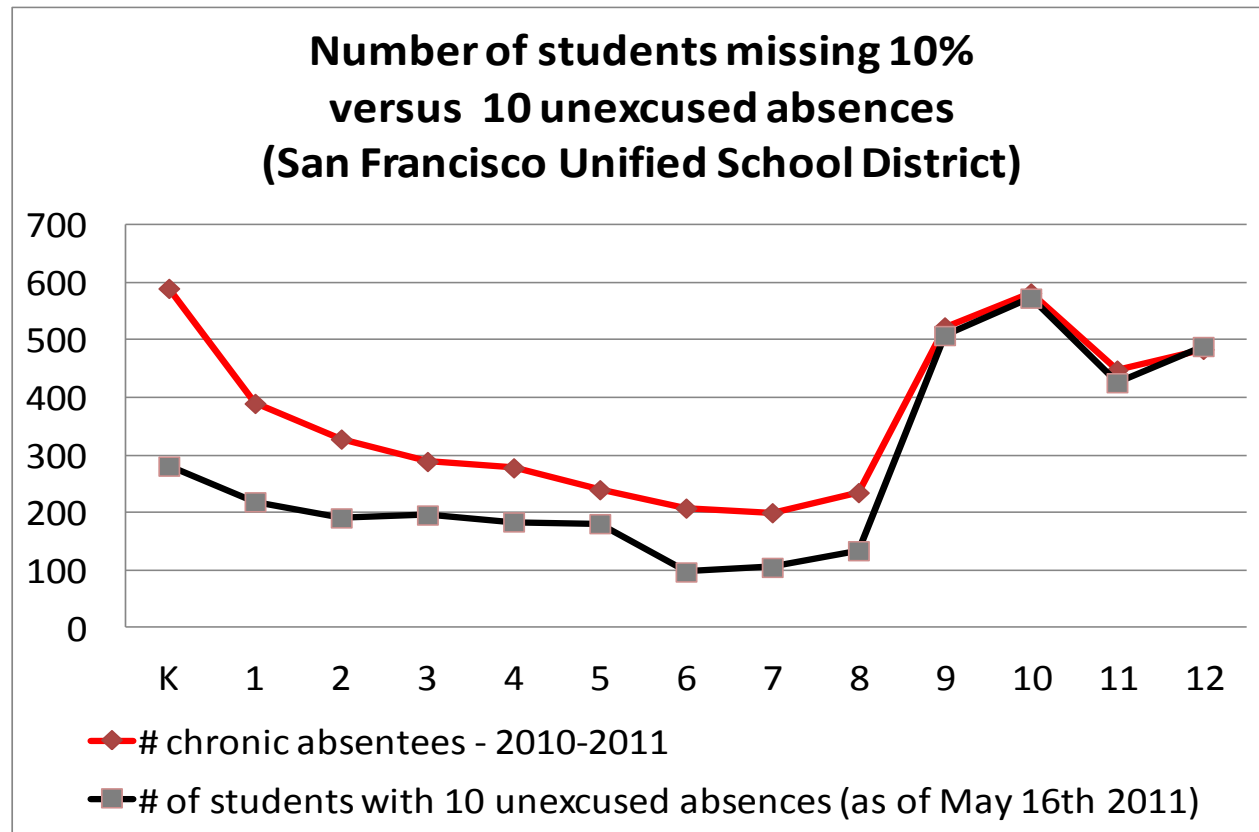
98% ADA = little chronic absence

95% ADA = don't know

93% ADA = significant chronic absence



Chronic Absence Vs. Truancy





Chronic Absence Is Easily Masked If We Only Monitor Missing Consecutive days

