



Reducing Chronic Absence: It's a Matter of 1, 2, 3!





Welcome



Alicia Lara

Senior Vice President

United Way Worldwide



Convening Partners



HEALTHY SCHOOLS
CAMPAIGN





2016 By the Numbers

- More than **431** communities in **47** states plus DC pinned on the Attendance Action Map
- **203,294** website page views in September
- Over **10,000** listserv subscribers
- **1,571** media hits
- **7,458** tweets using #schooleveryday creating **15.8 million** impressions
- **455** superintendents signed Call to Action appearing in EdWeek



2017 Campaign Goals

1. **Expand the public's awareness** of the important role that regular attendance plays in student achievement as well as the need to address common barriers to getting to school particularly for our most vulnerable children. Given its impact on early attendance, we promote special attention to challenges related to physical and behavioral health;
2. **Promote** schools and community partners using data to drive and take action; and
3. **Activate a wide array of stakeholders** (educators and a wide array of likely and unlikely public agencies and community allies) to partner with students and families to reduce chronic absenteeism.



What's New in 2017

1. Submit stories and ideas for the 2017 AAM Map to catherine@attendanceworks.org
2. Superintendent's Call to Action: Goal is to reach 600 superintendents!
3. September Brief: "Portraits of Change"
4. Look for new graphics to celebrate the 2017 AAM slogan: Engagement = Attendance.



Welcome



Hedy Chang

Executive Director
Attendance Works

**& Members of the
Attendance Works Team**



Poll Questions

1. Did your community participate in Attendance Awareness Month last year?
2. Is your community planning to participate in Attendance Awareness Month in 2017?



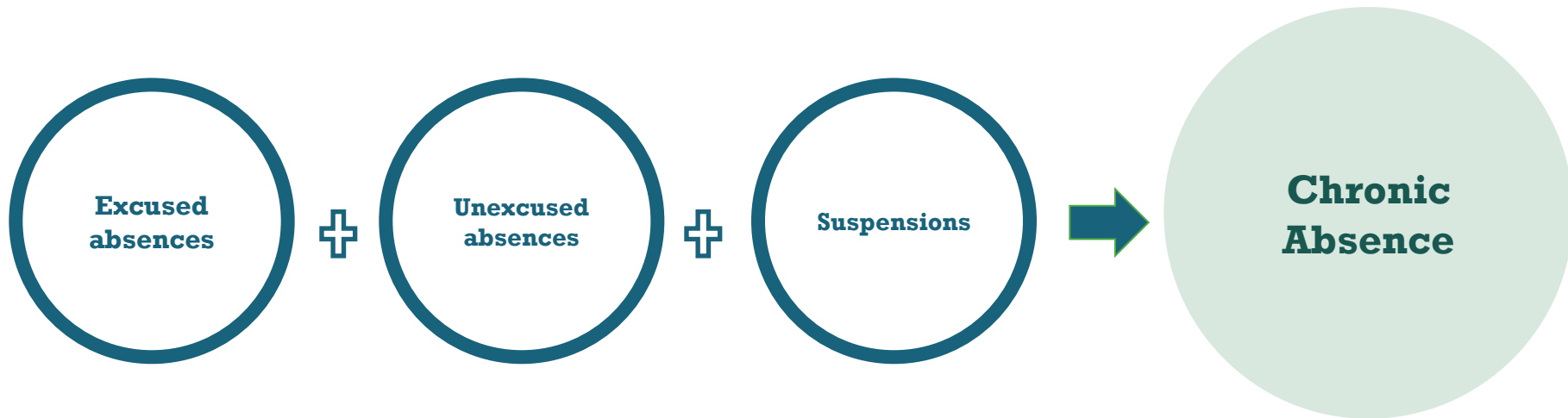
Agenda

1. **Review of Key Concepts**
2. **Tier I Strategies – What Works**
 - ★ **Todd Rogers**
Harvard University
 - ★ **Shauna McMillan**
United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania
 - ★ **Stephen Weiss**
His Place Community Center
 - ★ **Beth Duda**
The Patterson Foundation
 - ★ **Diana Greene**
Manatee County Schools
3. **Announcements and Resources**



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

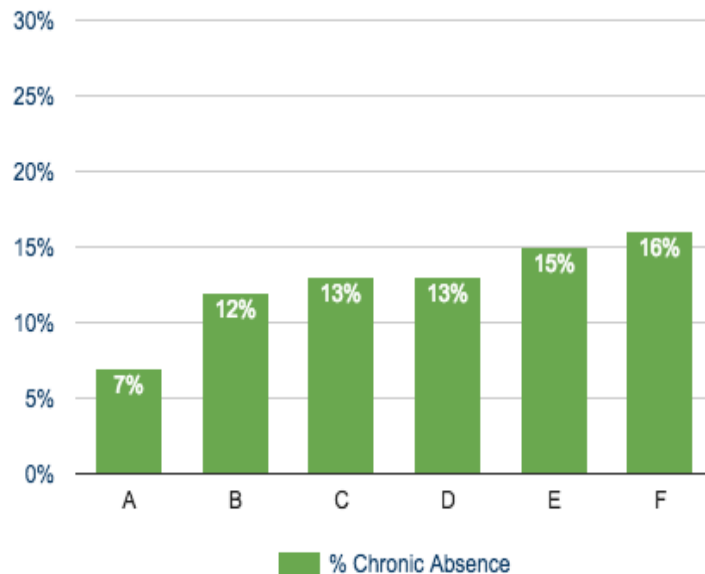
Who is missing so much school they are academically at risk? Broadly means missing too much school for any reason—excused, unexcused, etc. Many researchers and growing number of states define it as missing 10% of school. OCR currently define it as missing 15 days. Chronic absence is a required reporting metric and an optional measure for school improvement in ESSA.



