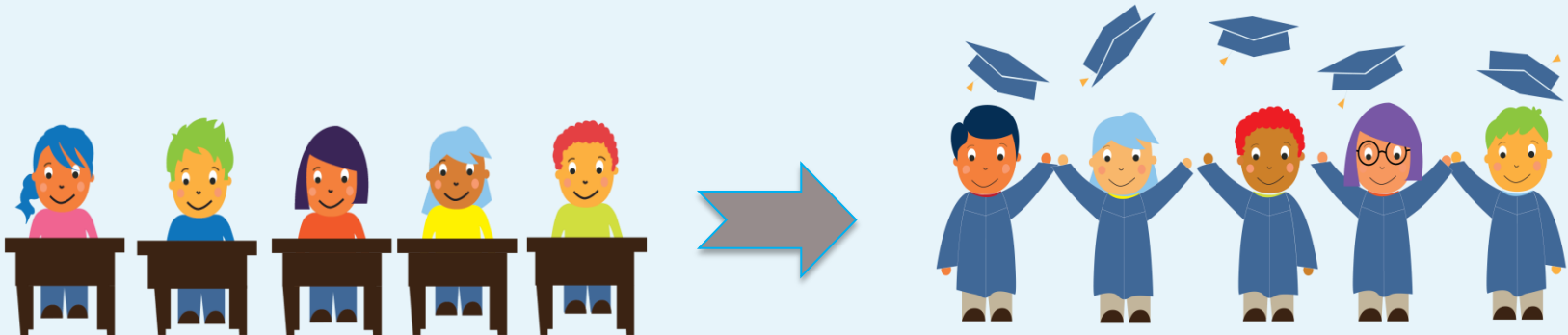


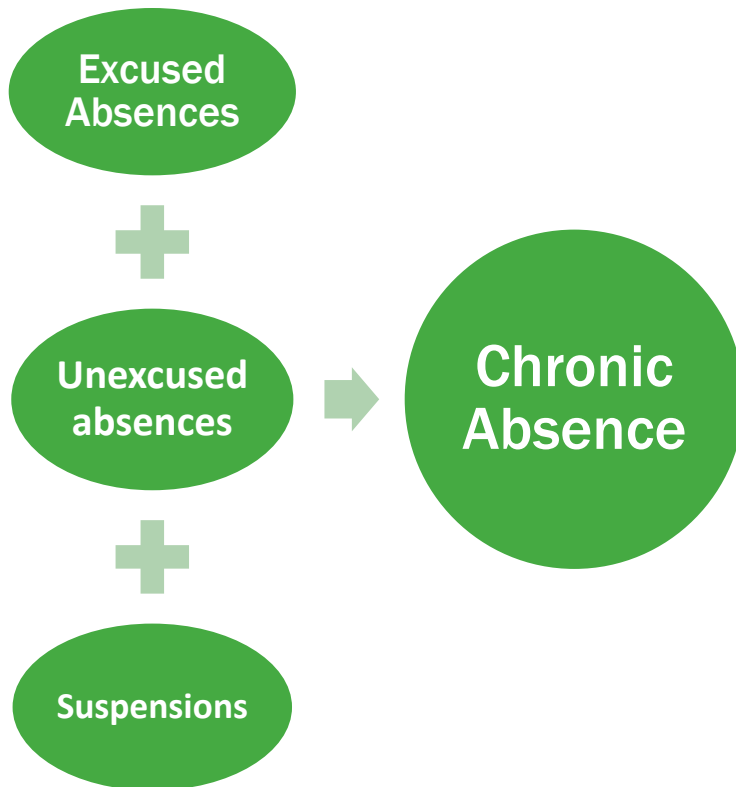
# Attend to Achieve

## *How Chronic Absence Affects Student Academic Outcomes*



# What is Chronic Absence?

Attendance Works recommends defining chronic absence as **missing 10% or more of school for any reason.**



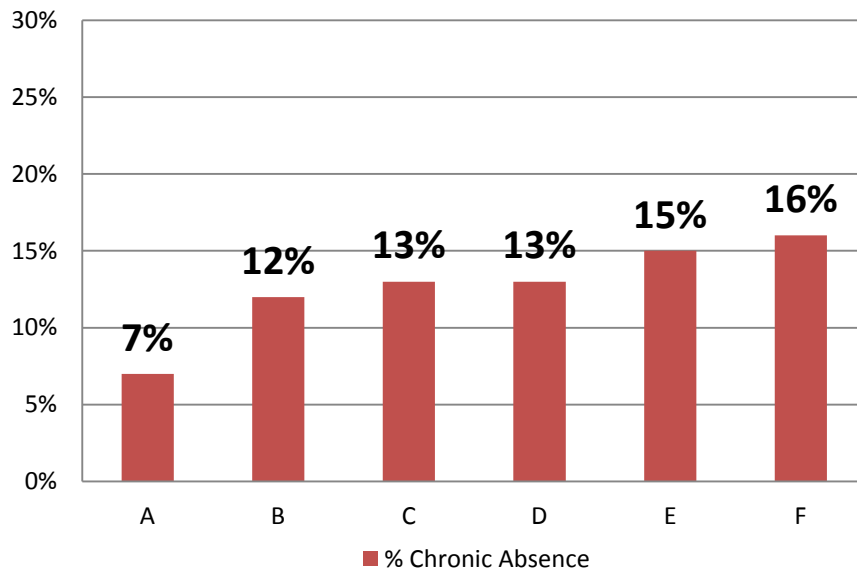
**Chronic absence** is different from **truancy** (3 unexcused absences, tardies of 30 minutes or more) or **average daily attendance** (how many students show up to school each day).



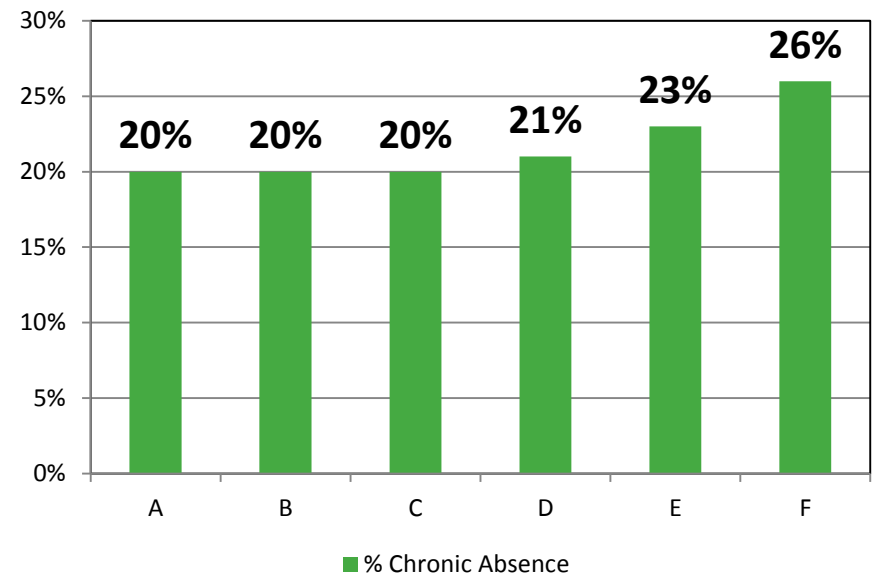
# High Levels of Average Daily Attendance (ADA) Can Mask Chronic Absence

