



# On the Front Line of Attendance and Engagement: The Crucial Role of Teachers

Attendance Awareness Campaign 2024 – Webinar I of 4

April 3, 2024

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



# Welcome!



**S. Kwesi Rollins**

Vice President for Leadership & Engagement  
Institute for Educational Leadership  
Chair, Advisory Board, Attendance Works



**Hedy N. Chang**

Executive Director  
Attendance Works

# About the Institute for Educational Leadership

**IEL** acts as a catalyst and capacity builder at the intersection of education, community collaboration and workforce development to effectively promote equity and better opportunities for all children and youth. 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)



## About Attendance Works

**Attendance Works** advances student success and closes equity gaps 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

## II. Attendance Awareness Campaign and Key Concepts

Kwesi Rollins, Vice President for Leadership & Engagement, IEL  
Hedy Chang, Executive Director, Attendance Works

## III. The Role of Teachers in Improving Attendance

- ❖ **Isis Blass**, Teacher, Camelback High School, Phoenix Union High School District, AZ
- ❖ **Laura Tellez**, Dual Language Academy Teacher, Campus Park Elementary, Livingston Union School District, CA

## IV. Systems that Support Teachers in Engagement and Attendance

- ❖ **Kaaren Andrews**, National Director, Center for High School Success
- ❖ **James Arndt**, Principal, Camelback High School, Phoenix Union High School District, AZ
- ❖ **Mayte Ramirez**, Principal, Campus Park Elementary, Livingston Union School District, CA
- ❖ **Maria Torres-Perez**, Director of Categorical Programs & Special Programs, Livingston Union School District, CA

## V. Closing Reflections & Resources

# Convening Partners AAC 2024!



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



**Slogan for 2024!**

# Be Present, Be Powerful!



# Attendance Awareness Campaign 2024 Webinar Series

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

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

**Webinar 1 On the Front Line of Attendance and Engagement: The Crucial Role of Teachers**, Wednesday, April 3: 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30 pm ET **Today!**

**Webinar 2 Essential Partnerships for Showing Up to School: Families, Youth and Community** Wednesday, May 15, 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30 pm ET

**Webinar 3 Creating a Culture of Belonging and Engagement: Principals in Action** Wednesday, August 7, 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30 pm ET

**Webinar 4 Leadership for Sustainability: Superintendents Making a Difference** Wednesday, September 25, 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30 pm ET

# 2024 Theme: Be Present, Be Powerful!

## Selected Key Messages

- ❖ **Building strong, trusting relationships that promote a feeling of belonging is fundamental to improving student attendance and engagement.**
- ❖ **Students are more likely to attend school if they feel safe, connected and supported.**
- ❖ **A positive, problem-solving approach driven by data will improve attendance.**
- ❖ **When the whole community collaborates with families and schools, we can overcome barriers to attendance and engagement.**



## Thank You to Our Corporate Sponsors for this Webinar!



[Kaiser Permanente](#) Thriving Schools brings together extensive health care expertise and partnerships with nationally recognized and trusted organizations to support schools in becoming a beacon of health in their community.



[RaaWee K12](#) provides a highly robust collaboration platform where school districts implement best practices for tracking students' attendance and managing interventions.