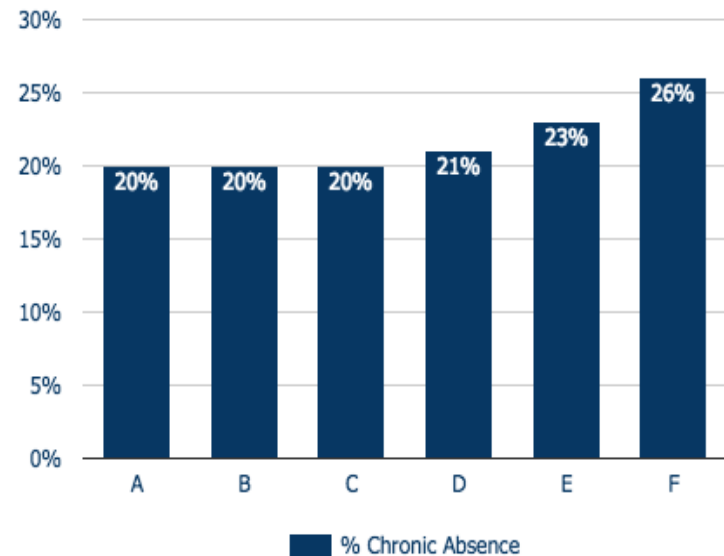
Average Daily Attendance (ADA) Can Mask Chronic Absence

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



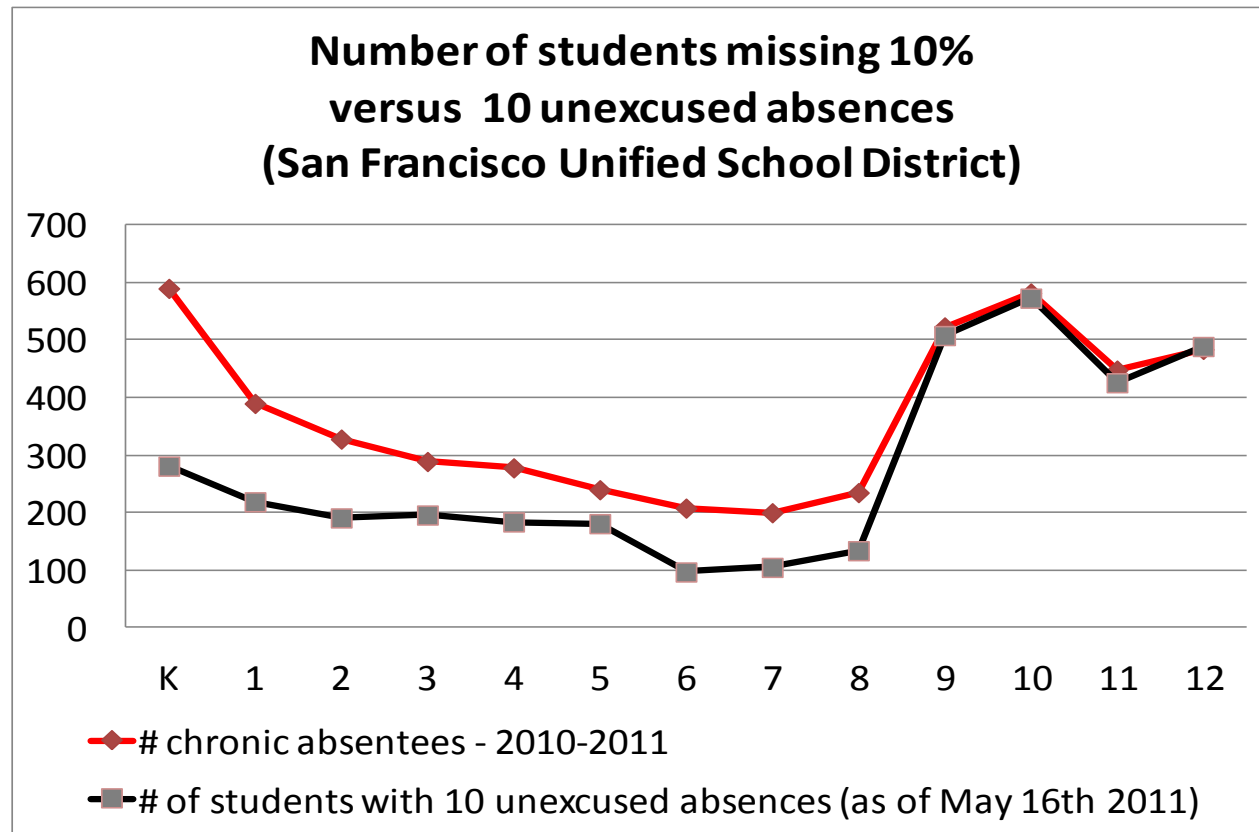
98% ADA = little chronic absence

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				
M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F
													X				X							
							X				X													
		X	X					X				X			X	X				X	X	X		

February					March					April					May					June				
M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F
				X						X														
X	X													X	X						X	X		
								X					X											

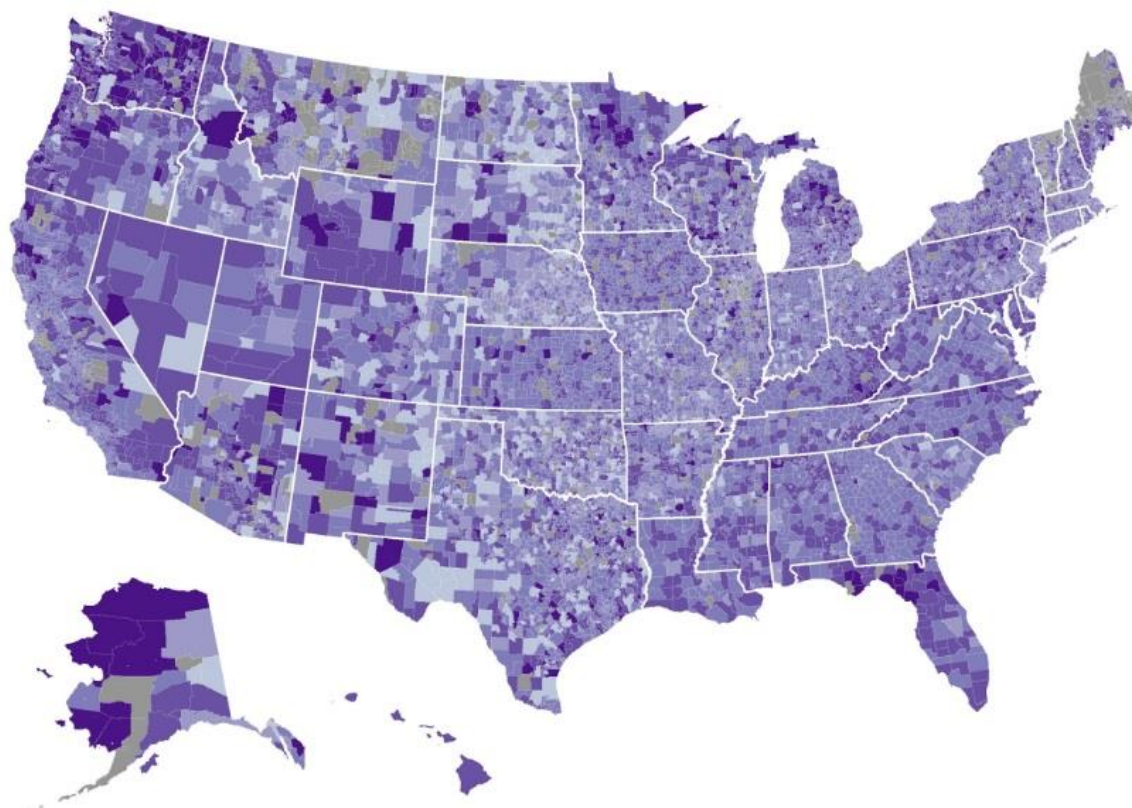
Chronic Absence = 18 days of absence = **As few as 2 days a month**

Why Does Attendance Matter for Achievement?

