



# Nurturing Belonging in the Spring

Attendance Awareness Campaign 2026  
Webinar 1 of 4

April 1, 2026

[www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org)



# Welcome!



**S. Kwesi Rollins**  
Chief Program Officer  
Institute for Educational Leadership  
Chair Emeritus, Advisory Board, Attendance Works



**Hedy N. Chang**  
CEO and President  
Attendance Works

# About the Institute for Educational Leadership

**IEL's vision is an equitable society in which shared leadership effectively uses all available resources for the betterment of their communities.**

**IEL partners with communities, working with local entities to fill service needs and support them in the long-term on their transformational leadership journey. IEL:**

- identifies and implements innovative strategies particularly where educational, economic and social challenges or gaps exist.
- has developed, trained and supported thousands of leaders across various networks.
- works at the local, state and national level, investing in community leaders of all ages, stages and sectors.

To learn more visit: [www.iel.org](http://www.iel.org)

# Convening Partners AAC 2026!



See the full list of national and state campaign partners here: <https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/partners-2/>



## About Attendance Works

**Attendance Works** advances student success in school and beyond for all students by reducing chronic absence. Operating at the local, state and national level, Attendance Works:

- Advances better **policy**
- Nurtures proven and promising **practice**
- Promotes meaningful and effective **communication**
- Catalyzes needed **research**

Since our launch in 2010, we have become the nation's “go-to” resource for improving student attendance. To learn more, visit our website: [www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org).

# Agenda

## I. Welcome

## I. Attendance Awareness Campaign

**Kwesi Rollins**, Chief Program Officer, IEL

## I. National Context

**Hedy Chang**, CEO and President, Attendance Works

## I. State Spotlight: Rhode Island's Attendance Campaign

**Angelica Infante-Green**, Commissioner, Rhode Island

## I. How Presence Fuels Belonging and Engagement

**Elizabeth Cook**, Director of the 50% Challenge, Attendance Works

## I. Panel: Bright Spot Districts

- **Jon Cerny**, Superintendent, Bancroft-Rosalie Community Schools, Nebraska
- **Kyle Elsasser**, Director of Secondary Education, Bancroft-Rosalie Community Schools, Nebraska
- **Terrence Mixon**, Assistant Superintendent, Mobile County Public Schools, Alabama
- **Denise Reimer**, Lead Social Worker, Mobile County Public Schools, Alabama
- **Karin Vogt**, Director of Elementary Education, Bancroft-Rosalie Community Schools, Nebraska

## VII. Closing Reflections & Resources

# Attendance Awareness Campaign 2026

## Webinar Series

### *Your Presence Matters!*

Note: Each session is accompanied by a discussion guide that can be used for webinar parties.

- Webinar 1** [Nurturing Belonging in the Spring](#)  
April 1, 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30 pm ET
- Webinar 2** [Engage and Build Bridges in the Summer](#)  
May 13, 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30 pm ET
- Webinar 3** [Create Community in the Fall](#)  
August 5, 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30 pm ET
- Webinar 4** [Ensure Support All Year Long](#)  
September 23, 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30 pm ET

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/webinars/>

# Five Key Actions & Messages for 2026

- **Embrace a problem-solving approach driven by data to improve attendance.**
- **Engage parents and guardians as vital partners.**
- **Create a safe, connected and engaged learning environment.**
- **Support the health and well-being of students, families and school staff.**
- **Involve the whole community in your strategies and actions.**

<https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resource/count-us-toolkit/what-are-the-key-messages-2/>



**Thank You to our Campaign Sponsor for supporting this webinar!**



[TalkingPoints](#) is an education technology nonprofit with a mission to drive student success by unlocking the superpower of effective family-school partnerships. The TalkingPoints award-winning communications and family engagement platform helps educators improve outcomes, such as attendance, through scalable, research-based best practices for family engagement.



**Welcome to our new AAC  
Partners!**



**CONSORTIUM**  
OF FLORIDA EDUCATION  
FOUNDATIONS

**UCHICAGO Consortium**  
on School Research

<http://consortium.uchicago.edu>

Learn more about the Attendance Awareness Campaign partners on [our website!](#)



## Support Attendance Works!



*Photo credit: Allison Shelley/The Verbatim Agency for EDUimages*

We rely on contributors like you to help us keep Attendance Works' resources free for everyone.

Join our movement and donate today!

[Donate](#)





# AAC 2026 Slogan!





# AAC 2026 Slogan!

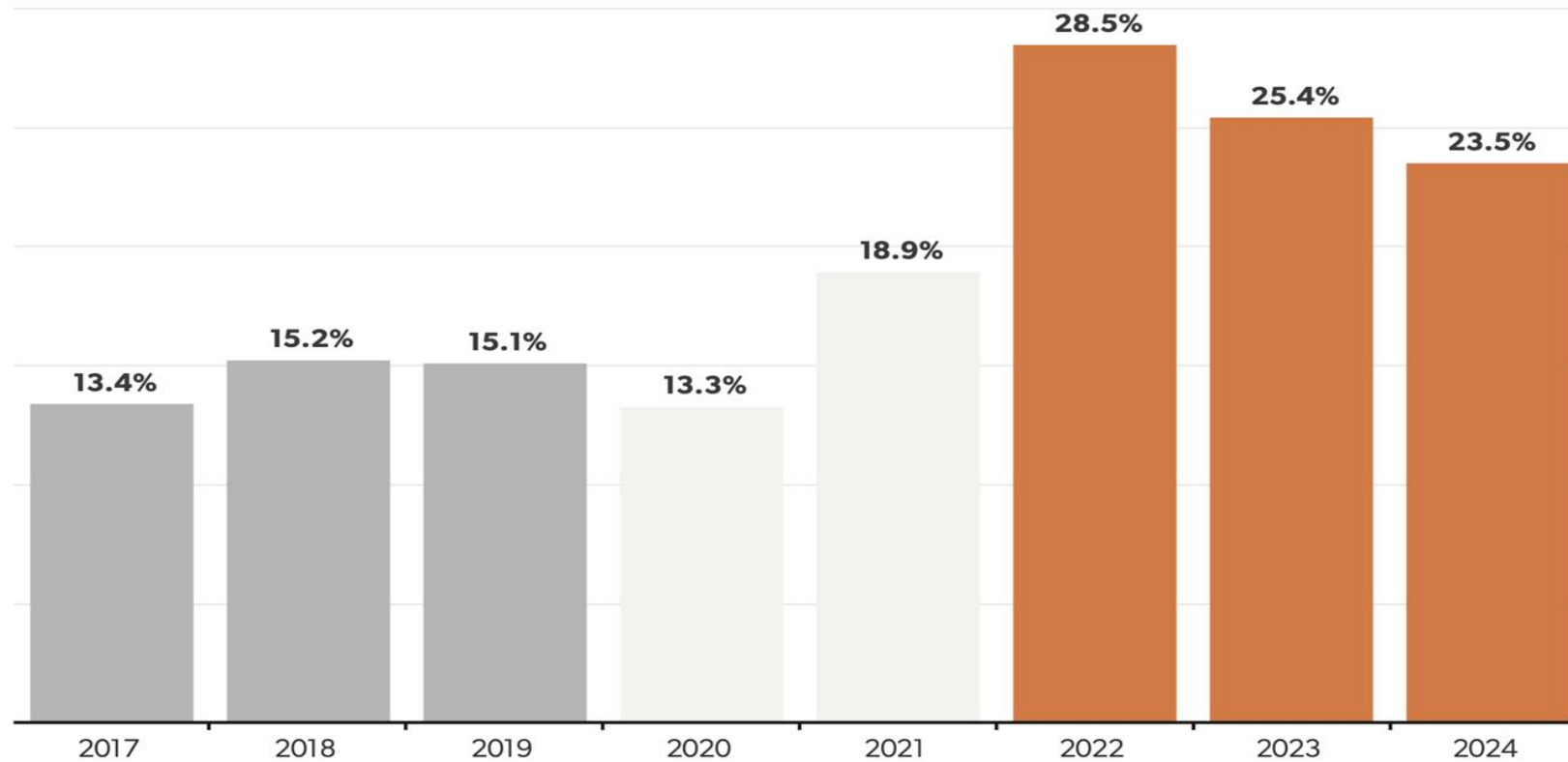
- Focuses on building trusting relationships with students, families and communities.