## Support Attendance Works



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

**Join our movement and donate today!**

DONATE

# Defining Terms

## 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

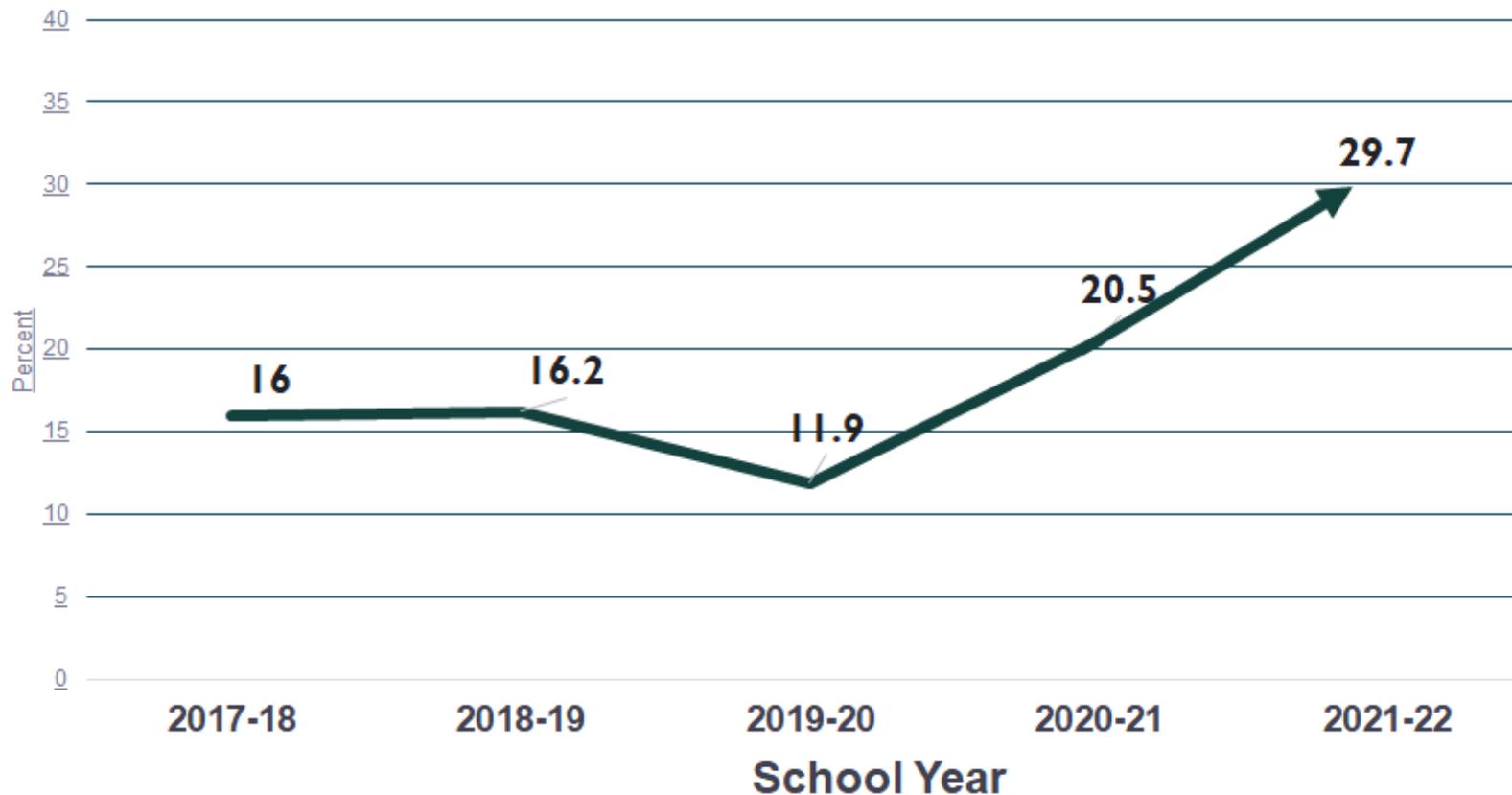
- ▲ Counts **ONLY** unexcused absences
- ▲ Emphasizes individual compliance with school rules
- ▲ Uses legal, typically more blaming and punitive, solutions