What we know from research around the country



Over 6.8 million students missed 15 days or more



- **Highly concentrated:** half of the students in 4% of districts
- **Rural districts:** many have high rates of chronic absence

% of students who were chronically absent in 2013-14



Missing data*

Source: U.S. Department of Education Civil Rights Data Collection SY 2013-14

<https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html>



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>



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

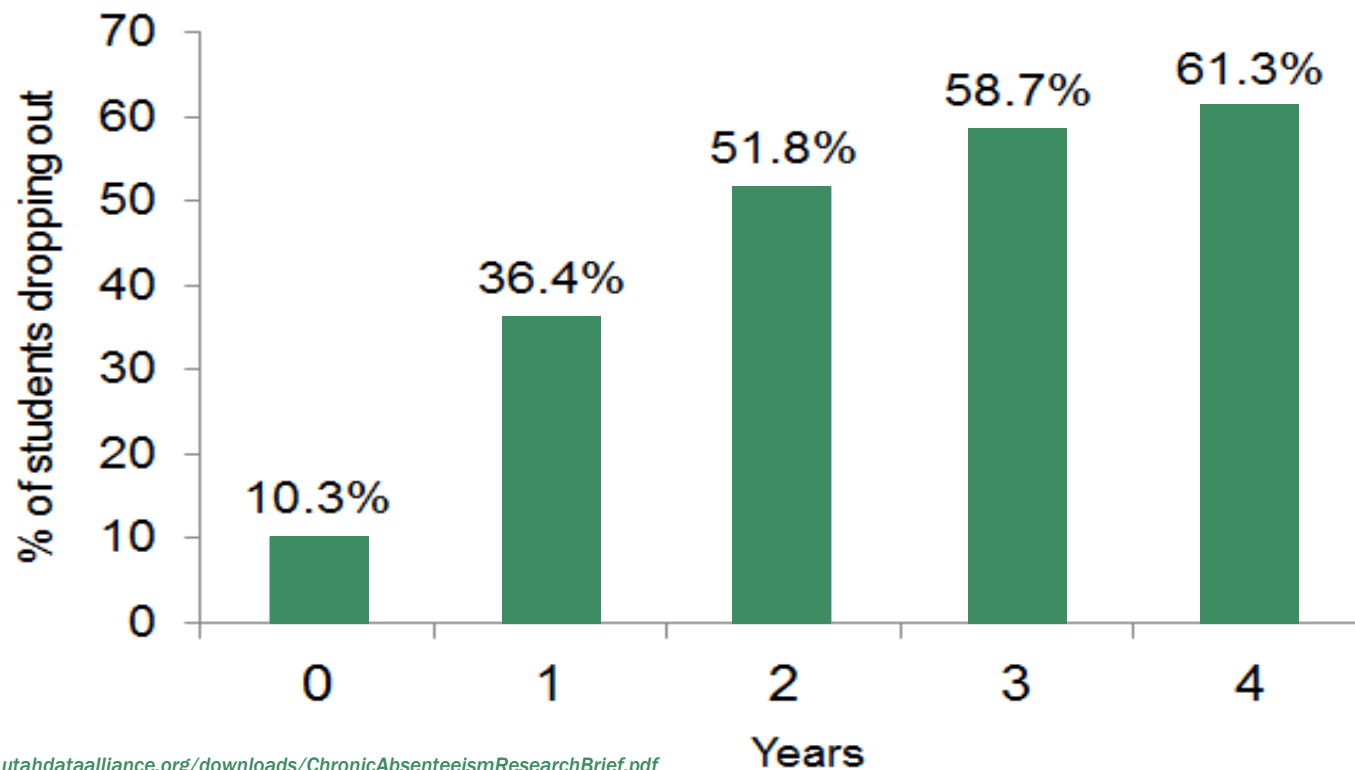
A Rhode Island Data Hub analysis found that compared to kindergartners who attend regularly, those chronically absent:

- 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.

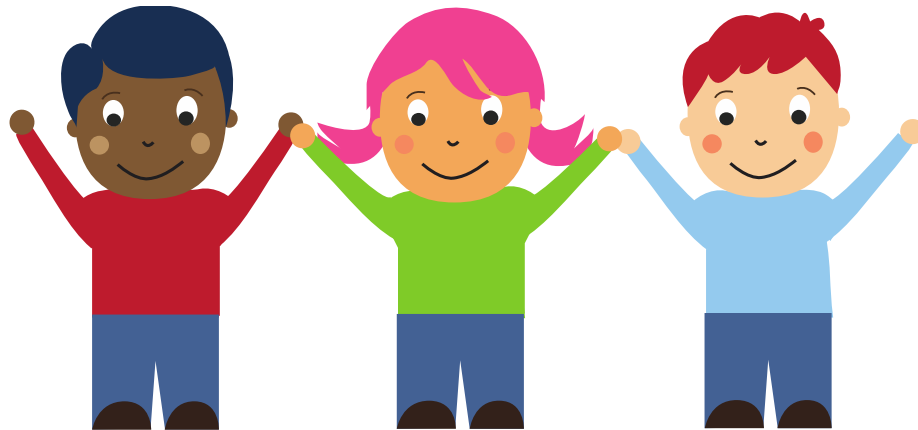


The Effects of Chronic Absence on Dropout Rates Are Cumulative

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



How Can We Address Chronic Absence?