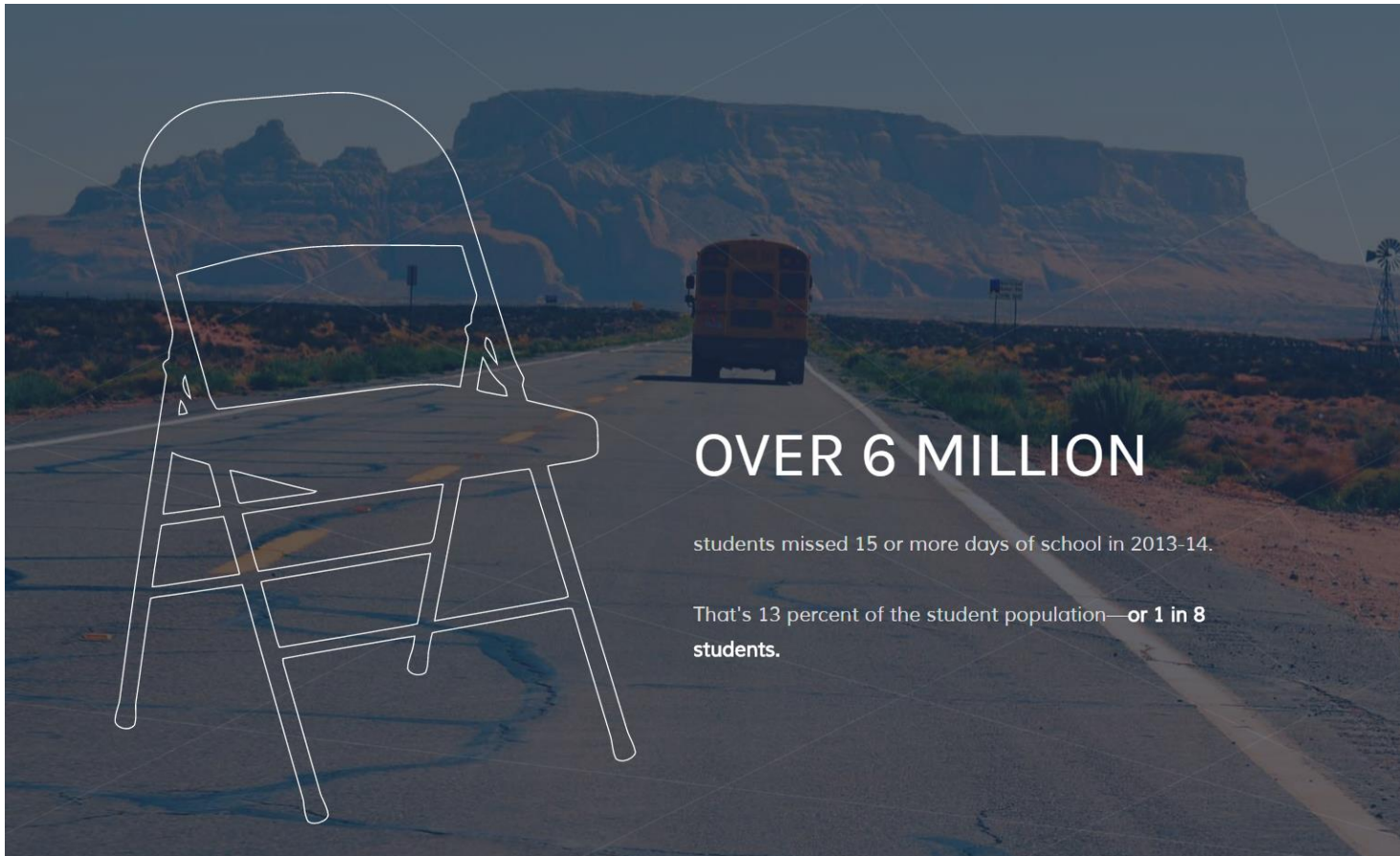
September					October					November					December					January				
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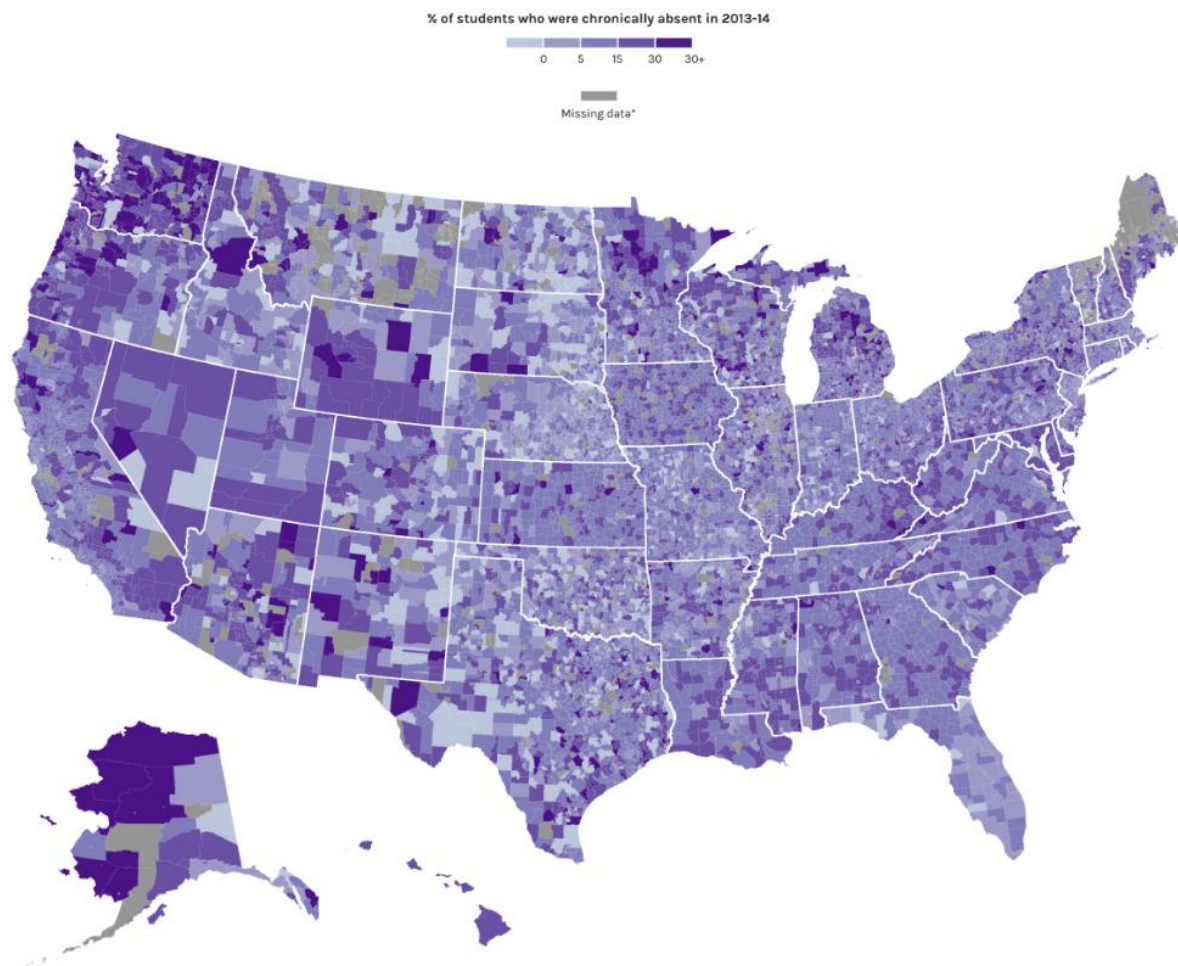
Chronic Absence = 18 days of absence = **As Few As 2 days a month**