## Chronic Absence

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

# National Chronic Absence Crisis

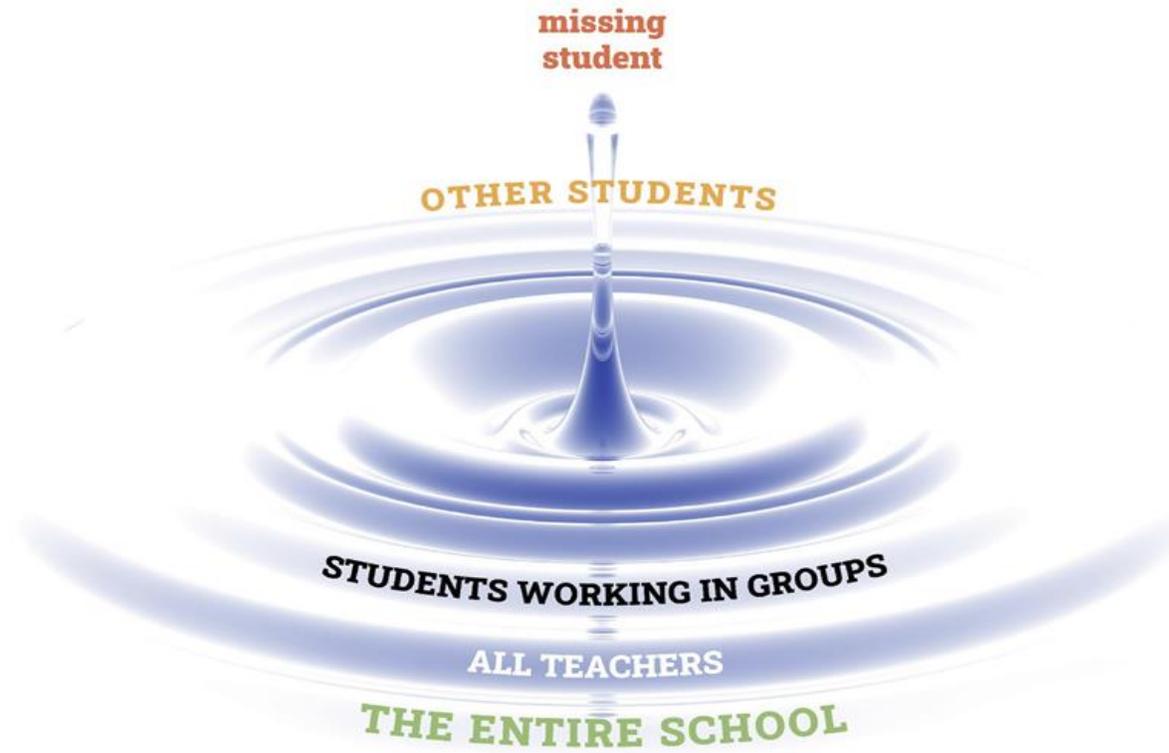
**Percentage of Students Chronically Absent Nearly Doubled Nationwide Between SY 2017-18 to SY 2021-22**



- ✓ The number of chronically absent students grew from 8,095,132 to 14,660,261.
- ✓ State data from 2022–23 indicate rates remain high.



## When a Student Misses School, the Impact Ripples



**66%** of students attend a school with 20% or more absenteeism (*SY 2021-22*) versus **25%** prior to the pandemic

# The key to reducing chronic absence is addressing what causes students to miss too much school

## Barriers

- Chronic and acute illness
- Family responsibilities or home situation
- Trauma
- Poor transportation
- Housing and food insecurity
- Inequitable access to needed services (including health)
- System involvement
- Lack of predictable schedules for learning
- Lack of access to technology
- Community violence