Unpack Contributing Factors to Chronic Absence

Myths

- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Don't realize just missing 2 days per month can affect learning
- Sporadic absences aren't a problem
- Attendance only matters in the older grades

Barriers

- Lack of access to health or dental care
- Chronic illness
- Trauma
- No safe path to school
- Poor Transportation
- Housing instability
- High mobility
- Involvement with child welfare or juvenile justice system

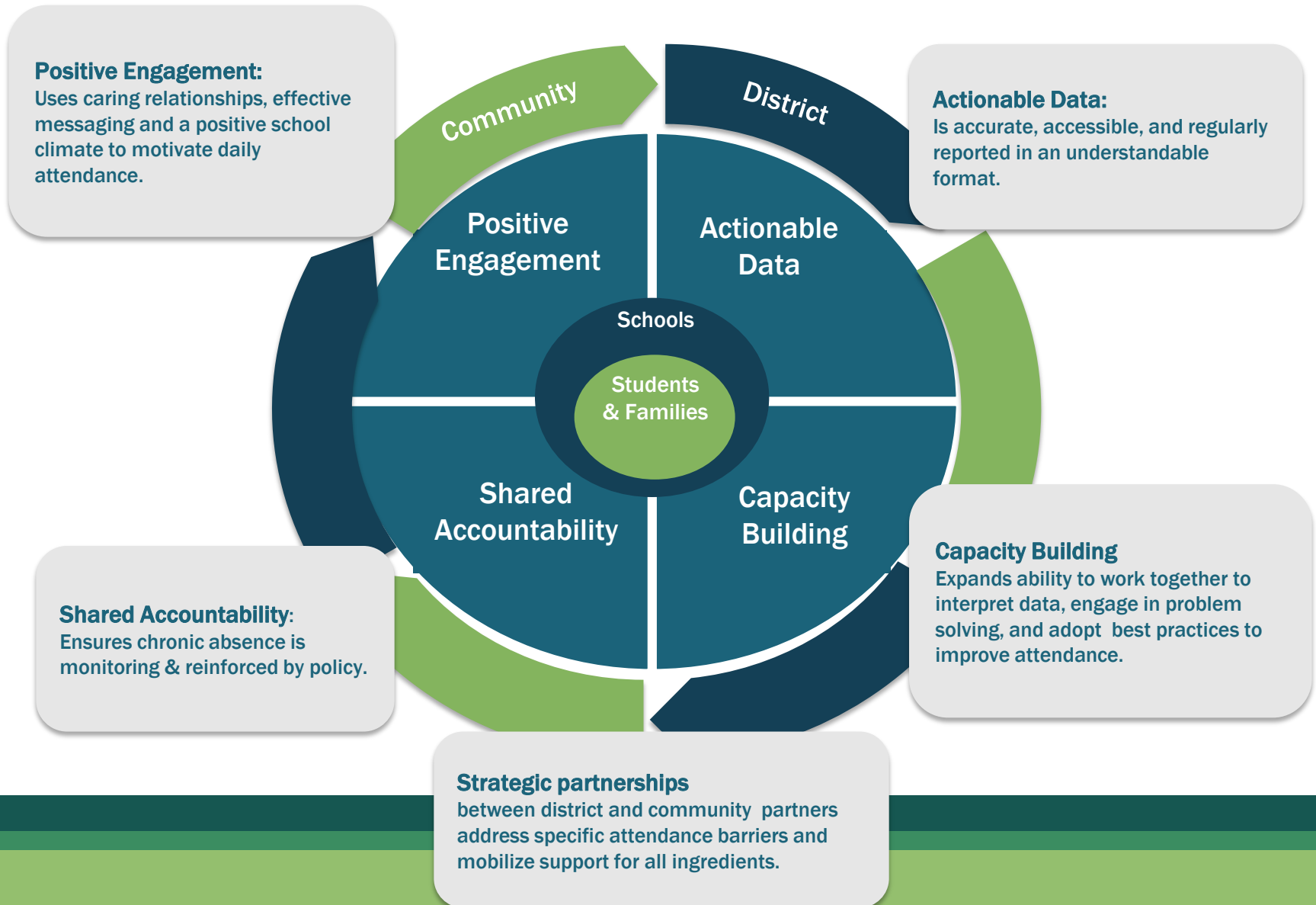
Aversion

- Struggling academically or socially
- Bullying
- Ineffective / exclusionary school discipline
- Parents had negative school experience
- Undiagnosed disability

Disengagement

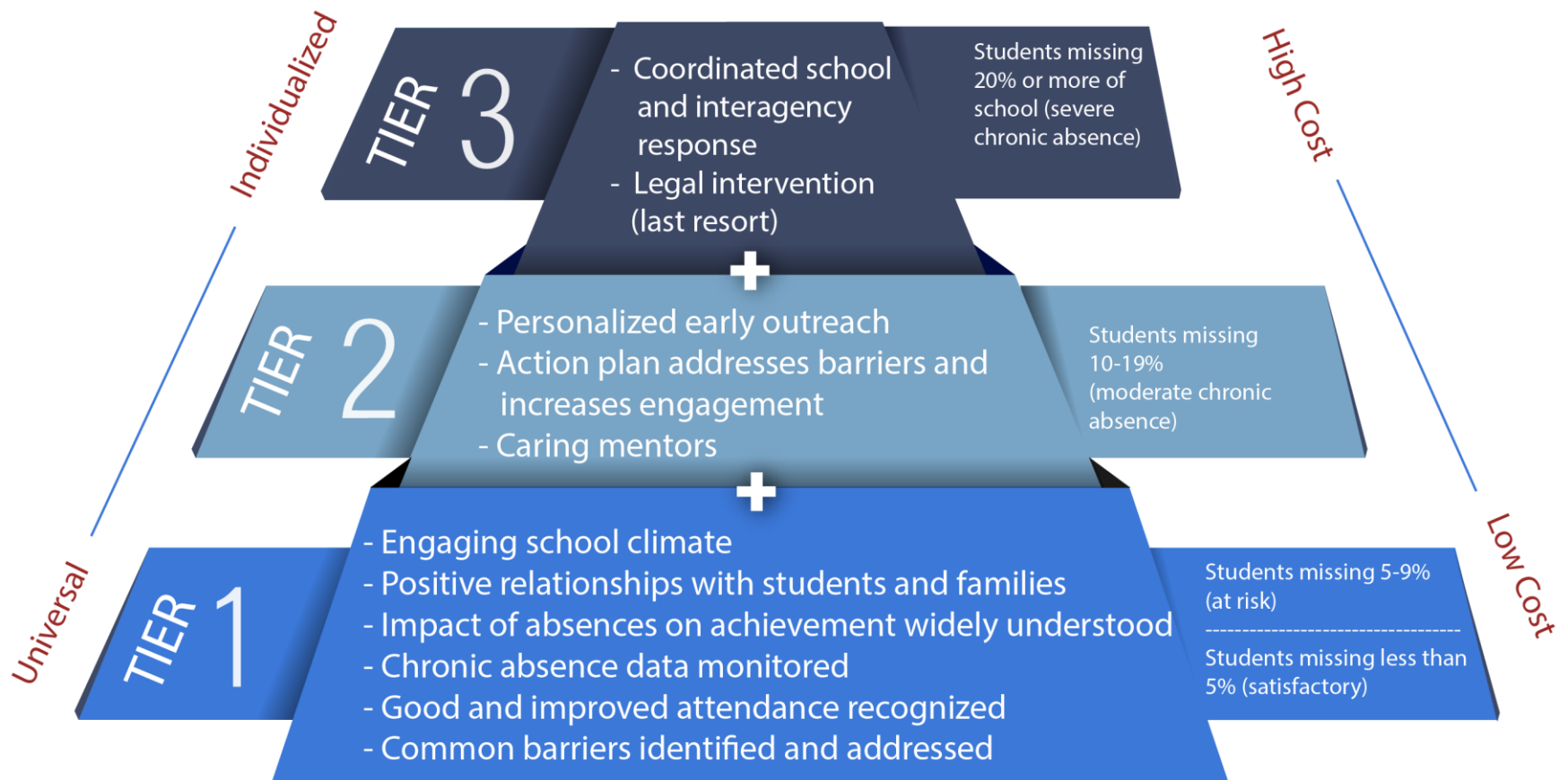
- Lack of engaging and culturally relevant instruction
- No meaningful relationships with adults in school
- Vulnerable to being with peers out of school vs. in school
- Poor school climate
- Discouraged due to lack of credits