***90% and even 95% ≠ 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

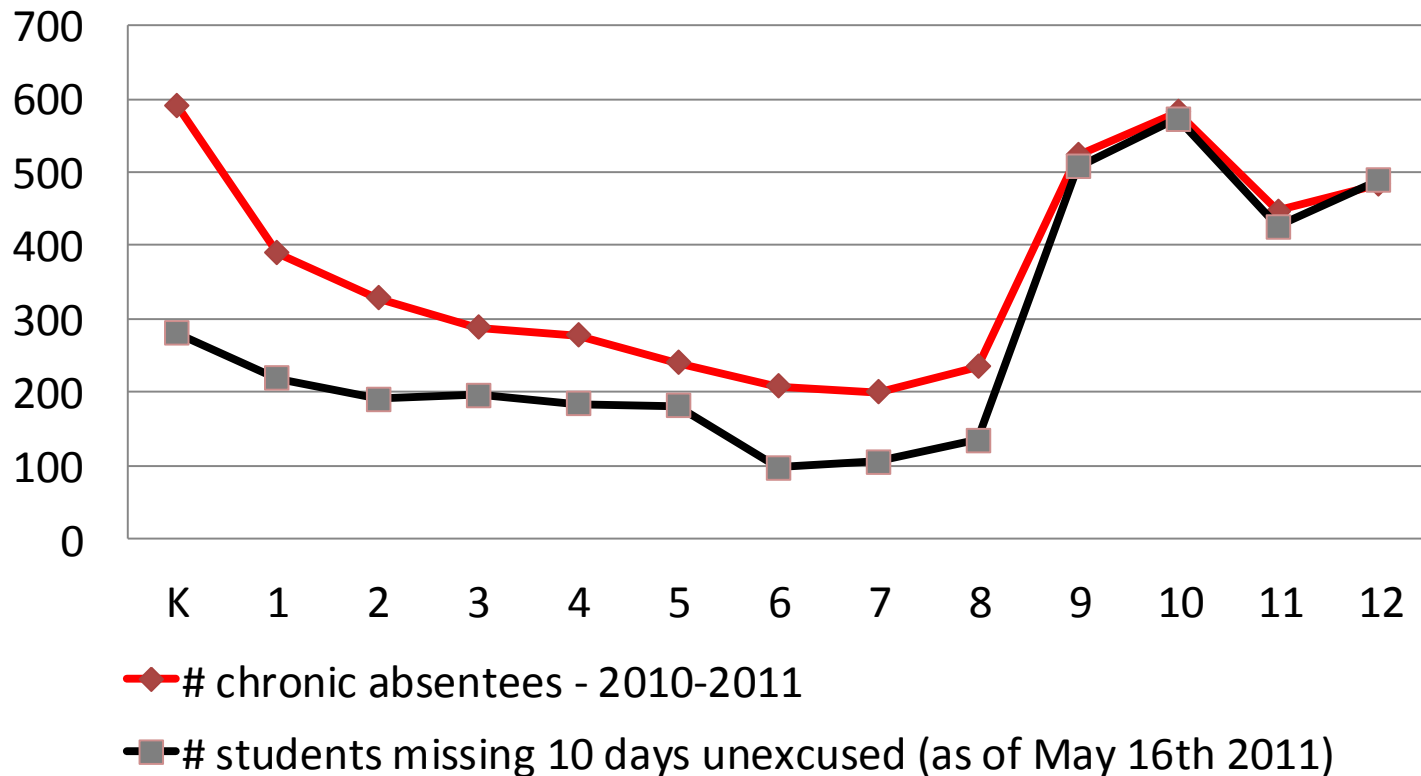


**98% ADA = little chronic absence**  
**95% ADA = don't know**  
**93% ADA = significant chronic absence**



# Truancy (unexcused absences) Can Also Mask Chronic Absence

**Number of Chronically Absent  
Versus Chronically Truant Students  
San Francisco Unified School District**

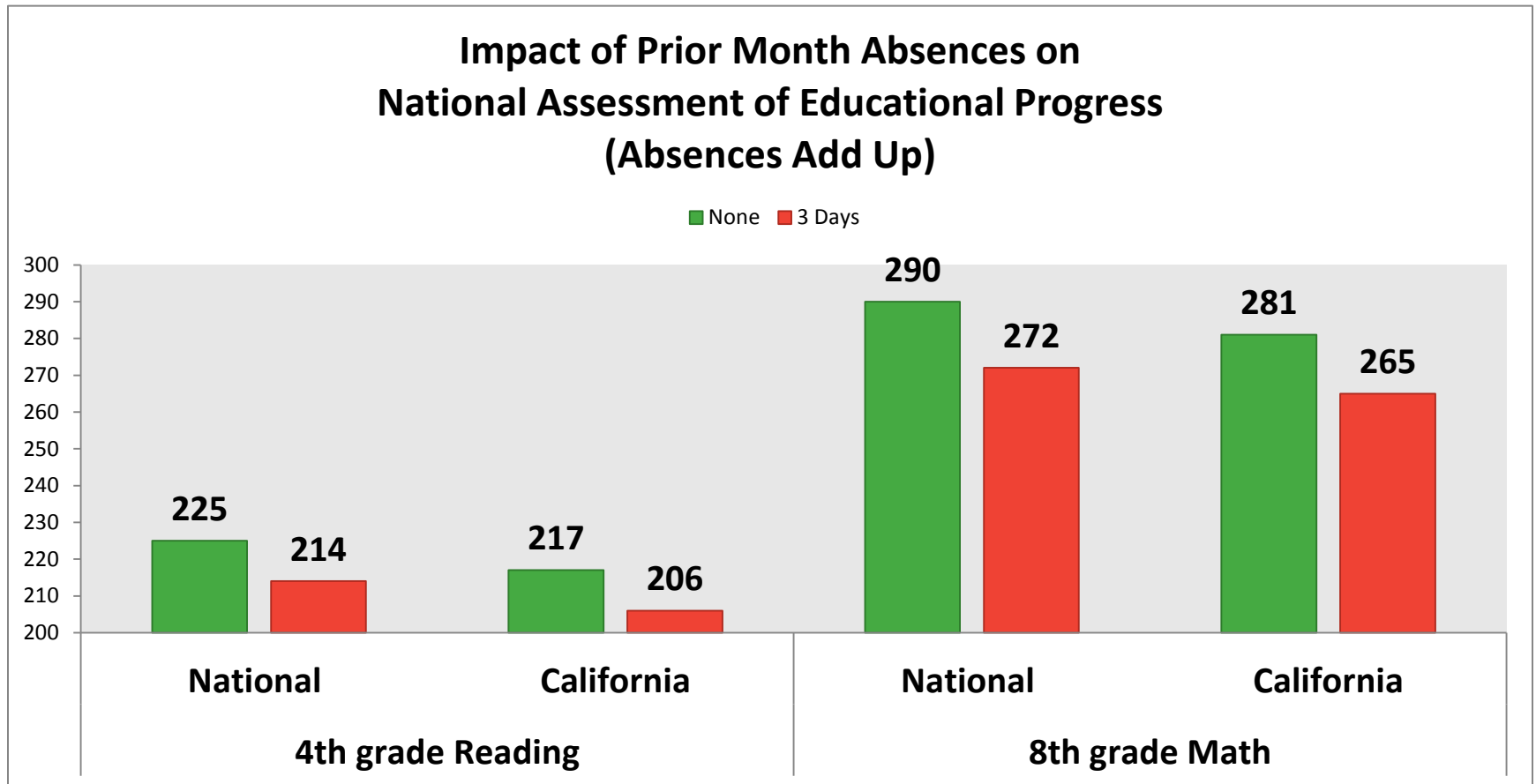


# Chronic Absence: A Hidden National Crisis

- ❑ Nationwide, as many as **7.5 million students** miss nearly a month of school every year. In California, the Attorney General estimates **250,000** elementary school students are chronically absent.
- ❑ Chronic absenteeism is a **red alert** that students are headed for academic trouble and eventually for dropping out of high school.
- ❑ Research shows that chronically absent students **are less likely to succeed academically**, and are **more likely to be suspended and eventually dropout**.
- ❑ Poor attendance isn't just a problem in high school. It can start **as early as pre-kindergarten**.