Chronic Absence a Huge National Problem



Source: U.S. Department of Education Civil Rights Data Collection



Why Does Attendance Matter for Achievement?

What we know from research around the country





Why Does Attendance Matter?



Developed by Annie E. Casey Foundation & America's Promise Alliance
For more info go to <http://www.americaspromise.org/parent-engagement-toolkit>

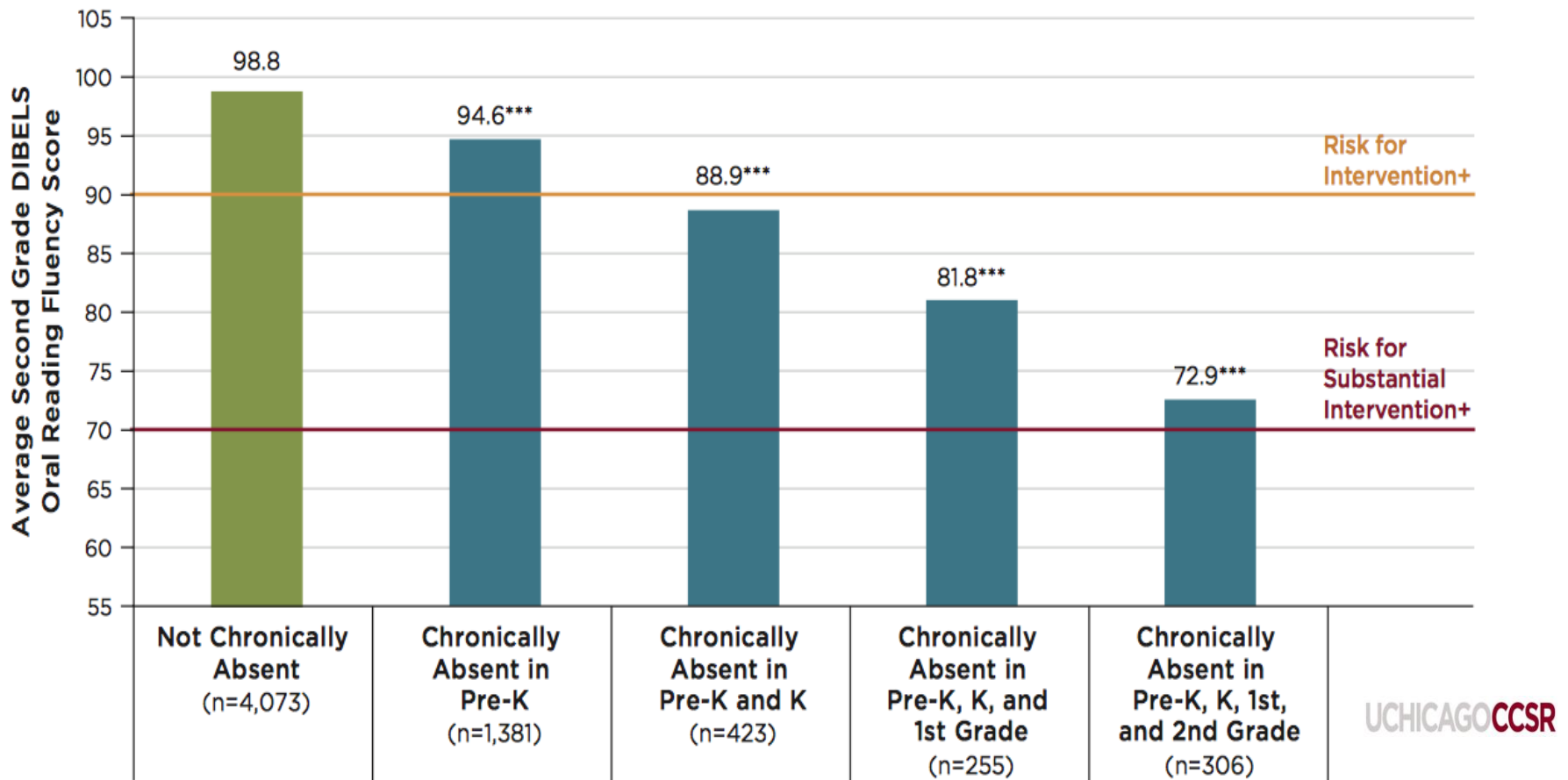


Improving Attendance Matters Because it Reflects:

- ✓ **Exposure to language:** Starting in Pre-K, attendance equals exposure to language-rich environments especially for low-income children.
- ✓ **Time on Task in Class:** Students only benefit from classroom instruction if they are in class.
- ✓ **On Track for Success:** Chronic absence is a proven early warning sign that a student is behind in reading by 3rd grade, failing courses middle and high school, and likely to drop-out.
- ✓ **College and Career Ready:** Cultivating the habit of regular attendance helps students develop the persistence needed to show up every day for college and work.