Take a Data Driven Systemic Approach





Invest in Prevention and Early Intervention

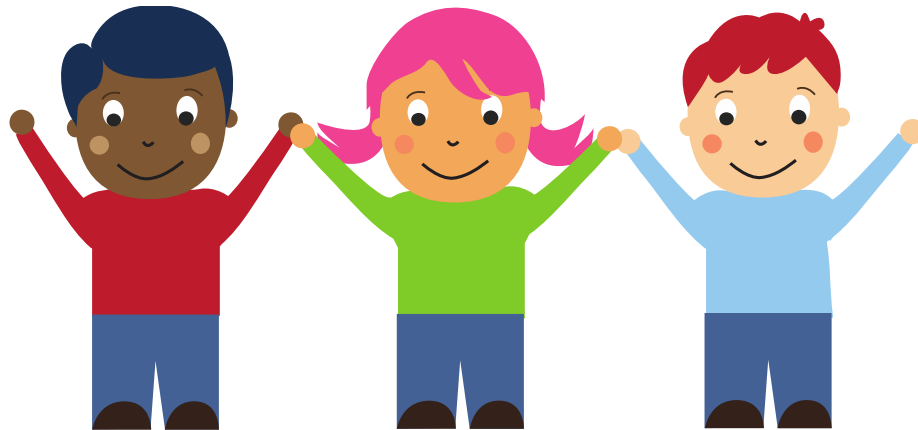




Poll Question

3. What do you think is the most effective way to message the importance of attendance?

Harvard University





Effective Attendance Messaging



Todd Rogers

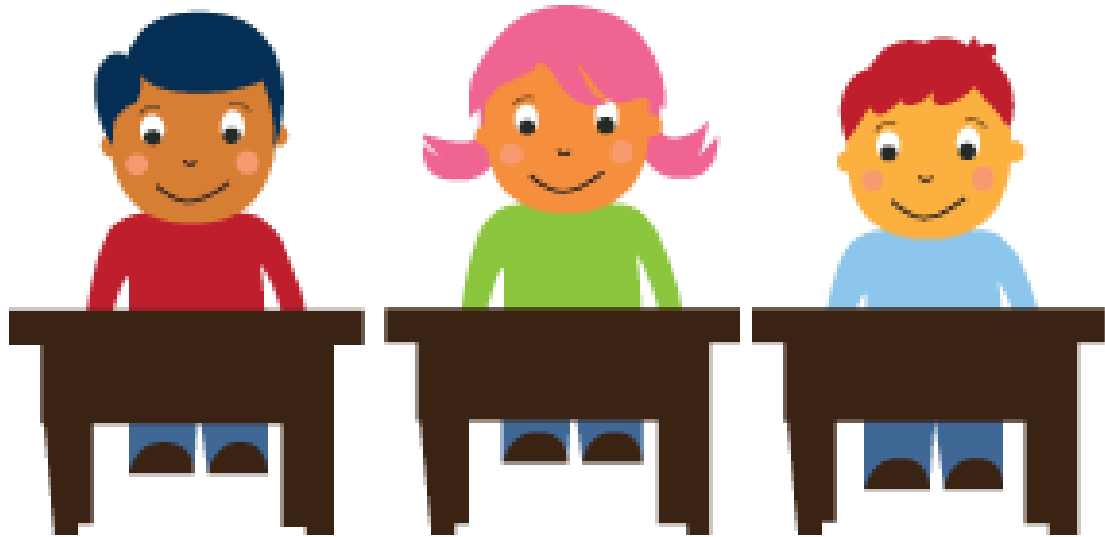
*Associate Professor of Public Policy
Kennedy School of Government,
Harvard University*

*Director
Student Social Support R&D Lab*



Questions

1. Tell us a bit about the Student Social Support R&D Lab and how you came to focus on attendance?
2. What have you and your collaborators learned about what works and what does not?





Robocalls:

- Very few *listen*

Notices of Truancy:

- 12th grade+ reading level
- Lots, lots, lots of words
- Oppositional, threatening

Elementary

January 20, 2016

Dear Parent/Legal Guardian:

Good attendance is required for academic excellence. California Education Code section 48260 provides that a pupil (child) subject to compulsory full-time education or to compulsory continuation education who is absent from school without a valid excuse three full days in one school year or tardy or absent for more than a 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof, shall be classified as a truant and shall be reported to the attendance supervisor or to the superintendent of the school district.

School records indicate that the pupil named above was absent from school without a valid excuse on 4 occasions, beginning with the following dates:

11/4/2015, 11/5/2015, 11/10/2015

**For a complete report of your pupil's absences, contact the school.*

Our goal is to partner with families to ensure that students attend school every day. While the following consequences may appear harsh, based upon your pupil's initial classification as a truant, we are mandated by Education Code section 48260.5 to inform you that:

- The parent or legal guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the pupil at school.
- Parents or legal guardians who fail to meet these obligations may be guilty of an infraction and subject to prosecution pursuant to Article 6 (commencing with Section 48290) of Chapter 2 or Part 27 of the Education Code.
- Alternative education programs are available in the district.
- The parent or legal guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the pupil's truancy.
- The pupil may be subject to prosecution under Education Code section 48264.
- The pupil may be subject to suspension, restriction, or delay of the pupil's driving privilege pursuant to Section 13202.7 of the Vehicle Code.
- It is recommended that the parent or legal guardian accompany the pupil to school and attend classes with the pupil for one day.