## **Your Presence Matters!**

- Highlights the value of listening to students and families to learn their strengths, as well as understand their challenges to getting to school.
- Is a call to action for everyone to work together and remove barriers and support students in attending school.

# Chronic absence nearly doubled and remains too high

Figure 1. US Chronic Absenteeism Rates: School Years 2017–24



Source: Return to Learn Tracker, "Chronic Absenteeism: 2017–2024," American Enterprise Institute, <https://www.returntolearntacker.net>.

Note: Pre-pandemic years are in grey, pandemic years that had potentially unreliable attendance data are in light grey, and post-pandemic years with reliable data are in orange. School years are referred to by the spring year.

# Reducing chronic absence has a triple bottom line.

- It improves student achievement & well-being.
- It increases district financing.
- It supports working families.

# What's the difference between ADA, truancy & chronic absence?

## Average Daily Attendance (ADA)

- School level measure (not student level)
- Notices aggregate attendance at certain point in time (e.g., half-days, holidays, bad weather)
- Masks individual student chronic absences

## Truancy

- Counts ONLY unexcused absences
- Emphasizes individual compliance with school rules
- Uses legal, typically more blaming and punitive, solutions

## Chronic Absence

- Missing 10% of school including ALL absences (excused, unexcused, and suspensions)
- Emphasizes impact of missed days and the benefits of being present
- Uses preventative, problem-solving, trauma-sensitive strategies
- Cultivates family and student engagement

**Visit: What's the Difference Between Chronic Absence and Truancy?**

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/whats-the-difference-between-chronic-absence-and-truancy/>

# Reducing Chronic Absence Requires Addressing Root Causes

## Barriers

- Chronic and acute illness
- Family responsibilities or home situation
- Poor transportation
- Housing and food insecurity
- Lack of access to needed services
- System involvement
- Unpredictable schedules for learning
- Lack of access to tech
- Impact of trauma
- Violence in the community

## Aversion

- Struggling academically and/or behaviorally
- Unwelcoming school climate
- Social and peer challenges
- Anxiety
- Unfair disciplinary and suspension practices
- Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations
- Caregivers had negative educational experiences

## Disengagement

- Lack of challenging, engaging instruction
- Bored
- No meaningful relationships to adults or peers in school
- Lack of enrichment opportunities
- Lack of academic and behavioral support
- Failure to earn credits
- Need to work conflicts with being in high school

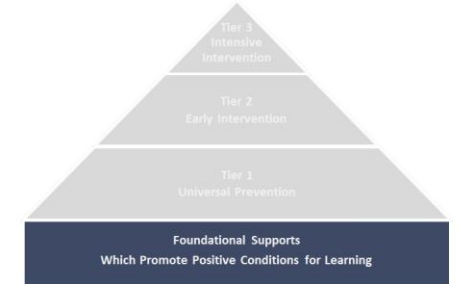
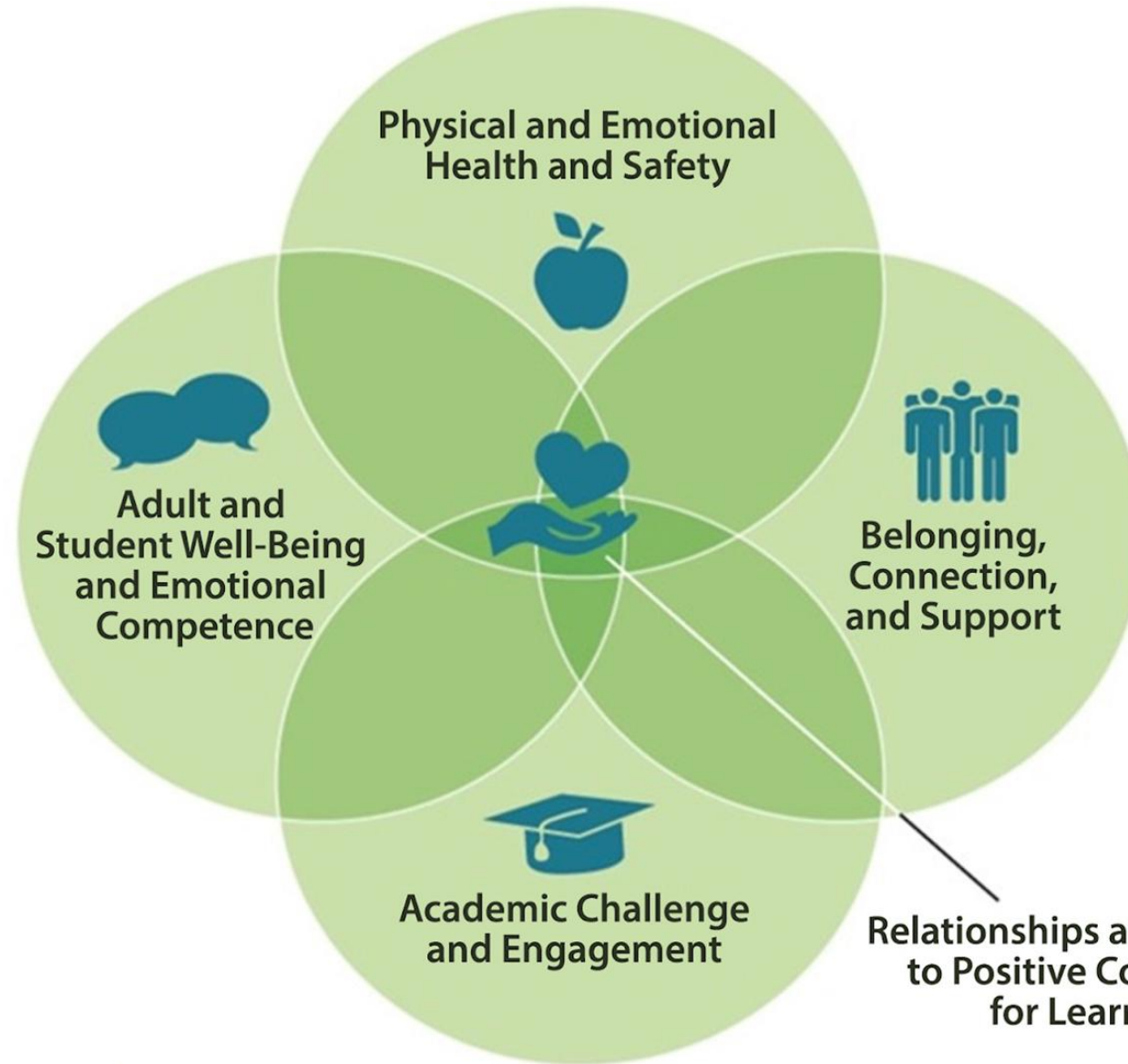
## Misconceptions

- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Missing two days per month doesn't affect learning
- Lose track and underestimate TOTAL absences
- Assume students must stay home for any symptom of illness
- Attendance only matters in the older grades
- Suspensions don't count as absence

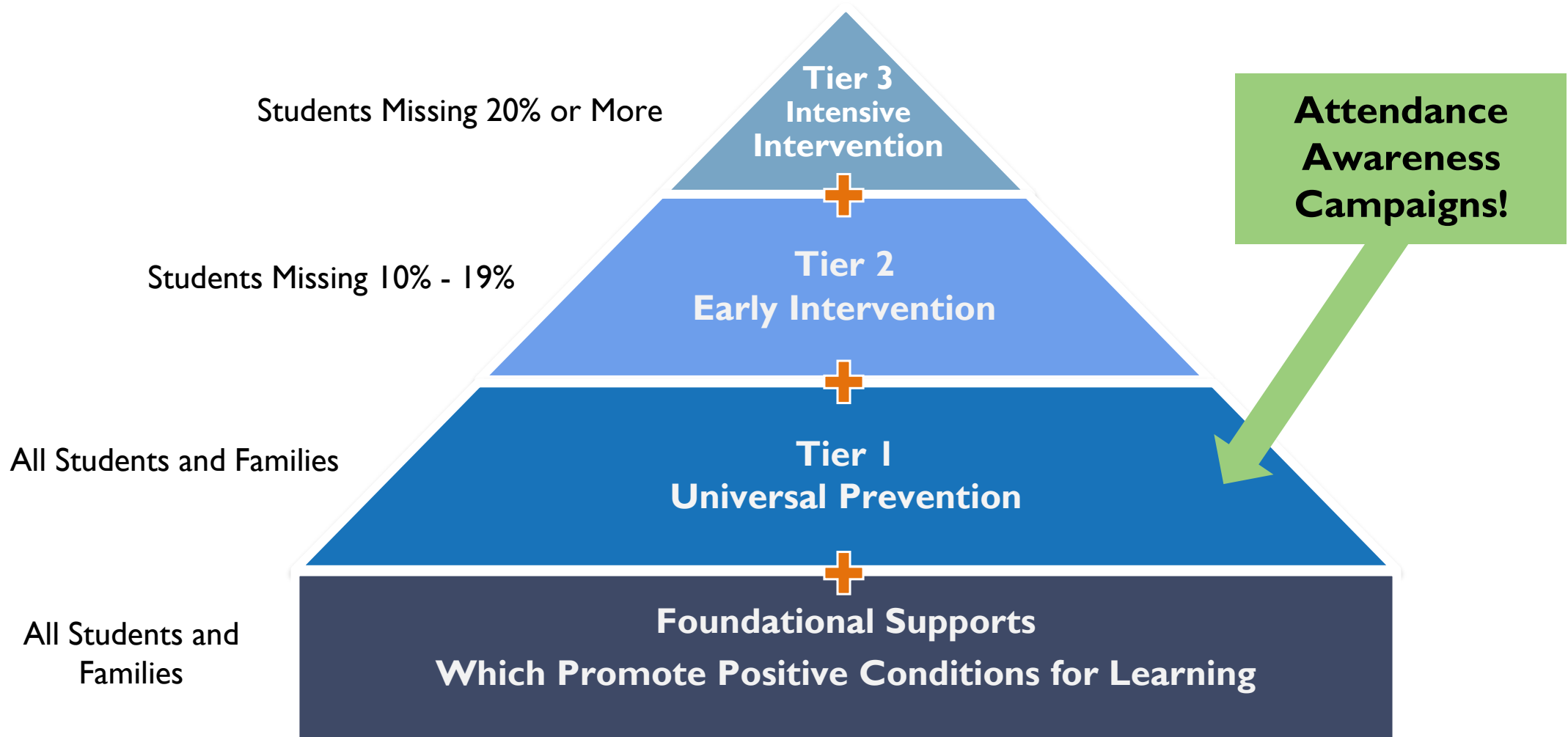
Visit: [Root Causes of Chronic Absence](https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/root-causes/)

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/root-causes/>

# Positive Conditions for Learning Lay the Foundation



# Requires A Multi-tiered System of Support



Visit: 3 Tiers of Intervention

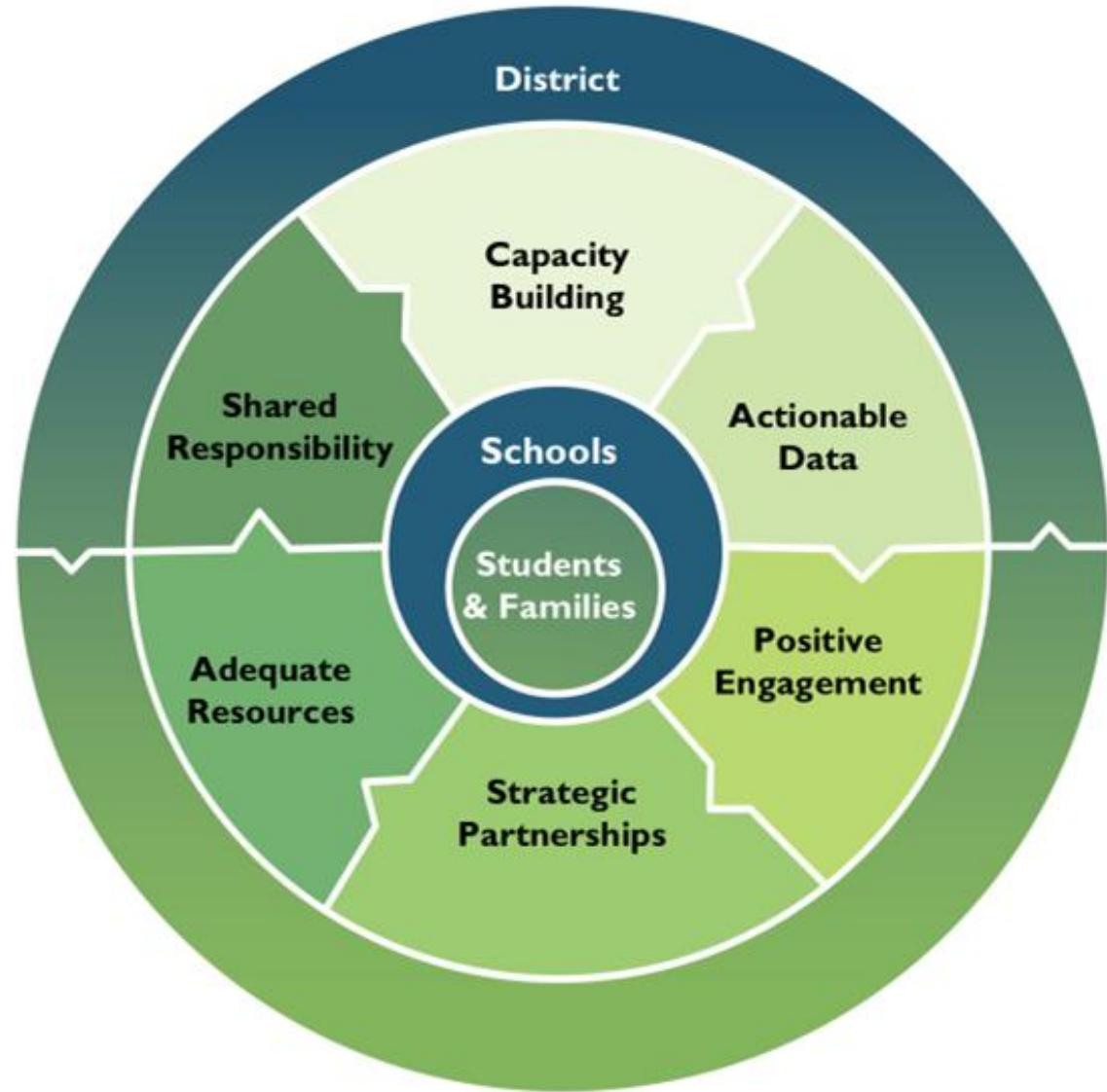
<https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/>