- ✓ **Engagement:** Attendance reflects engagement in learning.
- ✓ **Effective Practice:** Schools, communities and families can improve attendance when they work together.



Multiple Years of Chronic Absenteeism = High Risk for low 3rd Grade Reading Skills



Note: ***Indicates that scores are significantly different from scores of students who are never chronically absent, at p<.001 level. + In the DIBELS 6th Edition Assessment and Scoring Guide (Good & Kaminski, 2002), these are labeled as "Some Risk," indicating the need for additional intervention and "At Risk," indicating the need for substantial interventions.



Chronic Early Absence Connected to Poor Long- Term Academic Outcomes

Chronic absence in
kindergarten

Lower levels of
literacy in first grade

Lower achievement as
far out as fifth grade

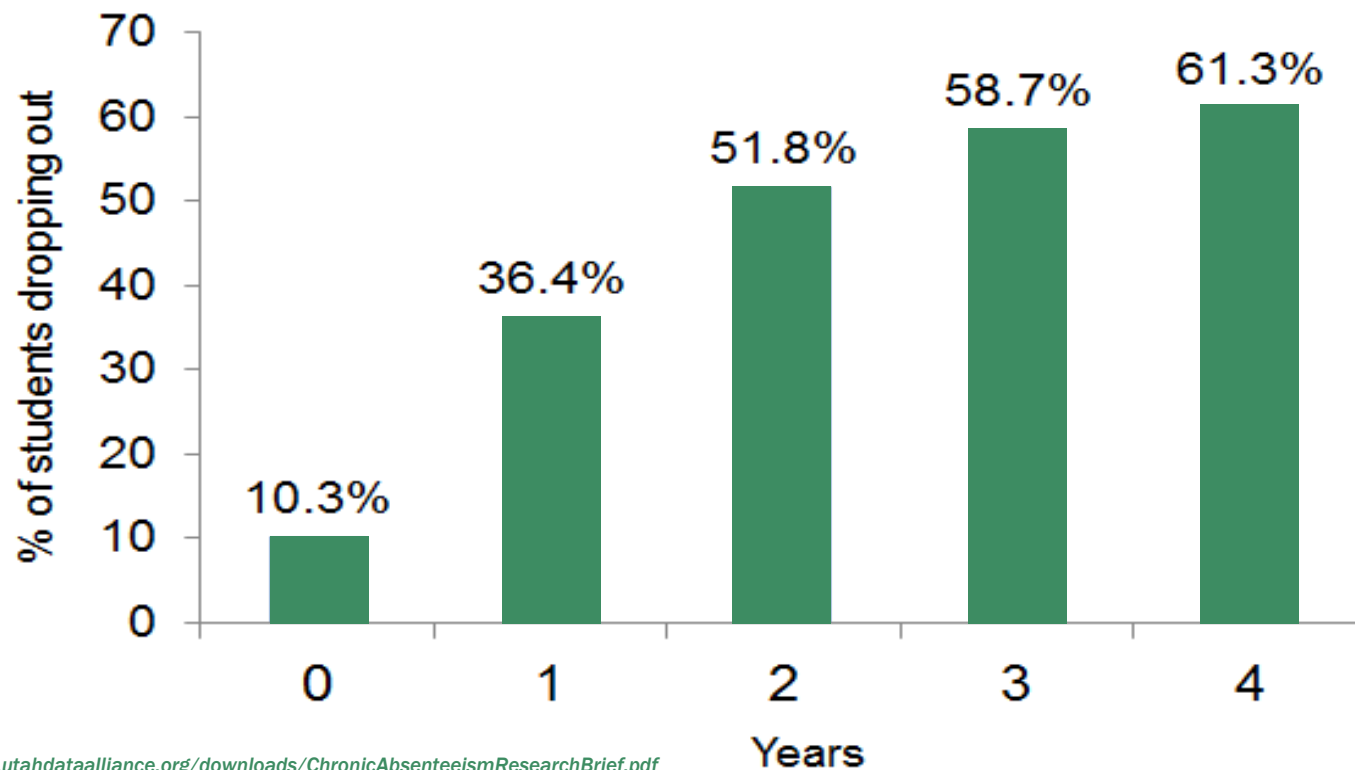
A Rhode Island Data Hub analysis found that compared to kindergartners who attend regularly, those chronically absent:

