



Committed: Supporting Attendance and Participation to the Very Last Day of School

Attendance Awareness Campaign Webinar #1 Discussion Guide

April 14, 2021

Below are a suggested set of discussion questions for schools and communities. Based on insights shared during the webinar, what strategies might you adopt to build strong, trusting relationships that create a sense of belonging? Feel free to use some or all of the questions to prompt a rich conversation about how to take action.

- 1. Covid-19 and Attendance in the 2020-21SY:** The speakers on the webinar shared the importance of positive and supportive relationships between school staff and families to support attendance this school year.
 - How is your school community/district promoting relationships in this school year?
 - What has made building relationships between teachers and their students and families hard? What has helped to overcome those challenges?
 - How will you ensure the strategies for outreach begin with hearts before focusing on academic concerns?

- 2. Using attendance and participation data:** The speakers on the webinar discussed how they use their attendance and participation data to notice who needs support and activate personalized outreach to students and their families who are missing a lot of school.
 - What information does your school community/district use to activate outreach to students and their families? Who is responsible for the outreach?
 - Are there any particular groups of students who seem to be especially struggling with chronic absence? If so, who are they? What do you know about their strengths and attendance barriers?

- 3. Avoiding the Spring Attendance Downturn:** Analysis of available attendance data show that during the school year, student enrollment, attendance and participation significantly dropped. In a typical year, students generally attend less often toward the last few weeks of school. Consider the examples in the **Belonging to School grid**, located in the new toolkit section for "[Crafting Engagement Strategies](#)".
 - a. What strategies can you put in place to encourage students and their families to stay committed through to the end of the school year?
 - b. What strategies can you put in place to promote enrollment for next year?

- c. What assets can you build upon? Can you use Covid relief funding to support the work?

4. Establishing A Team:

- Do you have a team of school and community stakeholders who can develop and implement an end of year engagement strategy? If not, how can you start one? Use the [Pathways to Engagement toolkit](#) as a resource.