# Our Theory of Action

Positive change builds up from local champions, with **districts** as the **units of change** that support action in schools

**States** are the vehicles for scale.

Both need a **supportive ecosystem** of partners and other public agencies



# Attendance Awareness Campaign Spotlight



**Angélica Infante-Green**  
Commissioner  
State of Rhode Island  
Department of Education



# Rhode Island's Attendance Matters Strategy

Rhode Island Department of Education  
Commissioner Angélica Infante-Green  
April 1, 2026  
AttendanceMattersRI.Org



**RIDE** Rhode Island  
Department  
of Education

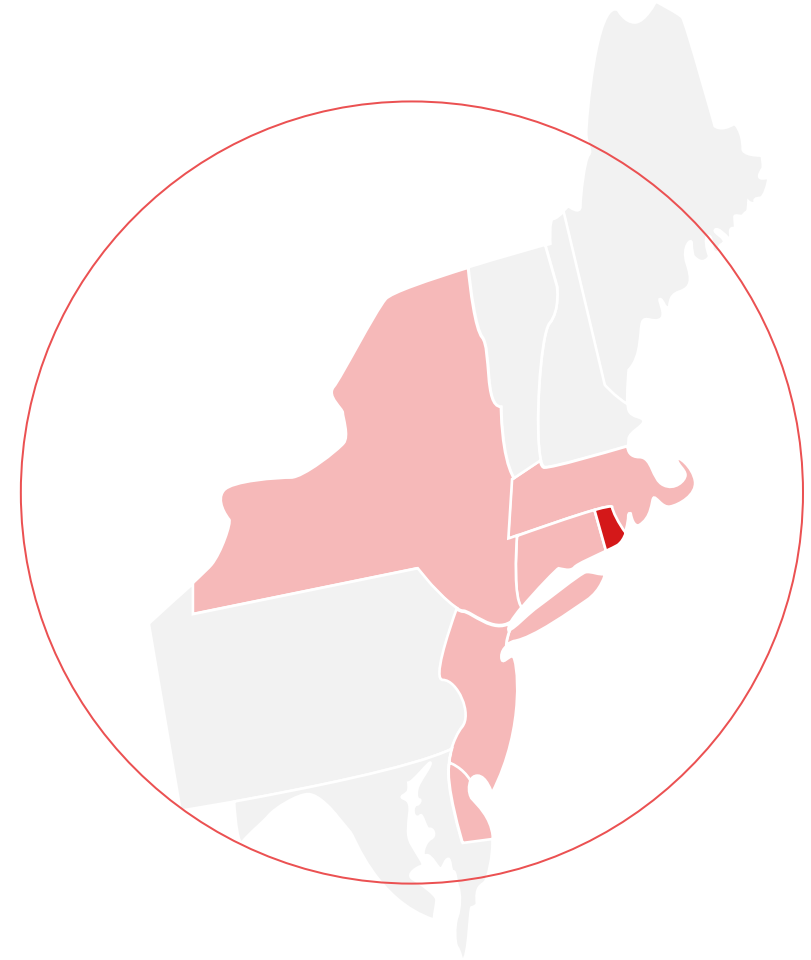




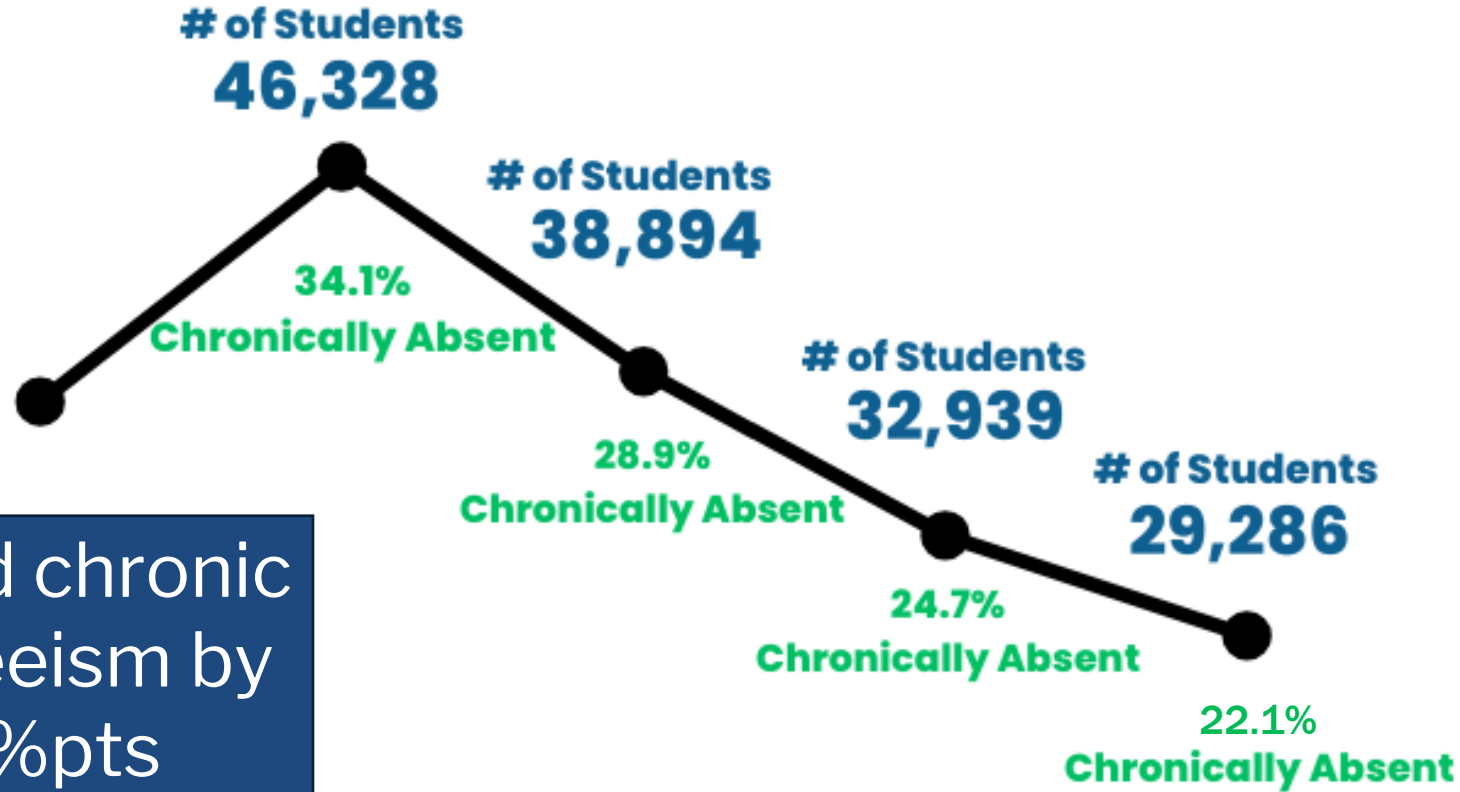
# Pandemic Impact on Chronic Absenteeism in RI