# Absences Add Up: Less School = Lower Scores



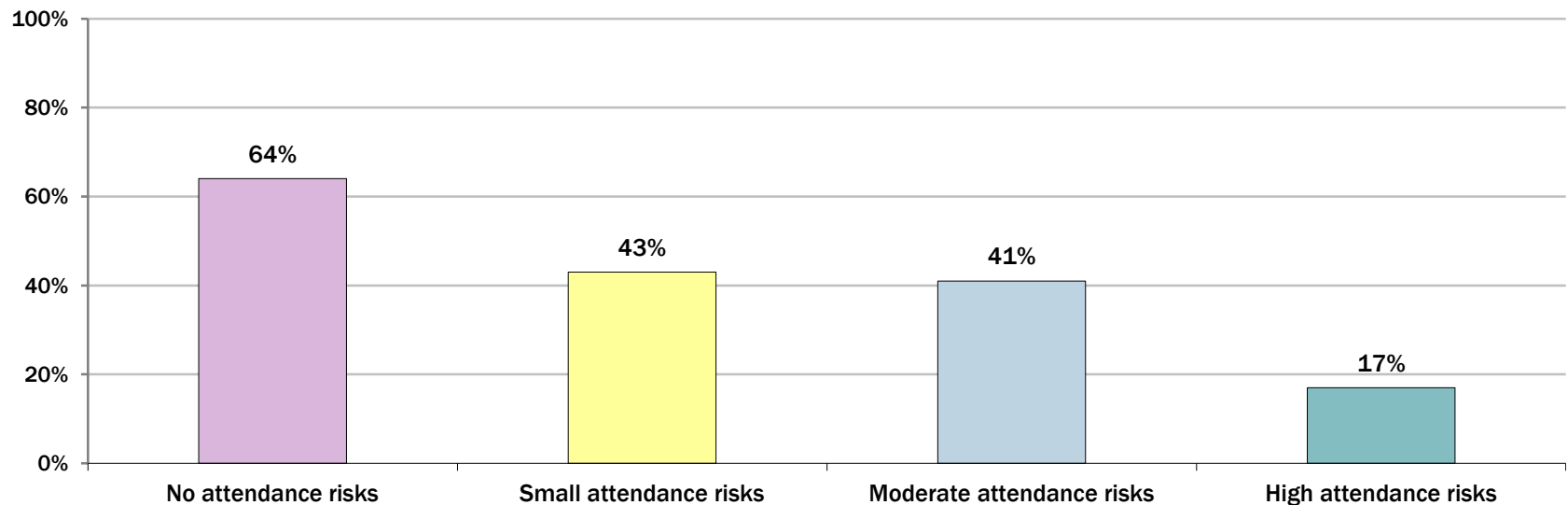
A 10-point difference on the NAEP is equivalent to one year of learning.

<http://www.attendanceworks.org/research/absences-add/>



# Chronic Absence in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade = Lower 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Reading Proficiency

*Percent Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced on 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade ELA  
Based on Attendance in Kindergarten and in 1<sup>st</sup> Grade*



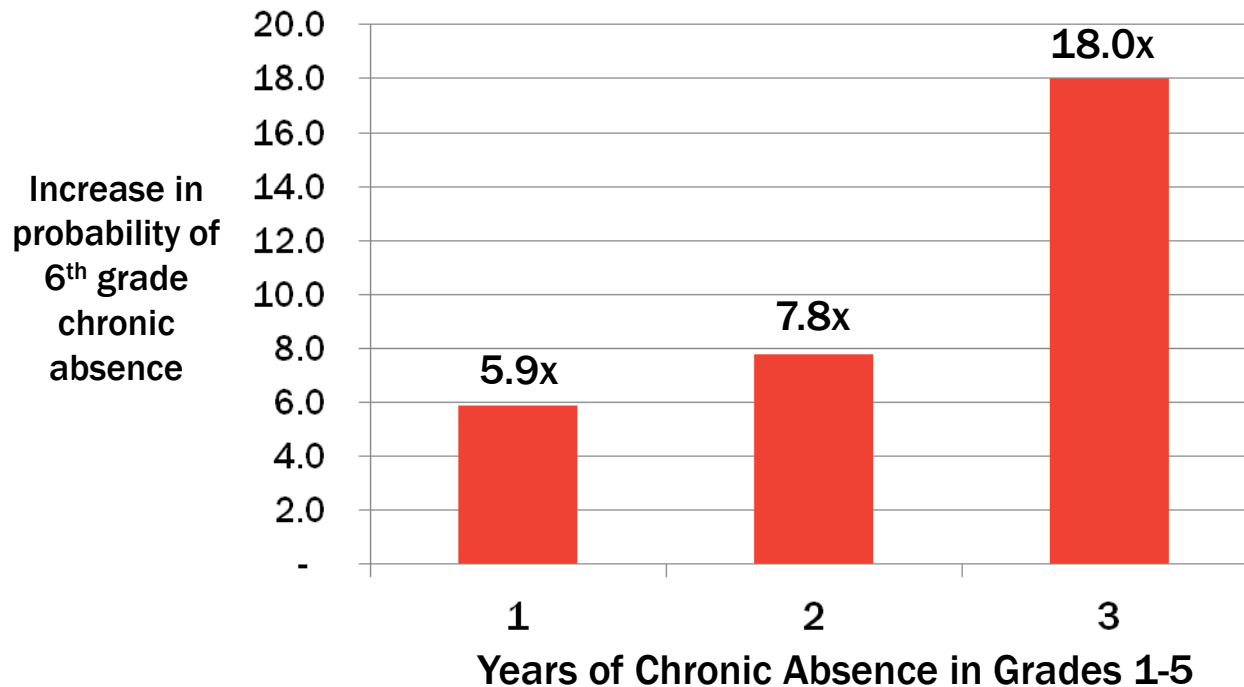
No risk	Missed less than 5% of school in K & 1 <sup>st</sup>
Small risk	Missed 5-9% of days in both K & 1 <sup>st</sup>
Moderate risk	Missed 5-9% of days in 1 year & 10% in 1 year
High risk	Missed 10% or more in K & 1 <sup>st</sup>

Source: Applied Survey Research & Attendance Works (April 2011)



# Multiple Years of Elementary Chronic Absence = Worse Middle School Outcomes

Each year of chronic absence in elementary school is associated with a substantially higher probability of chronic absence in 6<sup>th</sup> grade