- Scored **20% lower in reading and math** in later grades and gap grows
- **2X** as likely to be **retained** in grade.
- **2X** likely to be **suspended** by the end of 7th grade.
- Likely to continue being chronically absent

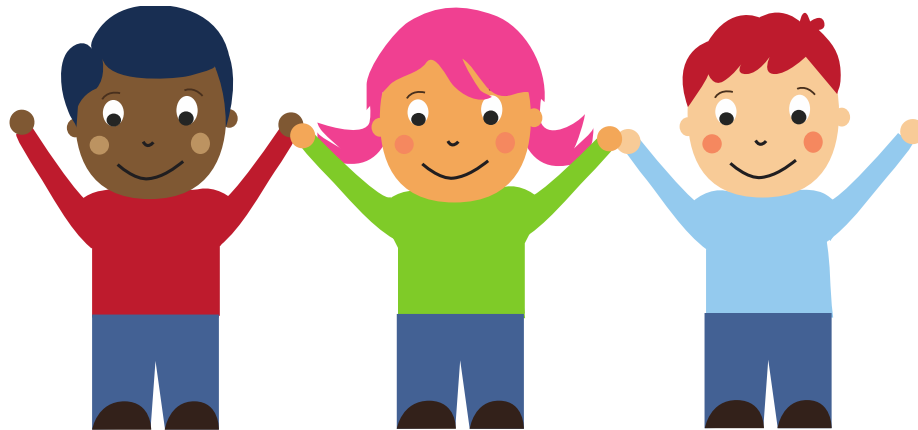


The Effects of Chronic Absence on Dropout Rates Are Cumulative

Proportion of Students Dropping Out by Number of Years the Student was Chronically Absent from 8th-12th Grades