This report is being issued under Education Code section 48264.5(a). As the parent/legal guardian you may be requested to attend a meeting with a school counselor or other school designee to discuss the root causes of the attendance issue and to develop a joint plan to improve the pupil's attendance.

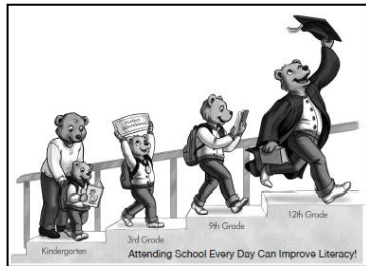
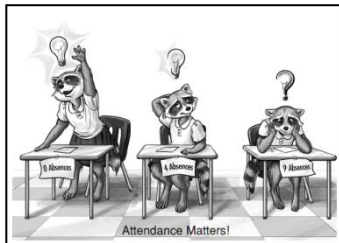
Please recognize that we are required to monitor attendance and notify parents/legal guardians of potential problems with student attendance. If you have concerns about your pupil's attendance or if you believe there is an error in this report, contact the school at [REDACTED]. The designated attendance personnel will work with you to resolve this issue. We look forward to assisting you.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Principal

1st Initial Notification of Truancy Report - English

1. Parent beliefs matter
2. Simplification matters
3. Shelf life matters



March Update

ABSENCES MATTER AND YOU CAN HELP

Dear Parent/Guardian of Todd Rogers,

Todd has been absent 23 days this school year.

Excused and unexcused absences affect Todd's learning.

Thank you for continuing to help Todd attend school as much as possible.

Sincerely,

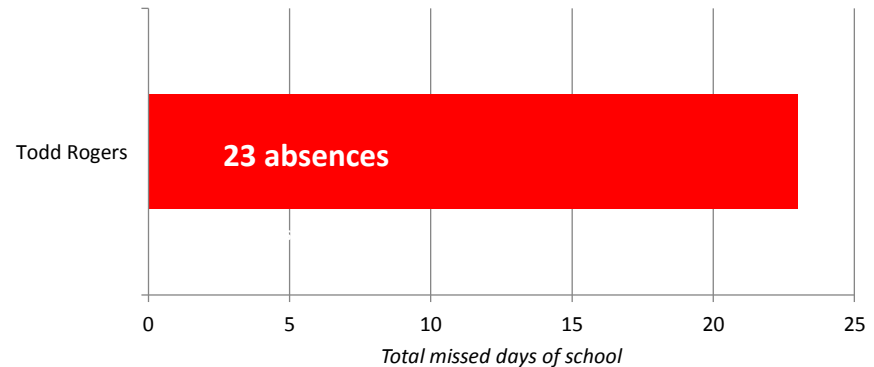
William R. Hite, Jr., Ed.D.

Superintendent

The School District of Philadelphia

March Update

Todd has missed 23 days of school this year**



** This card is part of the XYZ Attendance Project, which aims to increase awareness about the importance of attendance. This is a follow-up to cards we sent earlier in the year. The number of absences listed above includes excused and unexcused absences as of February 1, 2015. If you have questions, or you do not want to receive future cards, please call [PHONE], email [EMAIL], or visit www.XYZattendanceproject.org. Please be sure to provide the following code: [UNIQUE CODE]. If you received this card in error or have already opted out of receiving these cards, please disregard this one. We apologize for the inconvenience.

N=28,080 K-12 students (School District of Philadelphia)
Pre-registration #AEARCTR-0000829; [Paper #1 here](#)

N=10,967 K-5 students (10 San Mateo districts)
Pre-registration osf.io/gb9w8; [Paper #2 here](#)

N=20,000 K-12 students (Chicago Public Schools); unpublished replication

See also [this paper](#) by MDRC (NYC PS)

Todd_Rogers@hks.harvard.edu
[@Todd_Rogers](https://twitter.com/Todd_Rogers)

(Some) **false beliefs** matter; other candidates

Mail is read & remembered

Reduces chronic absenteeism 11%-15%

~\$6/incremental day + improving

Replicated in 12 districts

Cost effective...Tier 1.5 complement

Easily implemented at *scale* (admin data, automated)

In Class Today helping districts implement this approach
(johannes@inclasstoday.com)

ABSENCES MATTER AND YOU CAN HELP

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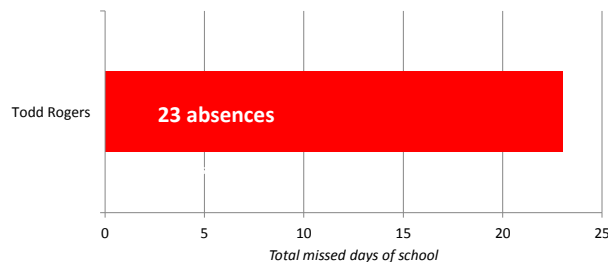
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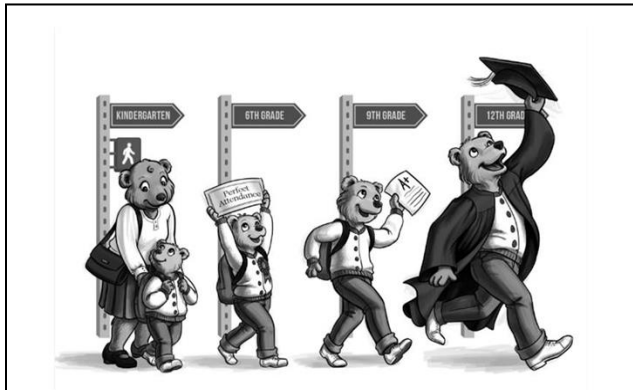


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www.S3rd.org/research

Todd_Rogers@hks.harvard.edu
@Todd_Rogers_



Attendance Matters

XYZ School District
123 E. 1st Street
City, State, 12345

ABSENCES MATTER AND YOU CAN HELP

February 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian of Todd Rogers,

Todd has missed more school than his classmates*.

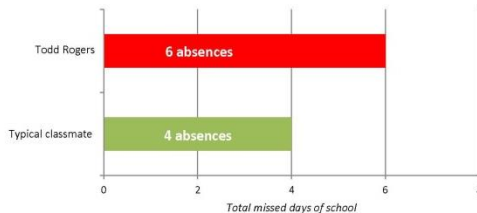
Todd was absent 6 days so far this school year.

Students fall behind when they miss school – whether students are absent for excused or unexcused reasons.

You can have a big effect on Todd's absences going forward – and we appreciate your help.