## The Covid-19 pandemic significantly exacerbated student chronic absenteeism

- Rhode Island was one of the first states to shift to statewide distance/virtual learning
- Student chronic absenteeism **nearly doubled**, from 18.5% in SY2019-20 to 34.1% in SY2021-22
- Rhode Island had the **8<sup>th</sup> highest** student chronic absenteeism rate nationally in SY2021-22



# The Number of Chronically Absent Students in Rhode Island Has Dropped Significantly



Reduced chronic absenteeism by 12.0%pts  
(From SY21-22 to SY24-25)

Reduced absences equates to 3.7M more instructional hours



# How Rhode Island is Improving Student Attendance

Rhode Island leads the nation in improving student attendance by focusing on the following key strategies as part of its [#AttendanceMattersRI](#) campaign:



Statewide, All-In Communications Campaign



Real-time, Innovative Data



Dynamic Student & School Supports

The collage features several articles and reports:

- CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM | COMMUNITY & WRAPAROUND PROGRAMS | NATIONAL**  
**How do you boost school attendance? In Rhode Island, with public rankings and Oprah-style giveaways**  
By Kalyn Belsha | August 27, 2024, 6:03pm EDT
- Team Sport: Rhode Island's Statewide Strategy for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism**
- 'It's cool to be in school': Educators stress the importance of attendance**  
Everyone in the community plays a role in combating chronic absenteeism, participants at a White House-sponsored event said.  
Published May 17, 2024 • Updated May 20, 2024  
Kara Arundel, Senior Reporter
- LOAD REPORT →**
- ANALYSIS**  
**How a Real-Time Dashboard & Statewide Push Are Cutting Chronic Absenteeism in RI**  
Cohen: Case study in investing political capital, enlisting stakeholders & creating a widely publicized attendance scoreboard to promote school reform

# Statewide Communications Campa



Dynamic, aligned statewide messaging reinforcing that #AttendanceMatters.

- Statewide messaging, **driven from Governor McKee and Education Commissioner Infante-Green**
- Multimedia “**AttendanceMattersRI**” campaign, with social media and AttendanceMatters videos
- **Active statewide coalition** - business, community, and city leaders all engaged through RIDE's statewide Chronic Absenteeism Working Group
- **Weekly press releases** recognizing Rhode Island school attendance leaders
- **AttendanceMattersRI.org** website



# Real-Time, Innovative Data: Data Tools

## Real-Time School Chronic Absenteeism Leaderboard

Attendance Performance [Where's my school?](#) [More Attendance Dashboards and Resources](#) Last Updated: 11/13/2025 2:30:11 AM

Schools  Districts

Showing: All Districts

Compare current % chronically absent to the same time last year. The change (Δ) indicates whether your chronic absenteeism is increasing or decreasing in a school.

Show  entries Search:

Rank	School Name	Level	Enr.	#	%	%PY	Δ	District	Principal
1	Hamilton School (23111)	E	443	19	4.3%	7.1%	↓ -2.8%	North Kingstown	Frederick Schweizer
2	Howard Hathaway School (27104)	E	437	19	4.3%	7.3%	↓ -3%	Portsmouth	Lisa Little
3	Washington Oak School (06121)	E	497	22	4.4%	12.7%	↓ -8.3%	Coventry	Paula Jacquard
4	Stony Lane El. School (23114)	E	361	16	4.4%	6.8%	↓ -2.4%	North Kingstown	Nicole Hitchener
5	Raices Dual Language Academy (04112)	E	214	10	4.7%	10.6%	↓ -5.9%	Central Falls	Elisa Rivera
6	Melville School (27111)	E	309	15	4.9%	6.3%	↓ -1.4%	Portsmouth	Danielle Laurie
7	Steere Farm Elementary School (03105)	E	265	13	4.9%	9.7%	↓ -4.8%	Burrillville	Courtney Francis
8	Jamestown School-Melrose (15102)	E	216	11	5.1%	9.6%	↓ -4.5%	Jamestown	Beth Roman
9	Portsmouth Middle School (27112)	M	593	31	5.2%	8.1%	↓ -2.9%	Portsmouth	Jason Masterson
10	Richmond Elementary School (98105)	E	473	25	5.3%	11.4%	↓ -6.1%	Charlho	Sharon Martin
11	Clayville School (30103)	E	131	7	5.3%	11.4%	↓ -6.1%	Scituate	Lori Boutiette
12	Pleasant View Elementary Schoo (31106)	E	539	29	5.4%	5.1%	↑ +0.3%	Smithfield	Terry Viera
13	Pocasset School (33107)	E	181	10	5.5%	14.2%	↓ -8.7%	Tiverton	Amy Donnelly-Roche
14	Lincoln Central Elem. (17109)	E	398	22	5.5%	7.2%	↓ -1.7%	Lincoln	Leanne Saravo
15	Myron J. Francis Elementary (10125)	E	406	23	5.7%	8.6%	↓ -2.9%	East Providence	Jamie McKenzie
16	Frenchtown School (09105)	E	262	15	5.7%	7.7%	↓ -2%	East Greenwich	Maryann Crudale
17	Kingston Hill Academy (32601)	E	259	15	5.8%	11.2%	↓ -5.4%	Kingston Hill	Drew Virbila
18	Nayatt School (01104)	E	350	21	6%	6.4%	↓ -0.4%	Barrington	Melissa Moniz
19	Forest Park El. School (23110)	E	250	15	6%	9.5%	↓ -3.5%	North Kingstown	Joseph Rotz
20	Community School (08109)	E	528	32	6.1%	8.1%	↓ -2%	Cumberland	Cheryl Vaughn
21	George Hanaford School (09108)	E	789	19	6.4%	11.8%	↓ -5.4%	East Greenwich	Coleen Smith