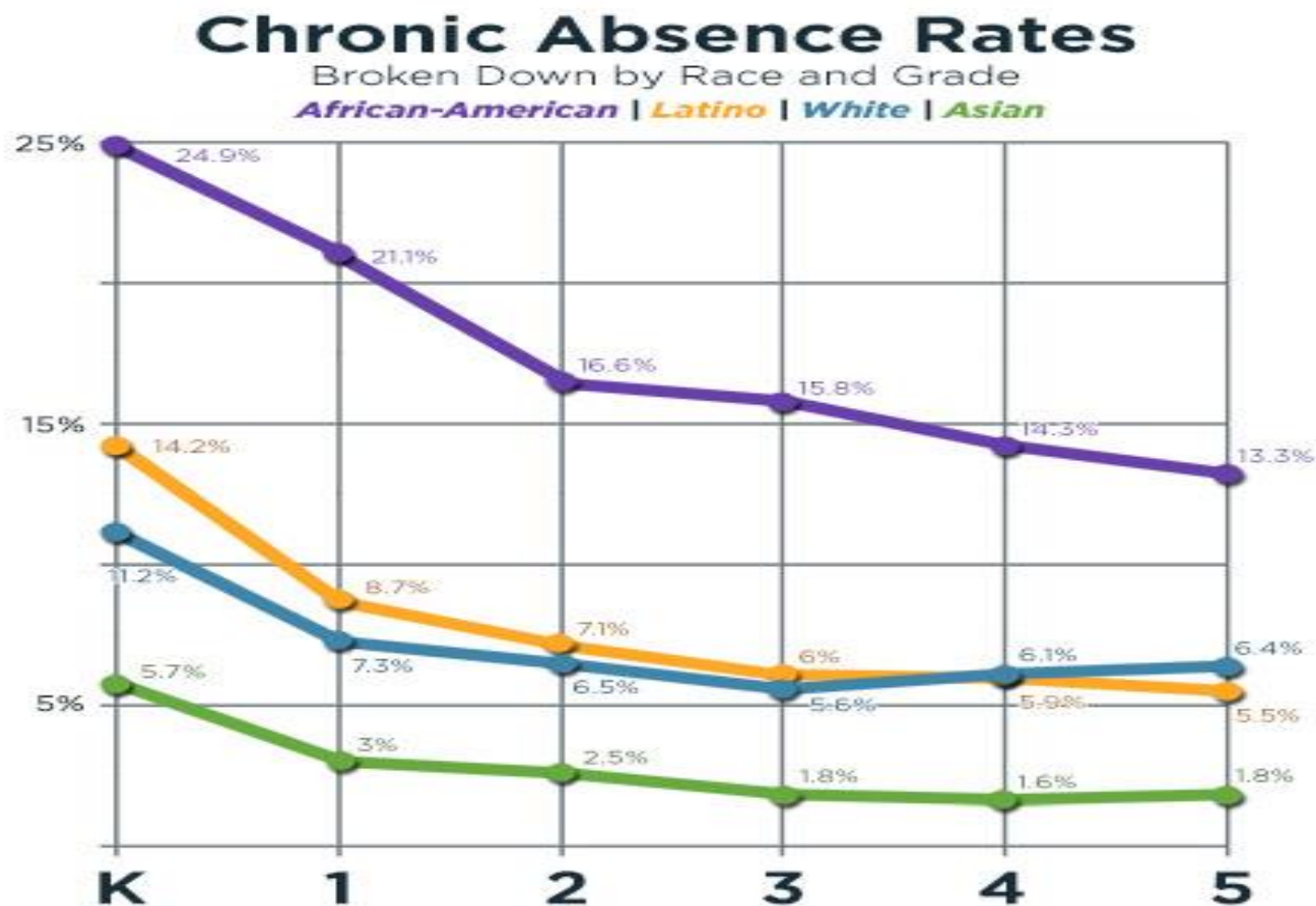


Chronic absence in 1<sup>st</sup> grade is also associated with:

- Lower 6<sup>th</sup> grade test scores
- Higher levels of suspension



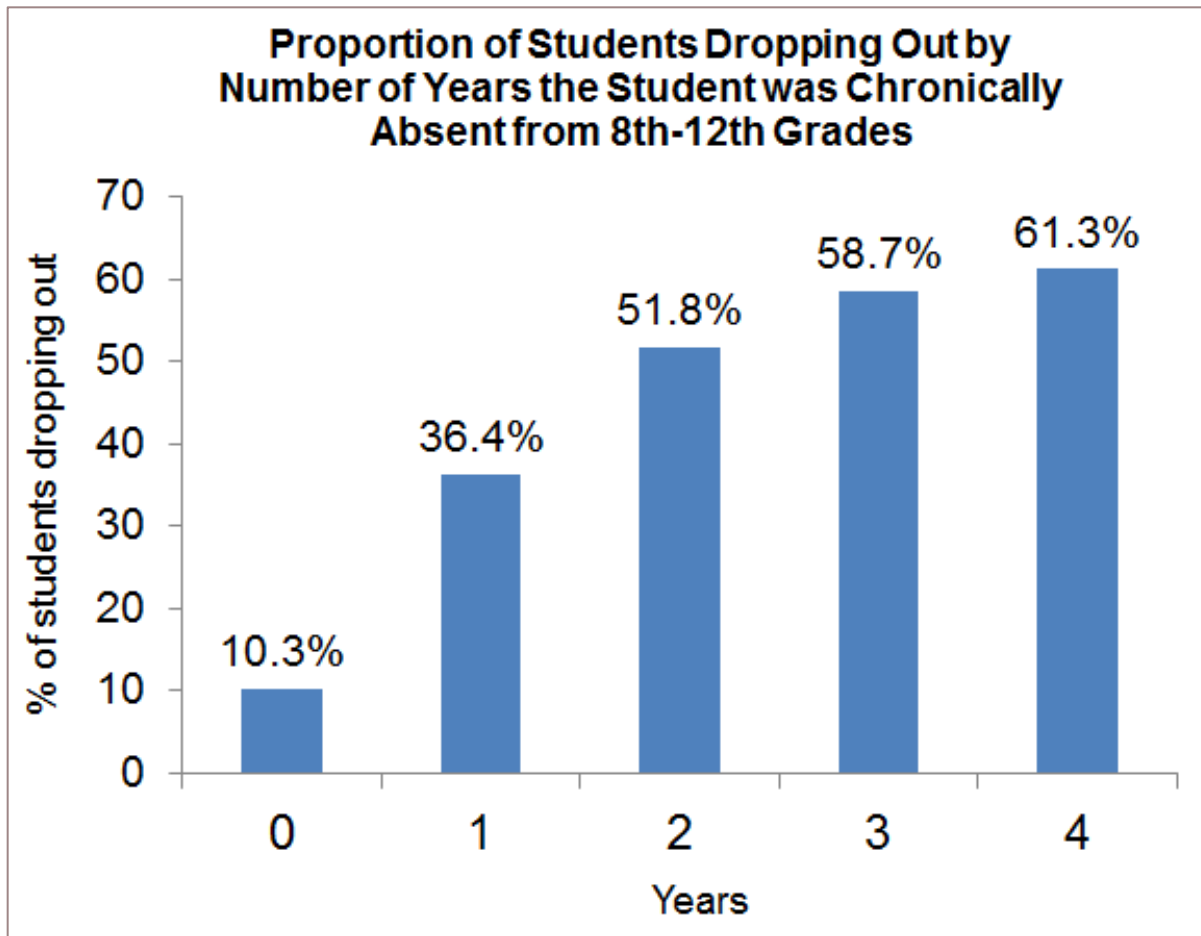
# Chronic Absence, Starting in the Early Grades, Contributes to the Achievement Gap



*"In School, On Track 2014", Office of the Attorney General: <http://oag.ca.gov/truancy/2014>*



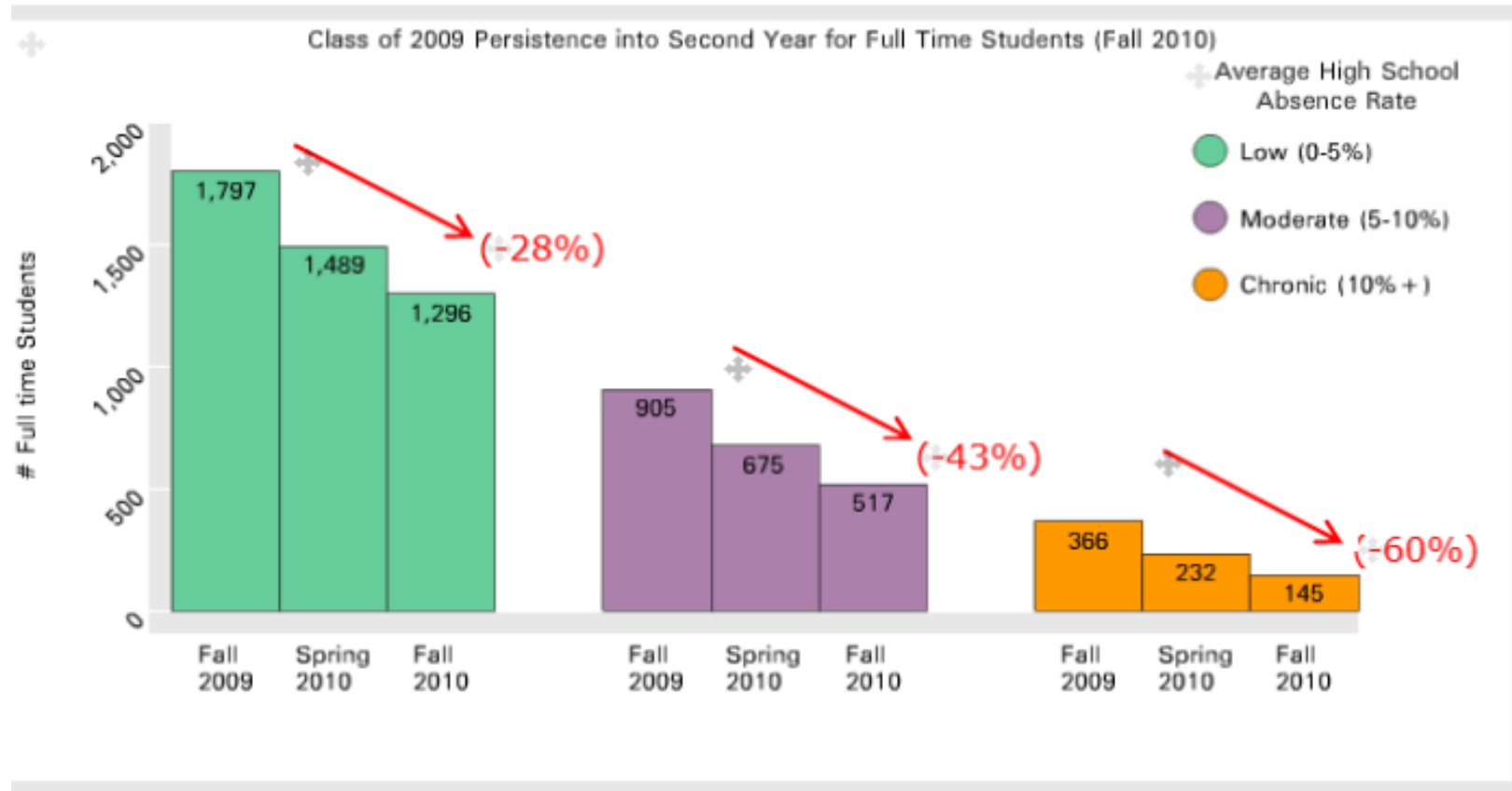
# The Effects of Chronic Absence on Dropout Rates are Cumulative