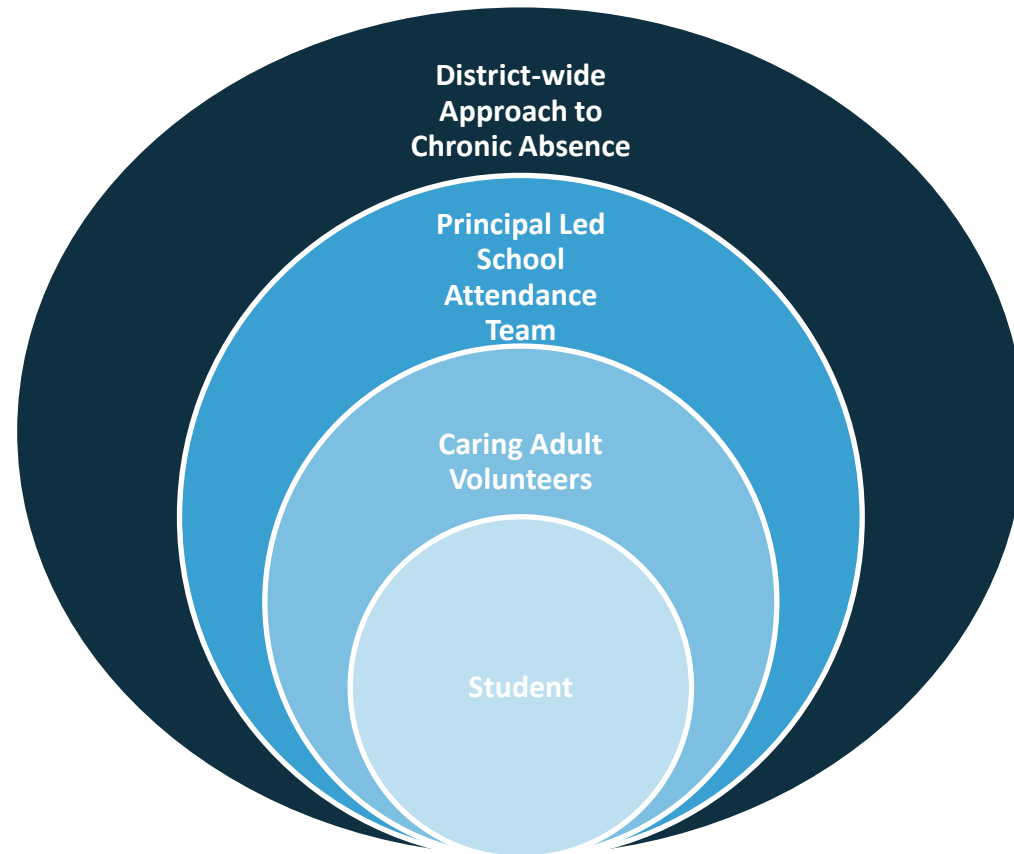


How Can Senior Corps Volunteers Address Chronic Absence?





Levels of Support Volunteer Programs Can Provide



Caring Adults Are Key



*Students don't care how much
you know until they know
how much you care.*



Equip Volunteers to Address Absenteeism

Educate your volunteers about the impact of chronic absence on achievement during training:

- Share an infographic or flyer,
<http://www.attendanceworks.org/tools/for-parents/parent-handouts/>
- Show a video,
<http://www.attendanceworks.org/tools/for-public-messaging/videos/>



What to Say to Students

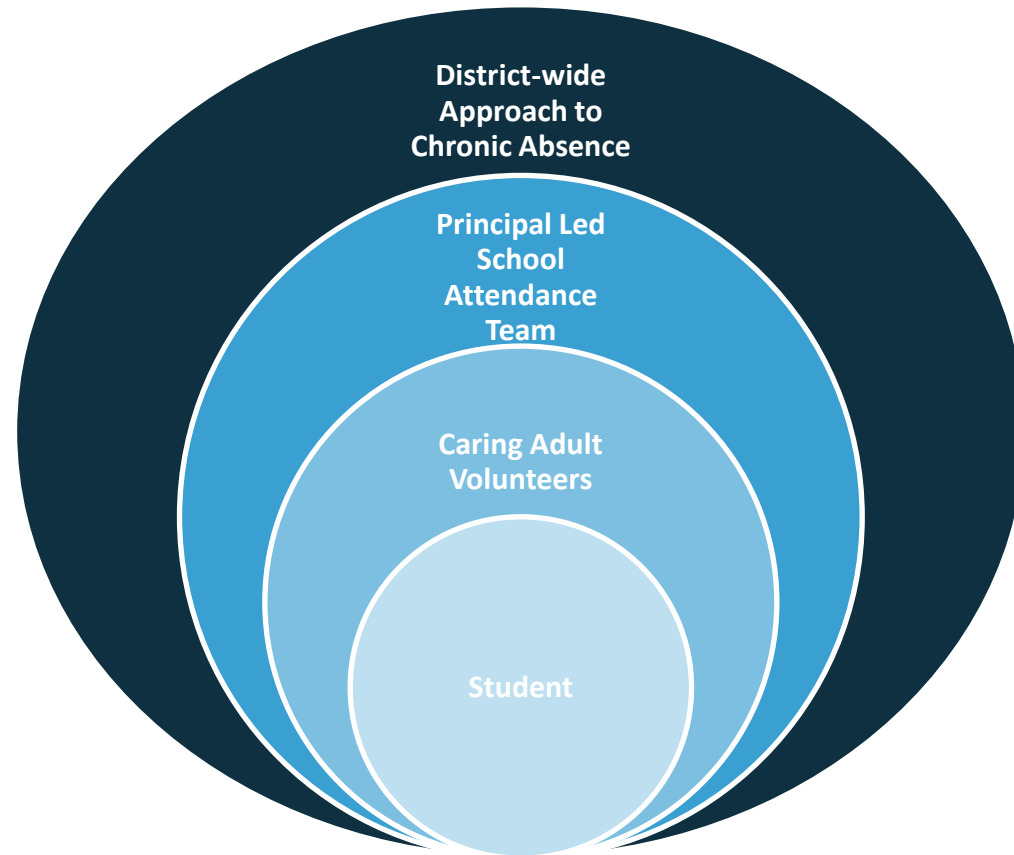
Encourage them to build a culture of attendance.