## School Calendar Attendance Heat Map

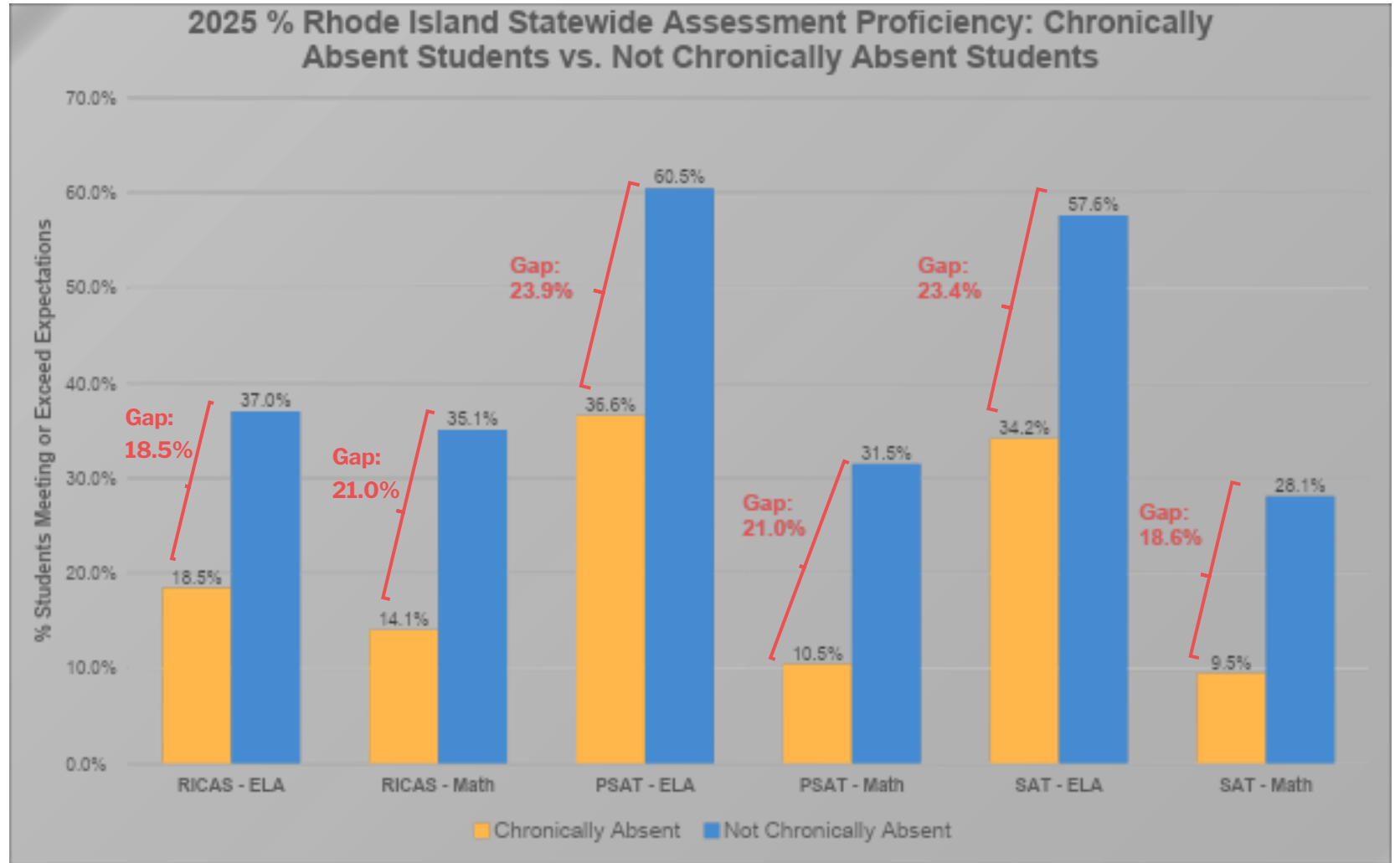




# Real-Time, Innovative Data: Student Impact

**Connecting chronic absenteeism to student outcomes is critical.**

Rhode Island was one the first states to publish performance results showing **significant performance gaps** in academic achievement and graduation rates between chronically absent and non-chronically absent students.



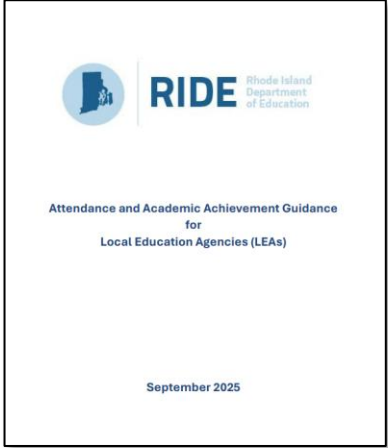
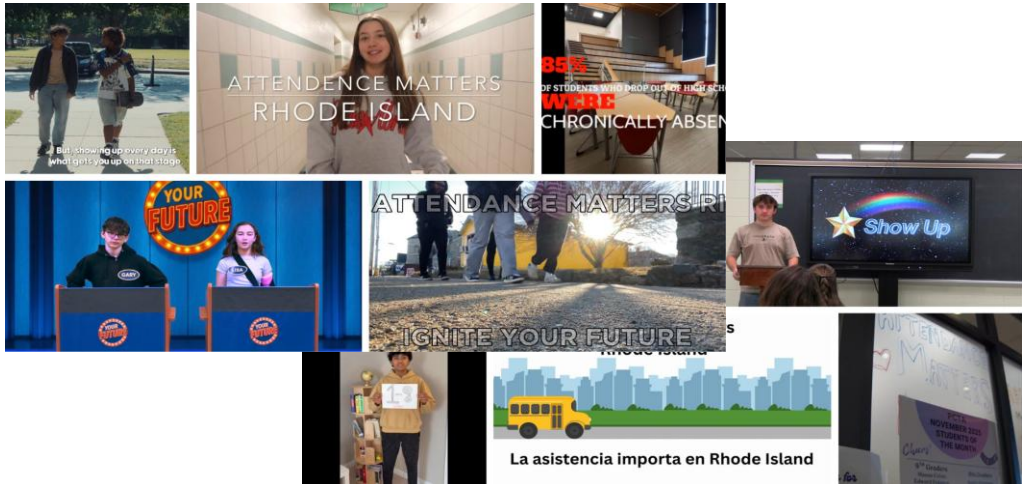


# Dynamic Supports for Students & Schools

## Free Mental Health Supports for Every Student



## Student Created Video Competition



Statewide guidance on connecting attendance and academic achievement to support students



Professional learning cohorts and best-practice spotlights for educators

# Recap: Rhode Island's Leading to Improve Attendance

Rhode Island's significantly reduced chronic absenteeism equivalent to 3.7 more million instructional hours through its #AttendanceMattersRI strategy:



Statewide, All-In Communications Campaign



Real-time, Innovative Data



Dynamic Student & School Supports

The collage features several articles and reports:

- Top Article:** "How do you boost school attendance? In Rhode Island, with public rankings and Oprah-style giveaways" by Kalyn Belsha | August 27, 2024, 6:03pm EDT. Categories: CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM, COMMUNITY & WRAPAROUND PROGRAMS, NATIONAL.
- Center Article:** "Team Sport: Rhode Island's Statewide Strategy for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism" by Liz Cohen. Includes a "DOWNLOAD REPORT" button.
- Bottom Left Article:** "'It's cool to be in school': Educators stress the importance of attendance" by Kara Arundel, Senior Reporter. Published May 17, 2024, Updated May 20, 2024. Includes a photo of a group of people at a meeting.
- Bottom Right Article:** "How a Real-Time Dashboard & Statewide Push Are Cutting Chronic Absenteeism in RI" by Liz Cohen. Subtext: "Cohen: Case study in investing political capital, enlisting stakeholders & creating a widely publicized attendance scoreboard to promote school reform".