## Aversion

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

## Disengagement

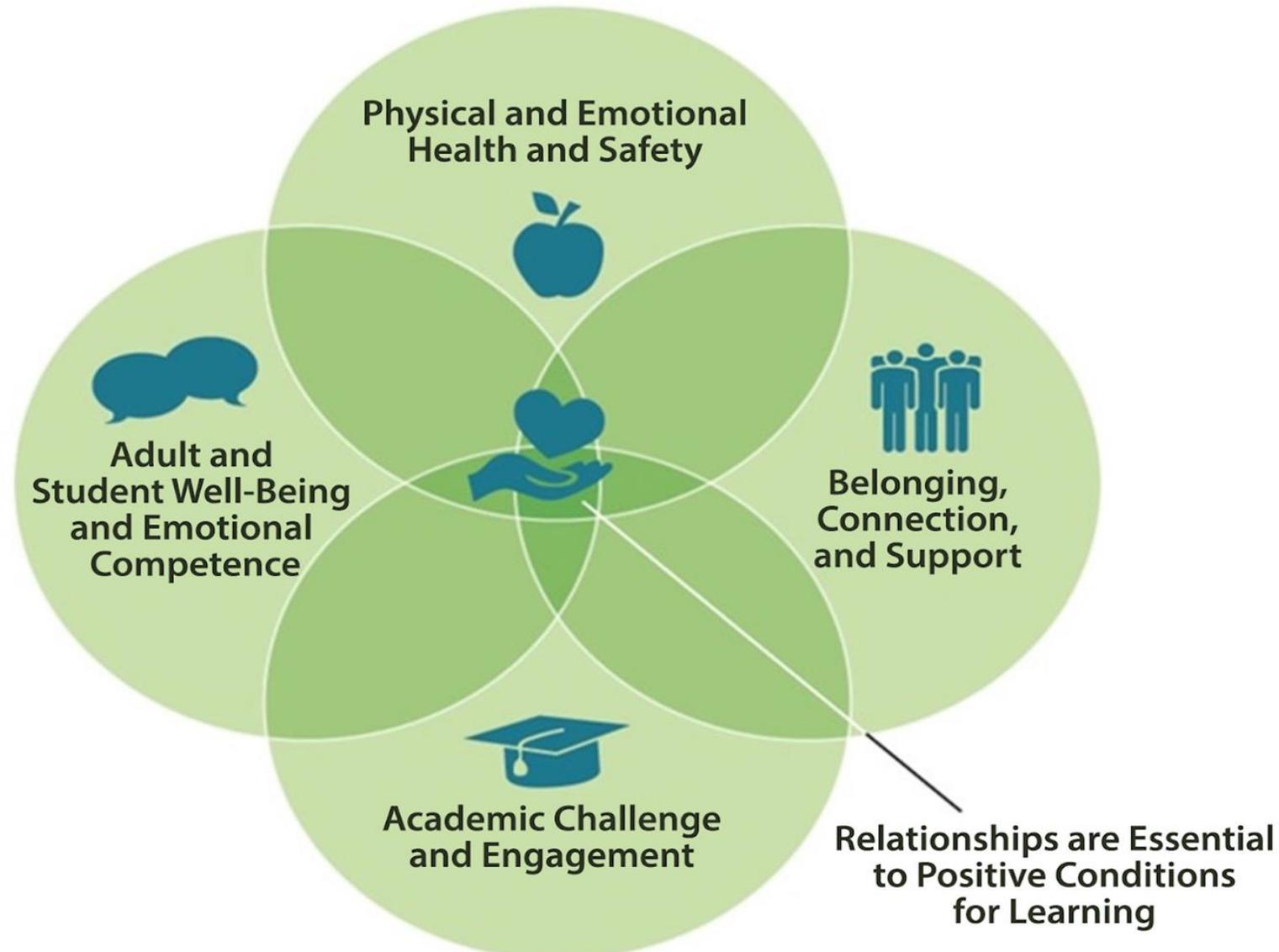
- Lack of challenging, culturally responsive instruction
- Bored
- No meaningful relationships to adults in the school (especially given staff shortages)
- Lack of enrichment opportunities
- Lack of academic and behavioral support
- Failure to earn credits
- Need to work conflicts with being in high school

## Misconceptions

- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Missing 2 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

