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ADVANCING STUDENT SUCCESS
BY REDUCING
CHRONIC ABSENCE



October 2015

About Attendance Works

A Note from the Director

We've just finished our third year co-sponsoring Attendance Awareness Month and are overwhelmed by the engagement and commitment we've seen across the country. Local schools and superintendents are stepping up to improve attendance. State leaders are calculating data and speaking out the connection between absenteeism and achievement. And today, federal leaders announced a nationwide initiative to reduce chronic absence.

We hope to build on the momentum to ensure that no children miss out on an opportunity to learn because they miss too much school. Join us for an e-summit on Nov. 12 to get started on this important work.

Hedy Chang

Policy Spotlight

Federal Leaders Announce Nationwide Chronic Absence Initiative

The federal government today took up the fight against chronic

Attendance Works is a national and state initiative that promotes awareness of the important role that school attendance plays in achieving academic success. We aim to ensure that every school in every state not only tracks chronic absence data for its individual students but also partners with families and community agencies to help those children.

Be sure to follow us on Twitter and Pinterest and like our Facebook page!



Donate

We express a special thank you to our colleagues and friends who have included Attendance Works in their charitable contributions helping us to provide Attendance Awareness Month materials and other toolkits free of charge. If you haven't had a chance, you can donate now by clicking:



Whatever the size of your gift, it will provide us with much needed support

absence with a cross-sector initiative aimed at helping states, school districts and communities address the root causes of absenteeism. The [Every Student, Every Day initiative](#) will harness support from the White House and the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development and Justice.



Attendance Works Director Hedy Chang (right) with Deputy Secretary of Education John King

"It's common-sense - students have to be in their classrooms to learn, yet too many of our children, and most often our most vulnerable children, are missing almost a month or more of school every year," said Education Secretary Arne Duncan, who announced the initiative at a Washington, D.C. elementary school after an awards ceremony honoring students with improved attendance.

The initiative, part of President Obama's My Brother's Keeper Initiative, will feature several components:

- A public awareness campaign supported by a public-private partnership
- A toolkit to support coordinated community action
- Technical assistance and training for districts including an e-summit in November
- Mentoring models developed through a public private partnership
- Release in Spring 2016 of chronic absence rates for most school districts, data collected for the first time by the Education Department
- An in-person summit in Spring 2016 to highlight best practices.

[Read more here.](#)

E-Summit to Outline Key Steps for Tackling Absenteeism

The U.S. Department of Education, Attendance Works, Everybody Graduates Center and United Way Worldwide invite you to attend [Every Student, Every Day: A Virtual Summit on Addressing and Eliminating Chronic Absence](#) on Nov. 12

to advance our work.

E-Summit

Sign up now for [Every Student, Every Day: A Virtual Summit on Addressing and Eliminating Chronic Absence](#) Nov. 12, 2 p.m. ET

California Webinar

California educators and advocates can join a Nov. 4 webinar spotlighting principals who have led their schools and communities to reduce chronic absence.

[Register now!](#)

Holiday Messaging

Attendance Awareness Month is over, but attendance messaging isn't. Sign up to receive our updated [Holiday Messaging toolkit](#), coming out later this month.

Contact Us

Questions?

For more information contact: info@attendanceworks.org

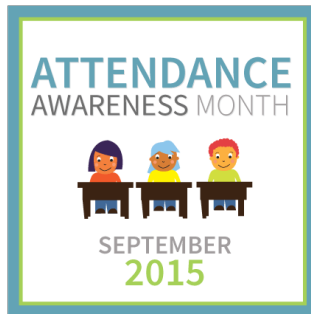
from 2-3:15 p.m. ET.

This online summit will feature two of the nation's premiere experts on absenteeism - Johns Hopkins researcher Bob Balfanz and Attendance Works Director Hedy Chang - who will outline key steps that states, districts and communities can take to improve student achievement by monitoring and reducing chronic absence.

[Register here.](#)

Practice Spotlight

Attendance Awareness Month Participation Up



From the first day of September until the last, Attendance Awareness Month drew an extraordinary response from schools and communities across the country. They taped PSAs, sponsored contests, issued proclamations, released balloons and, of course, calculated their chronic absenteeism data. Here are a

few of the metrics we've gathered:

- 4,300+ people have joined our listserv, up from 2,300 last year.
- 400 communities posted on the Attendance Action Map, up from 324 last year. The map is still open for anyone who hasn't posted yet.
- 1,350+ news stories and blog posts featured attendance issues or Attendance Awareness Month in August and September, nearly double last year's total.
- 8,800+ tweets featured the #schooleveryday hashtag in September alone, generating 15.7 million impressions.

[Read more here.](#)

Get Schooled Rolls Out Contest, Wake-Up Calls

Middle and high schools across the country are competing to see who can best increase attendance and student engagement between now and December. The [Get Schooled Get Connected Fall Attendance Challenge](#) offers prizes, such as DJ dance parties and celebrity visits, for the schools with the biggest attendance gains and the most students visiting the [online site](#). Schools can sign up through Friday, Oct. 9.

Get Schooled, a nonprofit focused on improving graduation rates and college completion, is also offering "[The Breakfast Club](#)," which features celebrity wake-up calls to get students to school everyday.

Calls to Action Enlists 200+ Superintendents

More than 200 superintendents across the country have committed to emphasize the importance of school attendance this fall and drive with data to reduce chronic absenteeism. The nationwide [Call to Action for superintendents](#) includes leaders from some of the nation's largest districts: New York City, Los Angeles and Miami-Dade County. [The full list](#) was featured in an ad in the Sept. 30 edition of Education Week.

The Call to Action, sponsored by the [Attendance Awareness Month](#) partners, gives superintendents access to tools, expert advice and peer learning opportunities. Superintendents can join the Call to Action on the [Attendance Works website](#).

Research Spotlight

New Reports Show Scope, Impact of Chronic Absence

September brought a trove of research analyzing chronic absence at the state and community levels, providing policymakers and educators with the data needed to drive attendance initiatives.

California: Attorney General Kamala Harris released [In School: On Track 2015](#), showing that an estimated 230,000 elementary students are missing 10 percent or more of the school year. The report also notes a positive trend, with more attention to chronic absence and success in improving attendance at the district level.

Houston, Texas: The Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation released [When Students Miss School: The High Cost to Houston](#), providing a detailed look at the impact poor attendance has on student achievement, classroom instruction and district finances.

New Jersey: Children of New Jersey released [Showing Up Matters](#), an analysis of state data documenting that more than 125,000 students from kindergarten through 12th grade missed 10 percent or more of the 2013-14 school year.

Attendance Works would like to express its deep appreciation to the foundations that have funded our work nationally and in communities across the country: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, The California Endowment, Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Community Foundation of Greater New Britain, Friedman Family Foundation, Kenneth Rainin Foundation, San Francisco Foundation, United Way Bay Area, Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation, Thomas J. Long Foundation, the Doug and Maria DeVos Foundation, the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation and Open Society Institute-Baltimore.

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