# How Presence Fuels Belonging and Engagement!



**Share**

Think of a time when you were fully engaged in a learning activity. What were you doing?

**Use the chat box**

# Defining Terms

## Belonging:

*“...the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school social environment.”*

— Carol Goodenow (1993)

## Engagement:

*“Engagement is the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience.”*

— George D. Kuh (2003)



# Defining Terms

## Belonging is a *condition* for meaningful *engagement*

Students who feel they belong show it through:

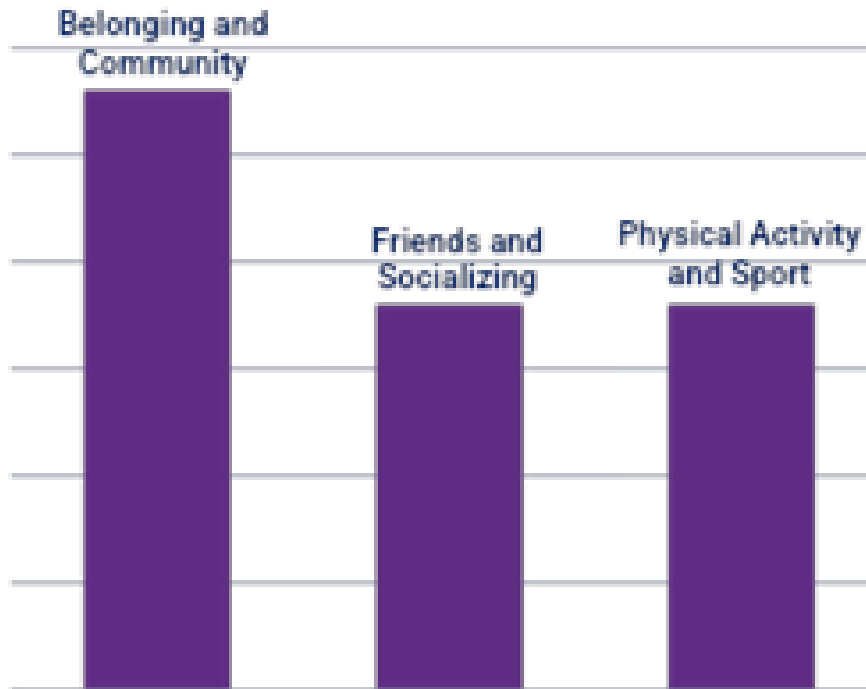
- Presence → showing up
- Participation → contributing
- Attention → focusing
- Persistence → staying with challenge
- Effort → investing in learning

Belonging is strongly associated with deeper, more meaningful investment in a task  
—not just participation (Korpershoek et al., 2020)

# What Youth Say

GENYOUth conducted a nationally representative survey of 1,505 students ages 13-18 to understand which wellness factors impact attendance

## Top 3 wellness factors related to attendance



## Subfactors within Belonging & Community

#1: Belonging and Community (Strongest overall)	Relationship
I felt welcomed at school	Strongest
I felt like I was part of school community	Strongest
The teachers treated students fairly	Strongest
I felt close to people at school	Strongest
I felt that I mattered to others	Strongest



**Share**


Go back to that moment—what  
conditions made that possible?

**Use the chat box**

# Year-Round Planning

Plan activities and events that keep a focus on improving attendance all year long.

- See sample activities for PreK, K-12 and district teams
- Use blank calendars to customize the plan for your community
- Remember to specify who is responsible for leading and how to measure the results



SAMPLE ACTIVITIES for K-12: rev. 3-28-23

### Attendance Activities School Year Plan (K-12)

School Name

School Year

Activities in the grid are examples. You can customize the plan for your school or program. For each activity, specify who is responsible for leading and how to measure the results. You can also recreate this chart in a larger format and use post-it notes to add activities as a group exercise. See the 3 Tiers of Intervention (<http://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/>)

Timing	Summer (July/August)	Welcome Back (August/September)	Ongoing (Weekly)	Fall Semester (October – November)	Winter Semester (December – February)	Spring Semester (March-April)	End-of-Year (May/June)
School Team	Establish school team to address attendance. Develop a yearly attendance plan and goals. Agree on metrics to monitor for in-person and distance learning. Utilize start of school year PD days for teachers and school staff to discuss yearly plan and whole school strategies.	Conduct team meeting by the second week of school.	Hold team meetings.	Review <u>early warning data</u> . Ensure staff are prepared to discuss attendance in a caring manner in parent-teacher conferences, attendance improvement meetings, outreach calls and home visits.	Revisit data to measure progress and revise school-wide strategies as needed. Expand team as needed to address reasons for absence.	Ensure staff are prepared to discuss attendance in parent-teacher conferences. Assess strategies and write school improvement plan.	Review data. Share data with student's next teacher for smooth transitions and trouble shooting.
Foundational Whole School Supports	Plan welcoming traditions for incoming early grades, transition grades and new students and their families. Ensure there is attention paid to students with disabilities and other student groups with historically high levels of absenteeism.	Disseminate in-person health and safety protocols. Promote immunization activities. Establish good and improved attendance recognition schedule/process. Conduct welcoming traditions for students and families.	Coordinate with other school leaders to promote and maintain a positive school climate.	Provide a warm welcome for students who start later in the school year. Offer afterschool programs with engaging and culturally responsive curricula.	Create opportunities for students, families and staff to recharge physically and emotionally. Increase the sense of belonging for specific student groups through clubs, history months and celebrations.	Boost excitement in learning – celebrate and event such as Earth Day.	Plan end-of-year traditions including opportunities for service, e.g. students in upper grades lead tours for students entering the school next fall.
Tier I (Universal)	Promote <u>attendance messaging</u> during registration/enrollment. Have home visits/phone calls to build relationship and remind families about the first day of school.	Share back-to-school messaging about the importance of attendance for in-person and distance learning.	Ask staff to establish daily, weekly and monthly routines to build relationships in the classroom and welcome students back after absences. Hold weekly/monthly recognition. Ensure positive, regular communication with	During <u>parent-teacher conference</u> , recognize good attendance and express concerns in a supportive manner if needed. Anticipate and plan activities/supports to minimize dips in attendance during holidays. Conduct a resource fair for students and their families.	Share messaging and engaging activities around <u>winter holidays</u> . Use data to identify attendance dips and align events to mitigate low attendance days. Schedule mid-year activities to remind school community about attendance.	Hold parent-teacher conference student attendance check-in. Plan engaging activities and messaging to avoid the spring slump.	Communicate the importance of student attendance in last weeks of school. Acknowledge attendance successes.

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/year-long-planning/>



# COMING SOON! New Principal Toolkit

Strategies and materials you can tailor to the needs of your community.