Volunteers can:

- Greet each student by name
- Show they are happy to see students in school
- Notice when students are absent
- Welcome students back. (I missed you. When you were out, we had an exciting lesson/activity about _____.)
- Express concern when absences start adding up (more than 2 days a month)



Volunteer Programs Can Support School-wide Efforts





School-Level Strategies to Improve Attendance

A. Recognize Good and Improved Attendance

B. Engage Students and Parents

E. Develop Programmatic Response to Barriers

D. Provide Personalized Early Outreach

C. Monitor Attendance Data and Practice



Assist with School-wide Strategies

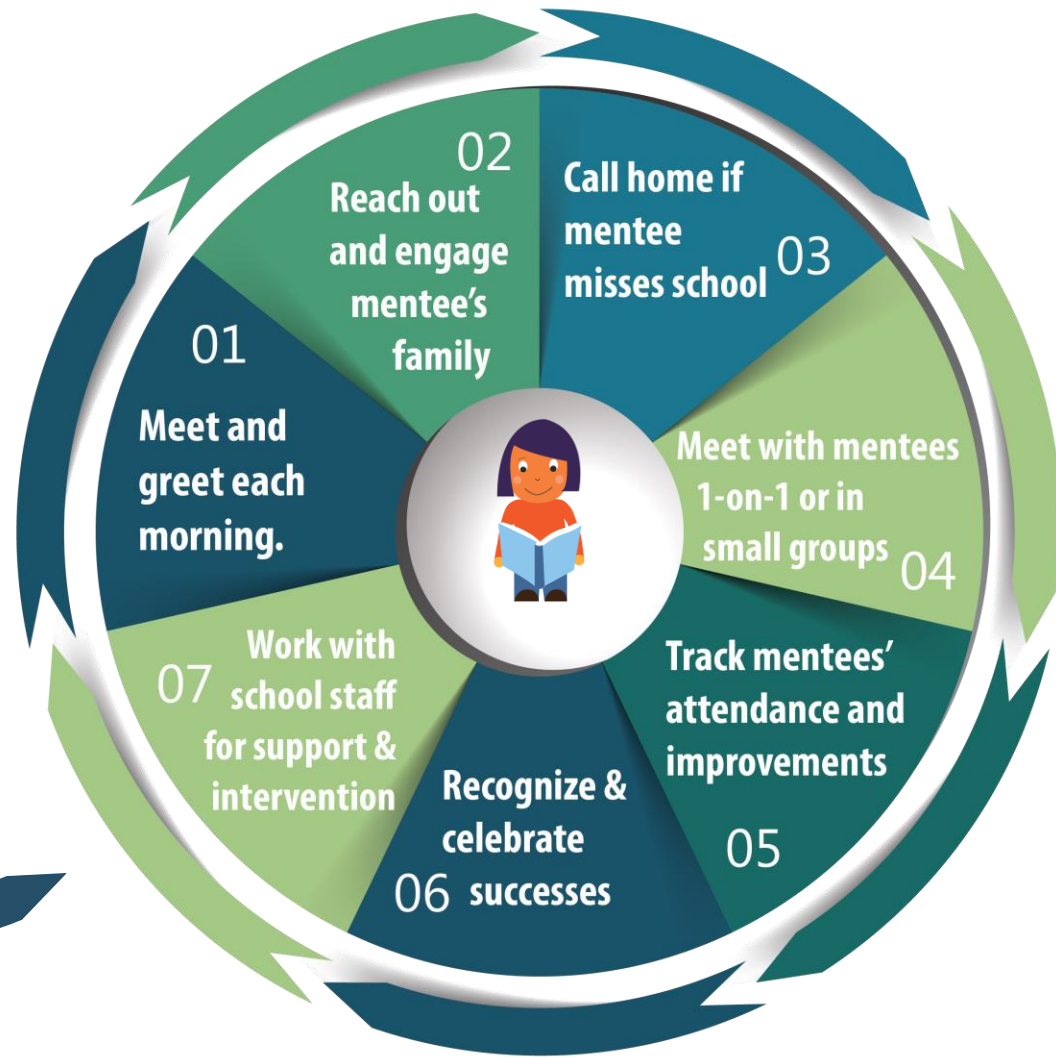
1. Be part of a school-wide effort to Recognize good and improved attendance. Help organize events such as assemblies or celebrations to recognize good and improved attendance.
2. Engage Students and Parents - Assist in welcoming students and parents to the school
3. Work with principal and school attendance team to
 - Offer insights into the causes of student absences
 - Make calls home when students are absent (Personalized Early Outreach)
 - Work 1:1 with a chronically absent student to set and reach attendance goals

Volunteers Can...