Sincerely,
John Smith
Superintendent

Todd has missed more school days than his classmates so far this school year*



*Todd's absences are compared to the typical number of absences among his classmates in 6th grade at Harvard Middle School.

** This card is part of the Attendance Project, which aims to increase awareness about the importance of attendance. This is a follow-up to cards we sent earlier in the year. The number of absences listed above includes excused and unexcused absences as of 2/4/15.

In Class Today



www.InClassToday.com

info@inclasstoday.com

Or email me:

Todd_Rogers@hks.harvard.edu



Questions from the Audience



United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania & His Place Community Center





Be There Campaign



Stephen Weiss



Shauna McMillan

BE THERE

Positive &
Proactive

Focus on Accurate
Data

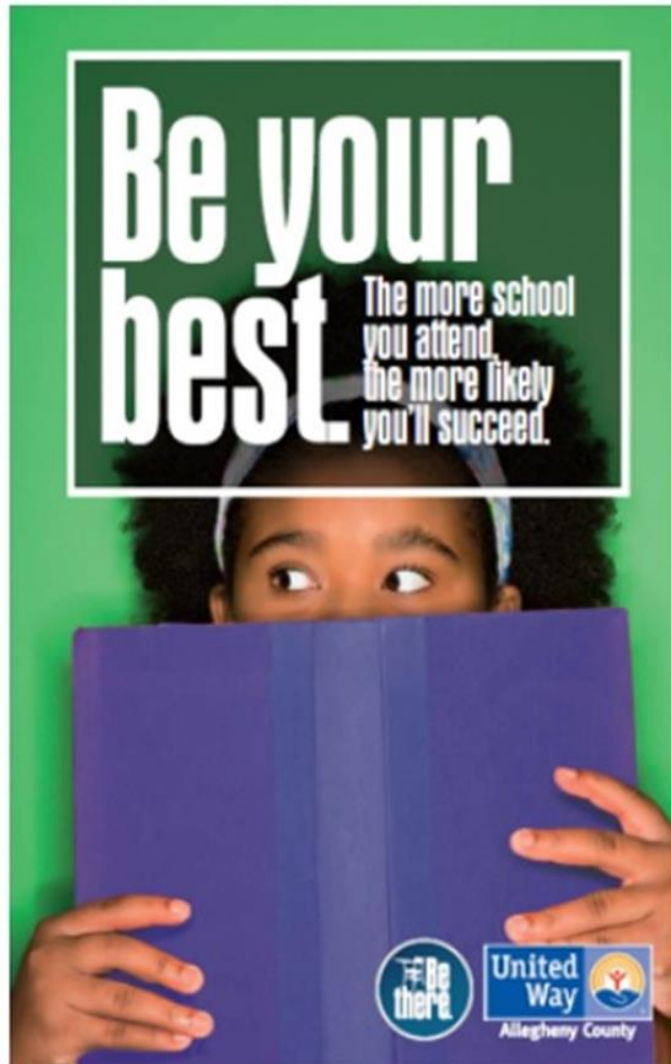
Partner Driven

Celebrating
Relationships

Positive environments fostering meaningful relationships
between students and adults will improve school
attendance.



In 2016, Be There has served:



29 school districts

69 schools

800+ trained on chronic absenteeism, data, and attendance best practices

27,500+ students engaged in the Be There Campaign to some capacity

Attendance Challenges and Mini-grants

Change in Chronic Absence Rate - Feb 2015 vs Feb 2016					
	School	Feb 2015 Rate	Feb 2016 Rate	Change	
	School 1	24%	18%	-6%	
	School 2	36%	20%	-15%	
	School 3	22%	12%	-10%	
	School 4	24%	10%	-14%	
	School 5	19%	9%	-10%	
	School 6	23%	10%	-13%	
	School 7	36%	21%	-15%	
	School 8	27%	11%	-16%	
	School 9	26%	22%	-4%	
	School 10	66%	47%	-18%	
	School 11	30%	12%	-18%	
	School 12	13%	3%	-10%	
	School 13	25%	13%	-12%	



Results

School Type	2012-13 Chronic Absence Rate	2015-16 Chronic Absence Rate	Change in Chronic Absence Rate
All PPS Students	25%	18%	-7%
Elementary School Students	19%	13%	-6%
Middle School Students	24%	15%	-9%
High School Students	44%	30%	-14%



Be There Partners



Attendance Initiatives:



Strategies: Messaging, Incentives and Attendance Buddies

Be There Support:



- Messaging
- Materials
- Ideas
- Funding
- Networking

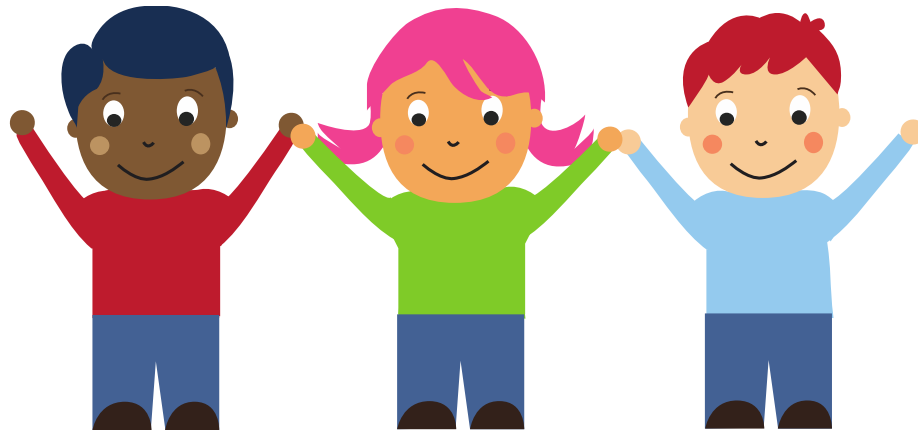




Questions from the Audience



The Patterson Foundation & Manatee County School District





Every Day Counts Campaign



Beth Duda



Dr. Diana Greene

School District of Manatee County, Florida Grade Level Reading **Our War on Absenteeism**



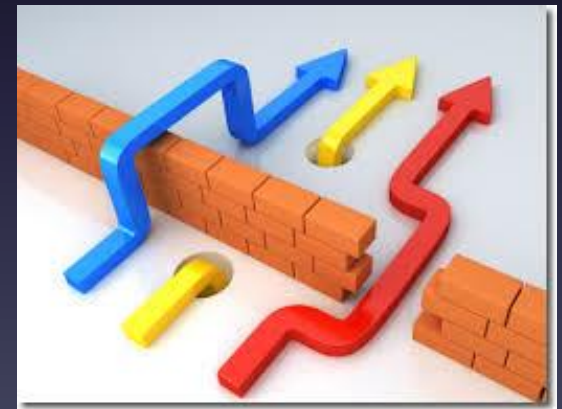
IN THE BEGINNING....