## For Principals: Leading Attendance Through Engagement

Bright spot stories illustrate how principals have reduced chronic absence.

- Step 1: **Create or strengthen a school team to improve attendance**
- Step 2: **Use data to understand and address the challenge**
- Step 3: **Cultivate a school-wide, yearlong approach to engagement**
- Step 4: **Determine whether you are making a difference**
- Step 5: **Advocate for resources and improved attendance policies**

# Panelists



**Jon Cerny**  
Superintendent  
Bancroft-Rosalie Schools,  
Nebraska



**Karin Vogt**  
Director of Elementary  
Education  
Bancroft-Rosalie Schools,  
Nebraska



**Kyle Elsasser**  
Director of Secondary  
Education  
Bancroft-Rosalie Schools,  
Nebraska



**Terrence Mixon**  
Assistant Superintendent  
Mobile County Public  
Schools, Alabama



**Denise Reimer**  
Lead Social Worker  
Mobile County Public  
Schools, Alabama

# Bancroft-Rosalie Community Schools Nebraska



Pre-12 Enrollment	284
Racial and Ethnic Background	
White	62%
Native American	29%
Free/Reduced Lunch	67%
Chronic Absenteeism Rate	5.5%

# DISTRICT INFORMATION

## MCPSS SCHOOLS

- 90 Schools in Mobile County
- 50,000 Students Enrolled
- Racial/Ethnic Composition = 51.87% Black, 34.20 White, and 13.93 % Other
- 71% Poverty Rate
- 12.81 Chronic Absenteeism Rate

## COUNTY SIZE

- Mobile County is 1,644 square miles - over 66 miles long

## SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS

- Urban Schools - 30
- Suburban Schools - 32
- Rural Schools - 28



Mobile County  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**What have been the most effective strategies for getting students to show up every day in your community?**

# Bancroft-Rosalie Community Schools



Student Outcomes	
Graduation Rate	100%
College Going Rate	97%
Work-Based Learning	80% (60% paid)
Associates Degrees	37%
Career Pathways	100%
<b>Relationships + Relevance= Results</b>	

# STRATEGIES & SUPPORTS TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

## ACCOUNTABILITY/DEMOGRAPHICS

- Continuous Improvement plans
- Monthly reports for attendance monitoring
- Administrator “buy-in”
- Attendance teams at schools

## CONSISTENT SUPPORT/DIRECTION

- Statewide utilization of the same SIS with data analytics
- Alabama Attendance Manual & statewide organization for attendance officers to meet, discuss & decide on strategies to improve attendance
- Strong legislative support for Mental Health Service Coordinator (↑\$6 million) Bullying Prevention (\$5 million), Helping Families Initiative (↑\$2 million) & School-Based Mental Health Collaboration (\$250,000)

## COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS/MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS/BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAMS

- Collaboration with multiple partner agencies to provide assistance to school/district personnel, students and families to create stronger relationships and a sense of belonging
- Collaboration with local universities to increase dual enrollment & alternative graduation pathways

## PARENTING SUPPORTS

- Parent Organizers
- Free Parenting Classes offered to all parents
- Statewide Parenting Day in October
- Semi-Annual District Parent Advisory Meetings



Mobile County  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**What do you see as the biggest barriers to attendance and how have you addressed them?**

# ATTENDANCE BARRIERS

**OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS** → Counts as an absence

**CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT ISSUES** → Increasing number of behavioral concerns

**ENSURING ENGAGING INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY** → Relationships between Teachers, Students, & Parents

**MENTAL HEALTH/BULLYING CONCERNS** → Fear of coming to school

**SPECIAL POPULATIONS** → Special Education, Homeless, Chronically Ill

**LOW PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT/ENGAGEMENT** → Young parents, Parents working multiple jobs

**TRANSPORTATION ISSUES** → Parents without transportation, limited public transportation, 2 mile radius, bus driver shortage



Mobile County  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## Major challenge:

- **Transportation:** Contracted with the Omaha Tribe for Tribal Transit/\$35 a student per month

**What are you doing now to ensure  
belonging in the spring?**

# Bancroft-Rosalie Community School



- **Team ACCESS** - grant through ESU2 focusing on student mental health
  - Provides LMHP services 2 days a week (we also seek additional LMHP support)
  - Development of a school mental health team
  - Data collection using Panorama Education
    - School Climate Survey and Student Mental Health Screeners
- **Student to Staff Connections** - Ensure all students have a positive connection with at least one adult
- **PBIS and School Improvement Team** - Set schoolwide expectations and recognize students who consistently meet those expectations
- **Personalized Learning** - Students take ownership of their learning
- **Activity Participation** - All students are strongly encouraged to participate in at least one extracurricular activity
- **Cell Phone Free** - Disconnecting from devices strengthens peer relationships

# STRATEGIES TO ENSURE BELONGING

- **SCHOOL INCENTIVES** —————>

- Pep/Spirit Rallies & Schoolwide Assemblies to encourage attendance & honor students who achieved it
- Out of Uniform/Pajama days, Dances for students with consistent attendance
- Honor Parade & Festival/Field Days to both encourage and reward consistent attendance

- **MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS/BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAMS** —————>

- Districtwide, grant-sponsored bullying prevention program focused on building strong peer relationships in compliance with a safe learning environment. School coordinators identify students with chronic attendance issues AND new students and pair them with a peer buddy who does an in-person, weekly check-in to encourage attendance & a sense of belonging
- Mental Health Camps during school breaks - SBMH therapists engage students & encourage regular/consistent attendance
- Advisor-Advisee Programs, Report Card Conferencing, School Clubs, & Extracurricular Activities to strengthen connection between students and adults

- **ACCOUNTABILITY/PARENTING SUPPORTS** —————>

- Parent Organizers & Attendance Teams reaching out daily via phone/email/carpool line to parents
- "Parent of the Month" parking place & Parent/Student Movie Nights for consistent attendance
- Community Partners/ School Social Workers engaging with parents via home visits, parenting classes, etc.



Mobile County  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# Q & A



# Join us for CSxFE26 in Long Beach, CA



Scan for Early Bird registration!



IEL's 2026 National Community Schools and Family Engagement Conference is in Long Beach, California, a beautiful city with one of the busiest seaports in the country!


Just as lighthouses guide ships through uncertain waters, **Guiding Lights, Brighter Futures** reminds us that every day matters for every child.



## Key Resource: Attendance Awareness Website

- ✓ **Proclaim September Attendance Awareness Month building off our sample proclamation**
- ✓ **Share our free social media materials with local districts!**
- ✓ **Follow us on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and X**
- ✓ **Add an AAC badge to your signature line website or materials**
- ✓ **Access the Count Us In! toolkit**

## PROMOTE THE CAMPAIGN



Attendance Awareness Campaign 2026

Attendance Works About Resources Partners Sponsors  
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Your Presence Matters!  
Join the campaign and receive regular updates.

Sign Up

Join 48,000+ listserv members and receive updates:  
[www.awareness.attendanceworks.org](http://www.awareness.attendanceworks.org)



# Webinar Recording

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

<http://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/webinars/>



## Feedback



Please let us know how we can improve:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AAC-April-2026>

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