With every year of chronic absenteeism, a higher percentage of students dropped out of school.

# Chronic Absence in High School Predicts Lower College Participation

*In Rhode Island, only 11% of chronically absent high school students persisted into a 2<sup>nd</sup> year of college vs. 51% of those with low absences.*



# How Can We Address Chronic Absence?



# Find Out Why Students are Chronically Absent

## Myths

Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused

Sporadic versus consecutive absences aren't a problem

Attendance only matters in the older grades

## Barriers

Chronic disease

Lack of access to health or dental care

Poor transportation

No safe path to school

## Aversion

Child struggling academically

Lack of engaging instruction

Poor school climate and ineffective school discipline

Parents had negative school experience

# Going to School Every Day Reflects When Families Have ...

**Hope**

for a better future

+

**Faith**

that school will help you or your child succeed

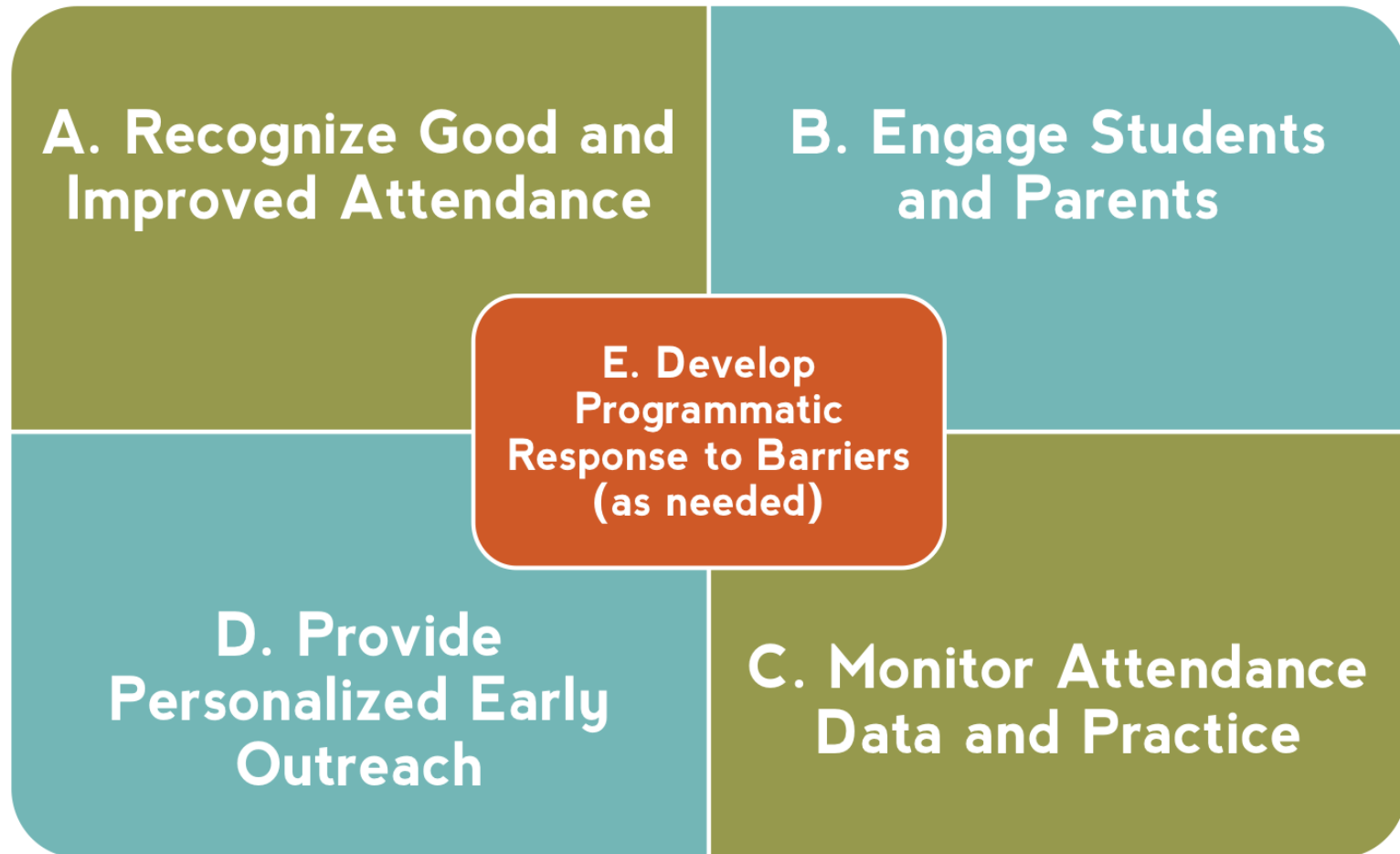
+

**Capacity**

Resources, skills, knowledge needed to get to school



# AW Recommended Site-Level Strategies



# Improving Attendance Requires a Multi-Tiered Approach

**TIER 3** Students who missed 20% or more of the prior school year (severe chronic absence) or were chronically truant.

- Intensive case management with coordination of public agency and legal response as needed

High  
Cost

Truancy  
interventions

**TIER 2** Students exhibiting chronic absence (missing 10%) or receiving 3 NOTs.

- Provide personalized early outreach
- Meet with student/family to develop plan
- Offer attendance Mentor/Buddy