Joined the Campaign for Grade Level Reading in 2015-16

- The Readiness Gap (Pre-K/Early Learning)
- Summer Slide
- Parent Engagement
- Healthy Learners
- **The Attendance Gap***

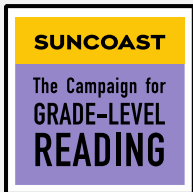
*** Major focus and investment**

REDUCING BARRIERS





The Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading Attendance Awareness Poster Contest

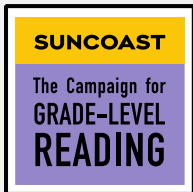


Open to all Public School Students in Manatee County and Sarasota County

- Templates provided to each school
- Easy to follow instructions were provided to be played on the School News programs.



- Each school selects one winner per grade level
- Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading provides prizes for each school-level winning student
- Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading provides an iPad for the regional winners in every grade level.



Participation



Number of students participating:

Year One 2015-16: 38,000

Year Two 2016-17: 44,000

Number of schools participating:

Year One 2015-16: 83 schools

Year Two 2016-17: 94 schools



Participation

Number of grade level winners:

Year One 2015-16: 386

Year Two 2016-17: 456





- Aligned with Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading
- Positive Attendance Messaging for schools, families, and the community
- Poster Creation helps students internalize the importance of outstanding attendance
- Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading Outreach Team works with each school on implementation.
- Cost is about \$2.00 per child



Our Plan to address Chronic Absenteeism

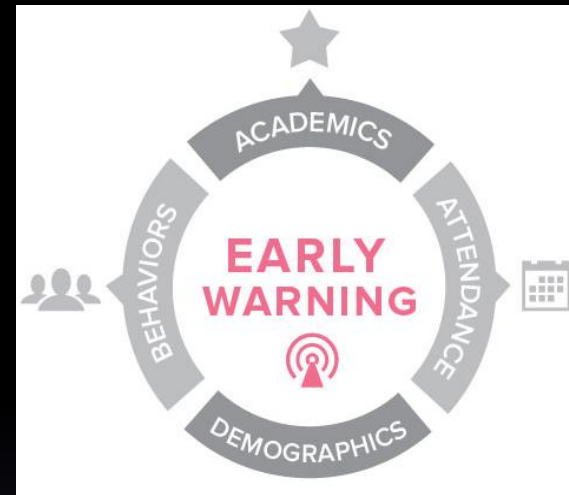
Graduation Enhancement Technicians

- Wrote and received Board approval for a new job description
- Assembled a district wide Attendance Task Force
- Hired and trained 25 Graduation Enhancement Technicians



CHECK AND CONNECT

A mentoring program
out of the University of
Minnesota



BRIGHT BYTES

An electronic early
warning system that
uses predictive
analysis to foresee
and prevent at-risk
behaviors before
students drop out.

Reductions in the percentages of students missing 18+ days (as compared to themselves) from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016

Students assigned a Graduation Enhancement Technician had improved attendance:

- 55% reduction in Title 1 elementary schools
- 36% reduction in Title 1 secondary schools
- 58% reduction in Title 1 Charter schools
- 50% overall reduction in all Title 1 schools



Connect With Us

Website: **GradeLevelReadingSuncoast.net**



Facebook.com/SuncoastCampaignforGradeLevelReading
Facebook.com/Leerpara3ro.Suncoast



@SuncoastCGLR
@Leer para 3ro
@ReadingBy3rd
#GLReading

Beth Duda: bduda@thepattersonfoundation.org

Discussion





Questions from the Audience



Announcements and Resources





Announcements



Cecelia Leong

Associate Director for Programs

Attendance Works



Resources Available

- ★ Attendance Campaign Webinar Series
- ★ Regular Email Blasts to Campaign Supporters
- ★ Updating the Count Us In! Toolkit
- ★ Attendance Awareness Month Website
- ★ Research Brief



Save the Date! 2017 Webinar Series

- ★ **May 23:** It Takes Two: Adding Early Intervention Strategies to Address Chronic Absence
- ★ **August 8:** The Secret Formula 1+2+3: Improving Attendance for our Most Vulnerable Students
- ★ **September 12:** Portraits of Change



Virtual National Convening



National Student Attendance, Engagement, and Success Center

NATIONAL STUDENT ATTENDANCE, ENGAGEMENT, AND SUCCESS CENTER

Virtual National Convening | April 3-4, 2017 | Via WebEx

Virtual National Convening

April 3-4, 2017

Hosted by the U.S. Department of Education and the Office of Safe and Healthy Students and its National Student Attendance, Engagement, and Success Center (NSAESC)

http://www.theeventconn.com/Virtual_Convening



Support AAC 2017



<http://www.attendanceworks.org/donate-to-attendance-works/>



Call to Action: Role of Collaborating Partners

- Download our free materials and toolkit and share with local districts.
- Encourage schools and community partners to join our listserv: 10,000+ members.

PROMOTE LOCALLY



What to Do When: At a Glance



Let's get started!

- Convene coalition
- Recruit partners
- Meet with district
- Enlist health care providers
- Launch poster contests and other marketing campaigns

Early Summer

Getting into specifics

- Distribute talking points
- Enlist elected officials & celebs
- Line up incentives
- Analyze data



Late Summer

It's Go Time

- Tape PSAs
- Begin media outreach
- Print banners & posters
- Plan assemblies and Back-to-School events
- Launch door-knocking campaigns

Back to School!

- Release proclamations
- Host Back-to-School events
- Host press conferences
- Share data
- Spread the word!





Pin on the 2017 Action Map

Post your community's
plans for Attendance
Awareness Month
2017 on the map!



<http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/aam-map-form-2017/>



Superintendent's Call to Action

Own the issue

**Mobilize the
Community**

**Drive with
Data**

**To sign-up for the Call to Action, or to learn more, please visit:
www.attendanceworks.org/superintendents-call-to-action**



Webinar Recording

**We will post a recording of this
webinar within 72 hours at:**

**[http://www.attendanceworks.org/peer-
learning-resources/](http://www.attendanceworks.org/peer-learning-resources/)**



Feedback

Please let us know how we can improve:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/A-Matter-of-1-2-3>

Thank you to our sponsors!

With special appreciation to:

**Annie E. Casey Foundation
Kellogg Foundation
The California Endowment**