**NOTICE A
CHRONICALLY
ABSENT STUDENT**



**CONNECT WITH
THEIR STUDENT**





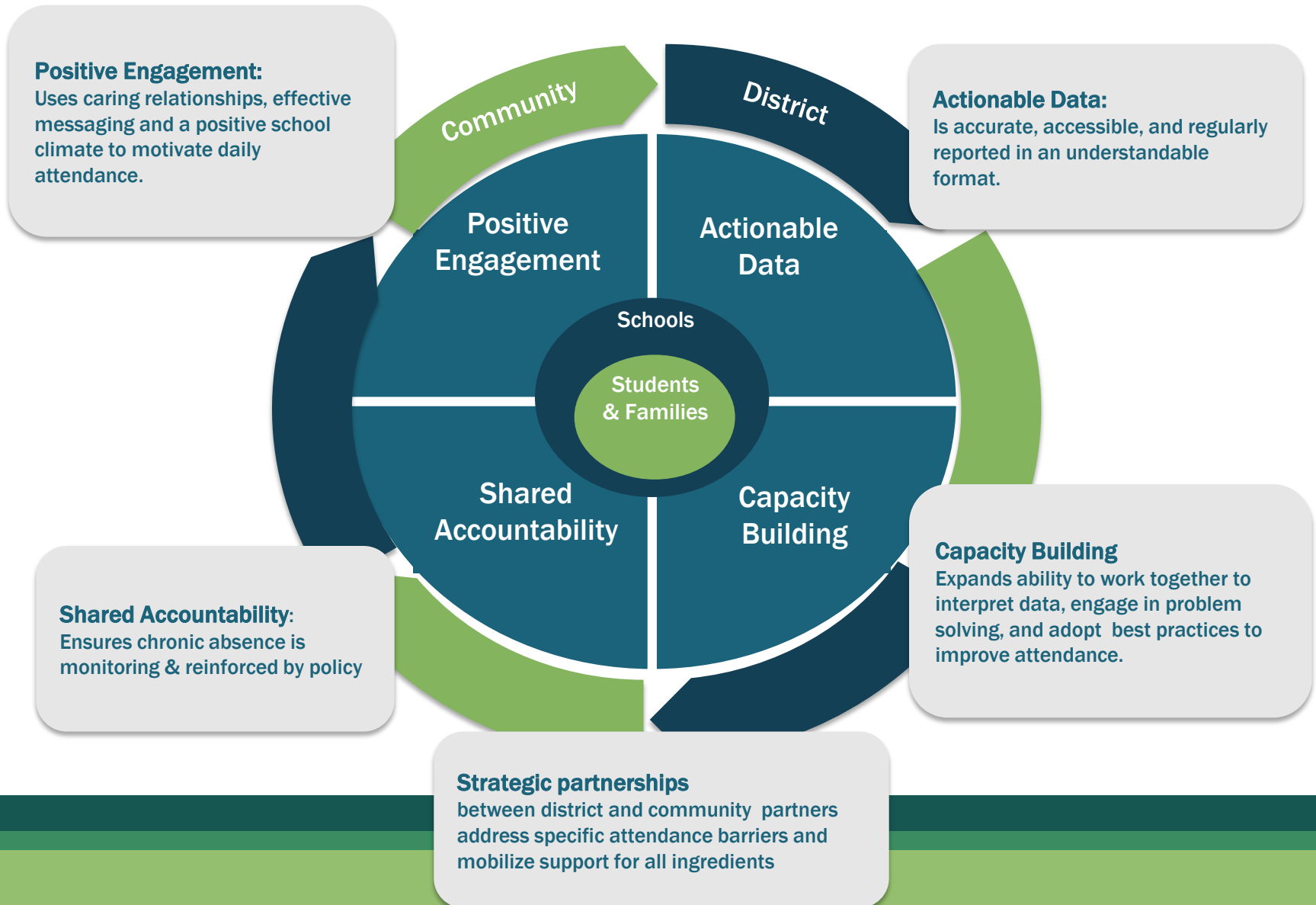
How to Find Support in Schools

Provide volunteers with key contacts in the school. Who can help students or families find resources that can address attendance barriers?



- Attendance team
- Community schools coordinator
- School nurse
- Counselor
- Principal
- Social worker

Take a Data Driven Systemic Approach





Partner and Coordinate at a District and Community Level

1. Participate in district or community work groups to understand how many students are chronically absent and where they are located
2. Coordinate assignment of volunteers to schools with greatest need
3. Develop positive messaging for larger community
4. Monitor collective impact of attendance interventions



Questions from the Audience



Additional Resources