**TIER 1**  
All students

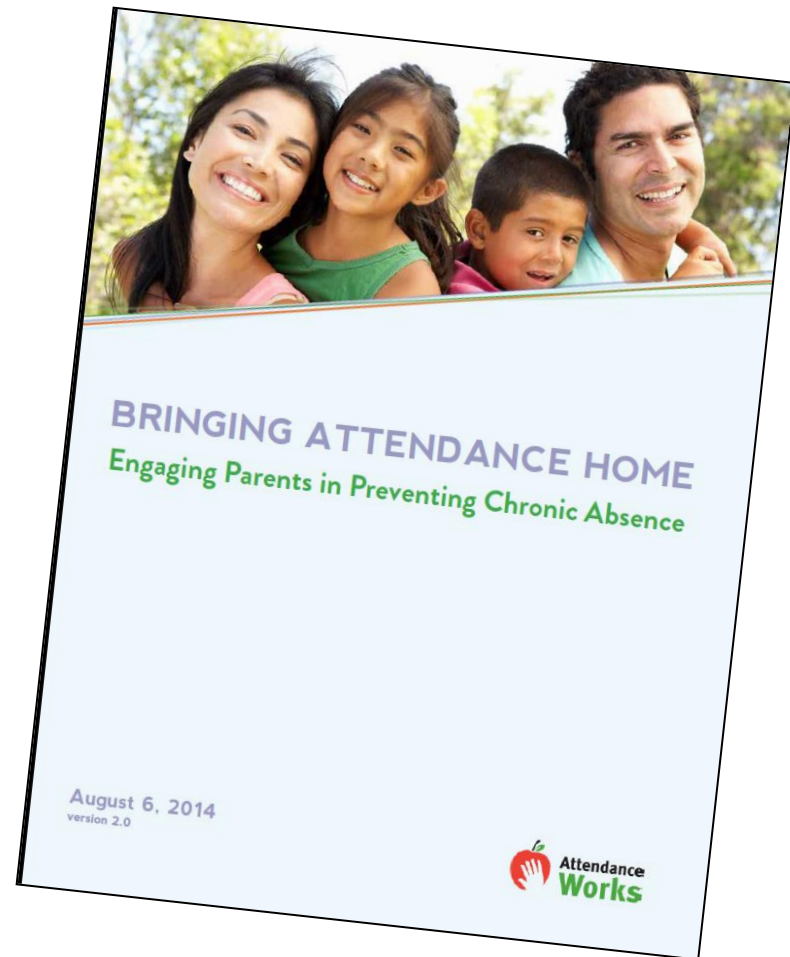
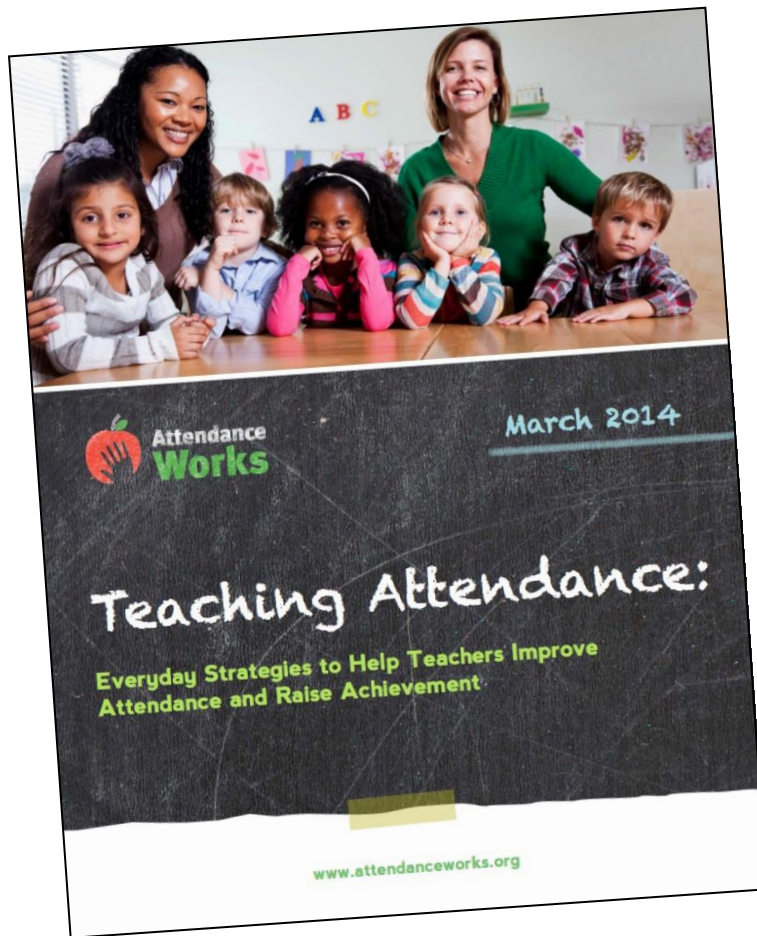
- Recognize good and improved attendance
- Educate & engage students and families
  - Monitor attendance data
- Clarify attendance expectations and goals
- Establish positive and engaging school climate

Low  
Cost



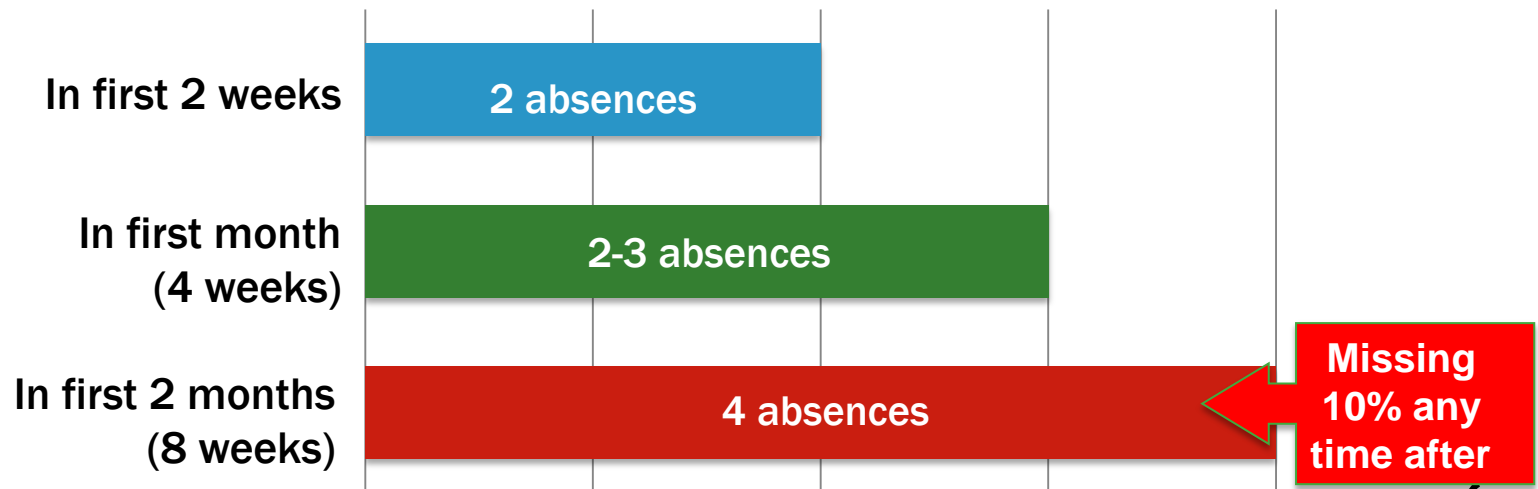


# Tier 1: Communication, Education, and Engagement

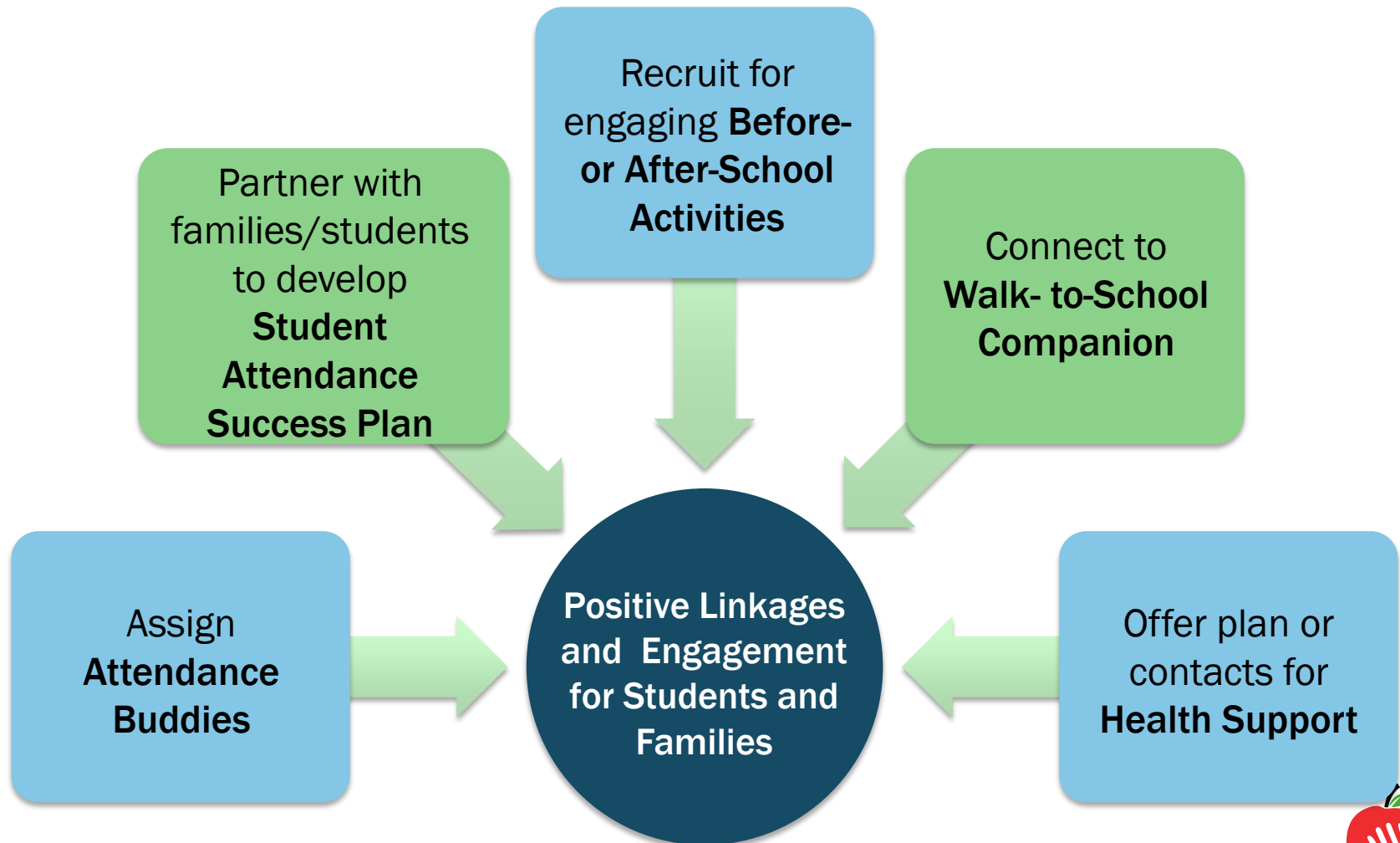


# Criteria for Identifying Priority Students for Tier 2 Supports

- ❑ Chronic absence (missed 10% or more of school) in the prior year, assuming data is available.
- ❑ And/or starting in the beginning of the school year, student has:



# Possible Tier 2 Interventions

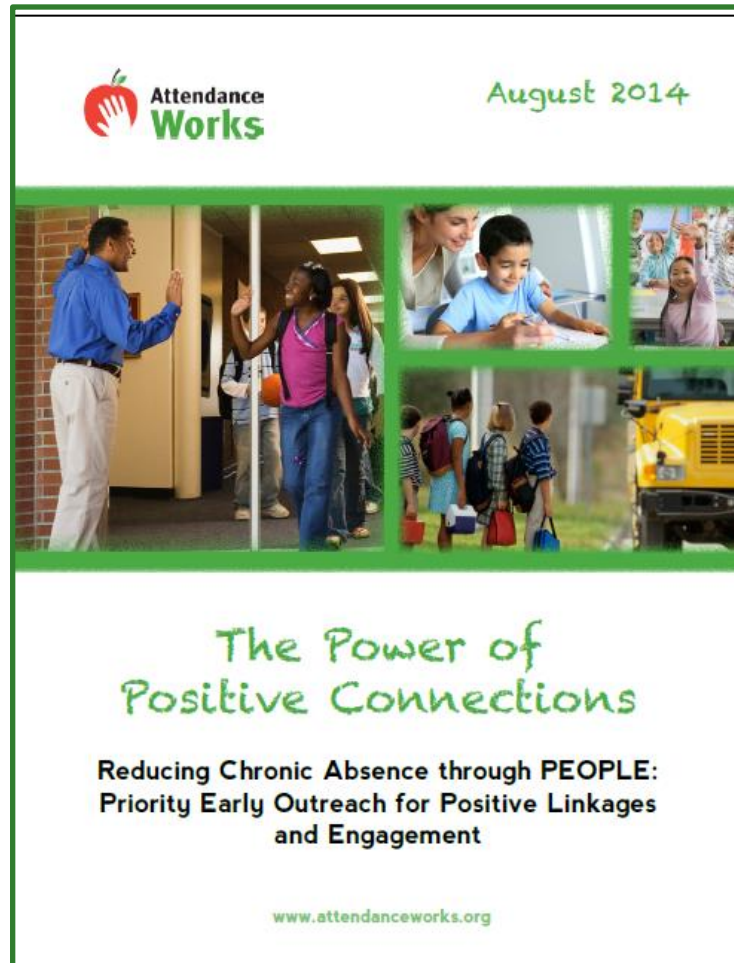


## **Key Finding: Success Mentors & Supporting Infrastructure Substantially Improved Student Attendance**

- Students with prior histories of chronic absenteeism who were paired with a Success Mentor **gained nearly two additional weeks of school (9 days)**, which is educationally significant.
- In the top 25% of schools, students with Success Mentors **gained one additional month of school.**
- High School students with Success Mentors (including those overage for their grade) were **52% more likely to remain in school** the following year.
- Mentees reported they liked having a mentor and the mentor helped **improve their attendance, schoolwork, motivation, and confidence.**

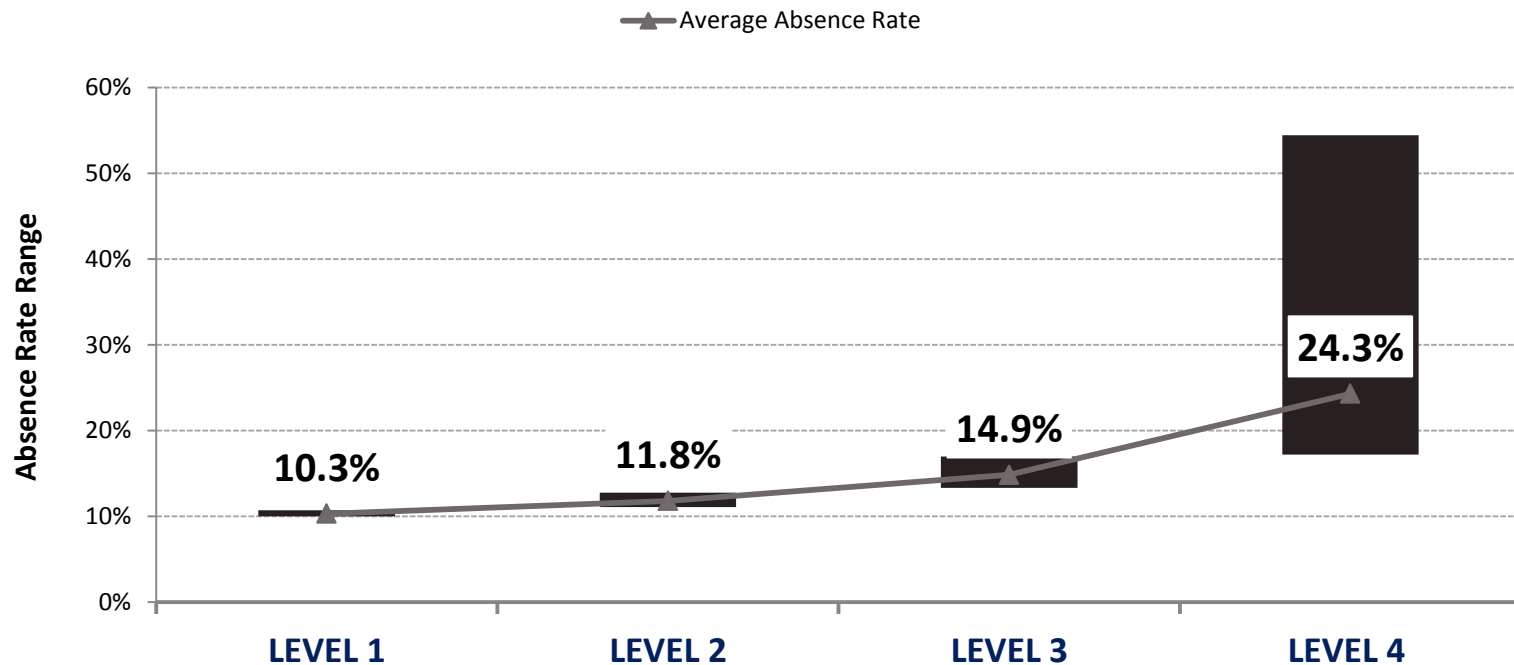
# Tools for Tier 2:

## The Power of Positive Connections

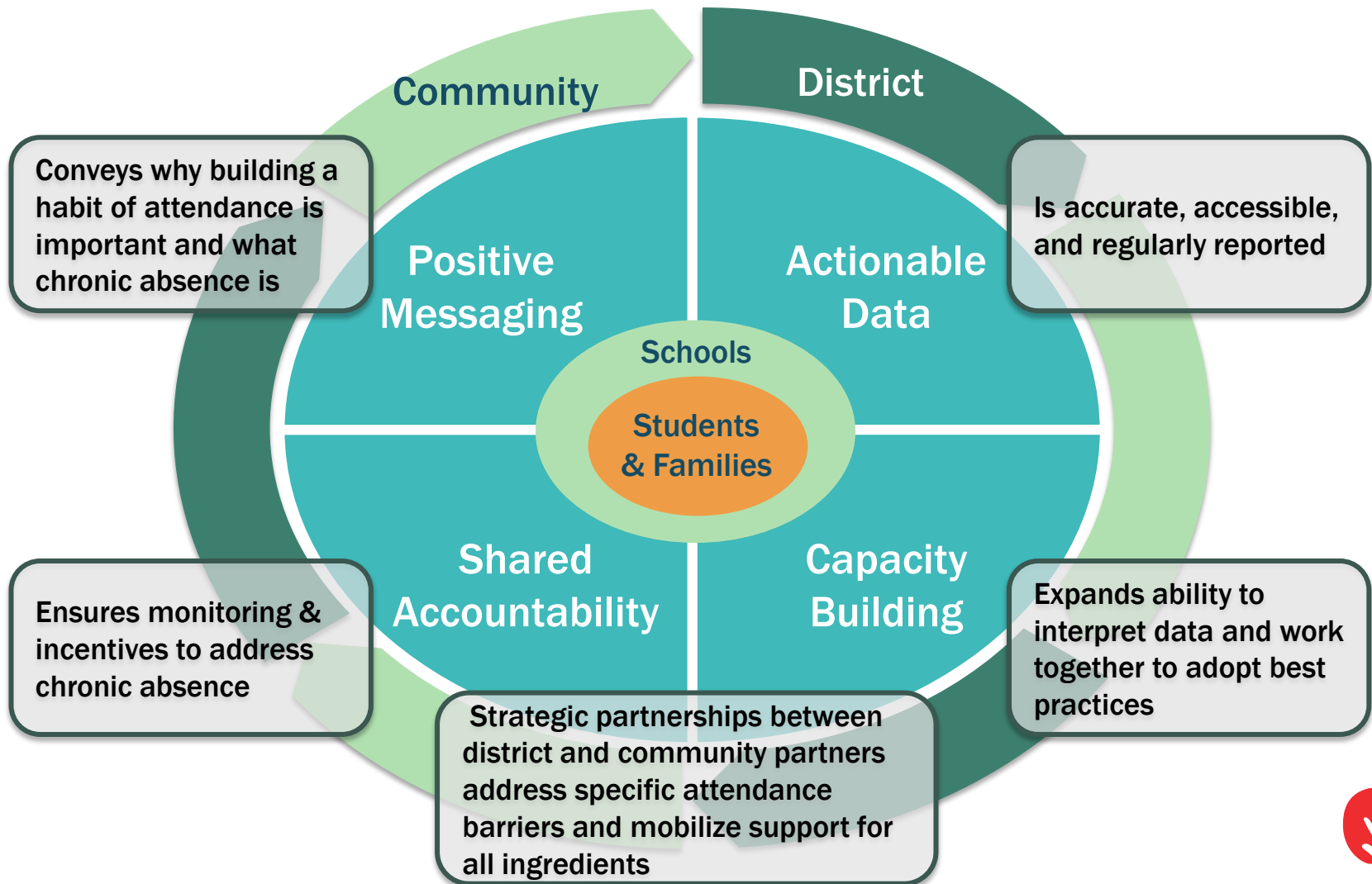


# Attendance data can help identify how to target community resources

*This analysis divides all chronically absent 1<sup>st</sup> graders in Oakland Unified district into 4 tiers (almost quartiles) based upon their level of absence*



# Ingredients for System-wide Success & Sustainability



# Accountability for Chronic Absence Built into LCAP Eight Priorities

1. Teachers, Materials, Facilities
2. Academic Standards
3. Parent involvement
4. Student achievement
5. Pupil Engagement: Measured by all of the following, as applicable: School attendance rates; Chronic absenteeism rates; Middle school dropout rates; High school dropout rates; High school graduation rates.
6. School Climate: Measured by all of the following, as applicable: Pupil suspension rates; Pupil expulsion rates; Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness.
7. Access to Courses
8. Other student outcomes.



# Variation Across Schools Helps Identify Good Practice and Need for Intervention

## *Chronic Absence Levels Among Oakland Public Schools (2009-10)*

	Elementary	Middle	High School
# Schools with 0%-5% Chronic Absence	9	0	0
# Schools with 5.1%-10% Chronic Absence	17	4	1
# Schools with 10.1%-20% Chronic Absence	25	8	6
# Schools with >20.1% Chronic Absence	9	4	9
Total No. Schools	60	16	16
Highest % of Chronic Absence	31.5%	32.8%	42.1%
Lowest % of Chronic Absence	0.3%	6.9%	7.9%
Median	12.7%	14.9%	21.0%
Mean	11.9%	15.6%	22.4%

# Los Angeles

## Attendance Improvement Program

- **Data-driven action:** Data are used to identify where to place counselors, which students to target and to evaluate success.
- **Attendance Improvement Counselors:** Attendance Improvement Counselors, along with Vista national service members, helped the schools track data, adopt universal & targeted interventions, create incentives for good attendance, reach out to students and parents, and ensure a timely response to poor attendance.
- **Capacity-building:** The Attendance Improvement Counselors are also charged with building the capacity of the school staff, parents, and community partners to understand attendance laws, use data, and develop a comprehensive approach that includes prevention and early intervention.



# LAUSD Attendance Improvement Program Outcomes

## Program Impact in Year 1 (2011-2012)

	Missing 7 days or less (96%+)			Missing 15 or more days (<91%)		
AIP Schools	2010-11	2011-12	Increase	2010-11	2011-12	Reduction
Kindergarten	37.24%	57.56%	+20.32%	31.32%	17.87%	-13.45%
Grade 9	51.45%	58.82%	+7.37%	27.65%	22.30%	-5.35%
School-Wide	2010-11	2011-12	Increase	2010-11	2011-12	Reduction
Elementary	55.56%	63.03%	+7.47%	18.64%	13.71%	-4.93%
Secondary	54.29%	58.65%	+4.36%	23.59%	20.36%	-3.23%

*Note: Program operated in 77 schools, including 52 elementary and 25 high schools with poor K and 9<sup>th</sup> grade attendance*

# Characteristics of More Successful AIP programs

- Strength-based approach with more positive perceptions of parents; higher expectations of their students and parents
- Greater levels of parent engagement
- A shared belief that everyone had a role in improving attendance and should work together
- Deeper levels of commitment to program implementation and delving into the causes of absence
- School leadership made improving attendance a high priority



# The Superintendents 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](http://www.attendanceworks.org/superintendents-call-to-action)*



# Chronic Absence = The Warning Light on a Car Dashboard

## The Parallels



- Ignore it at your personal peril!
- Address early or potentially pay more (lots more) later.
- The key is to ask why is this blinking? What could this mean?