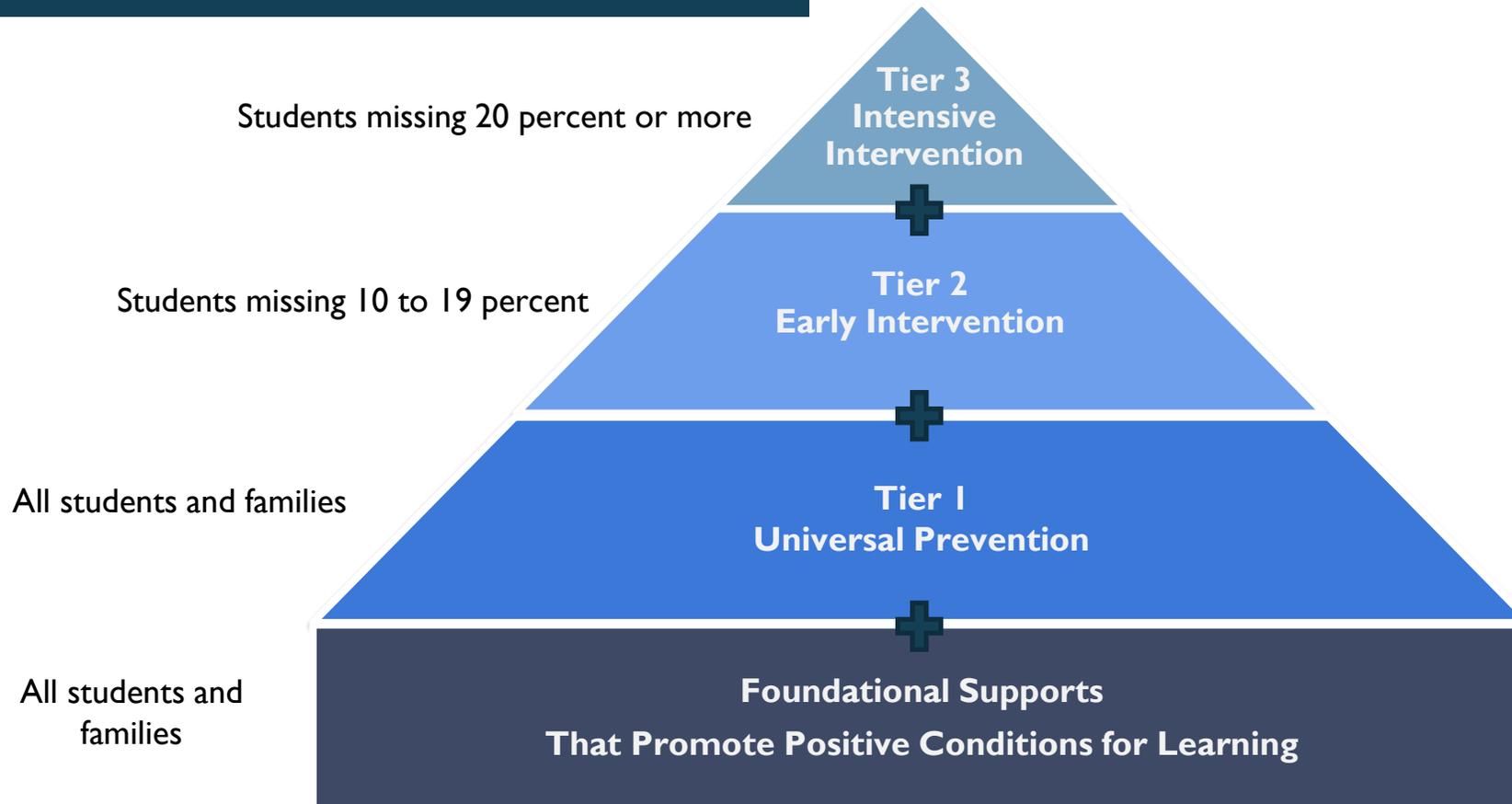
<https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/root-causes/>

# High levels of absence reflect an erosion in positive conditions for learning





## Multi-tiered support systems that begin with prevention are essential



# Leveraging Role of Teachers to Nurture Showing Up Every

## **I. Create a sense of belonging among students and families in the classroom**

- a. Welcome students and families in the classroom
- b. Forge positive relationships with each student and family
- c. Offer engaging and relevant learning opportunities
- d. Provide supportive learning environments

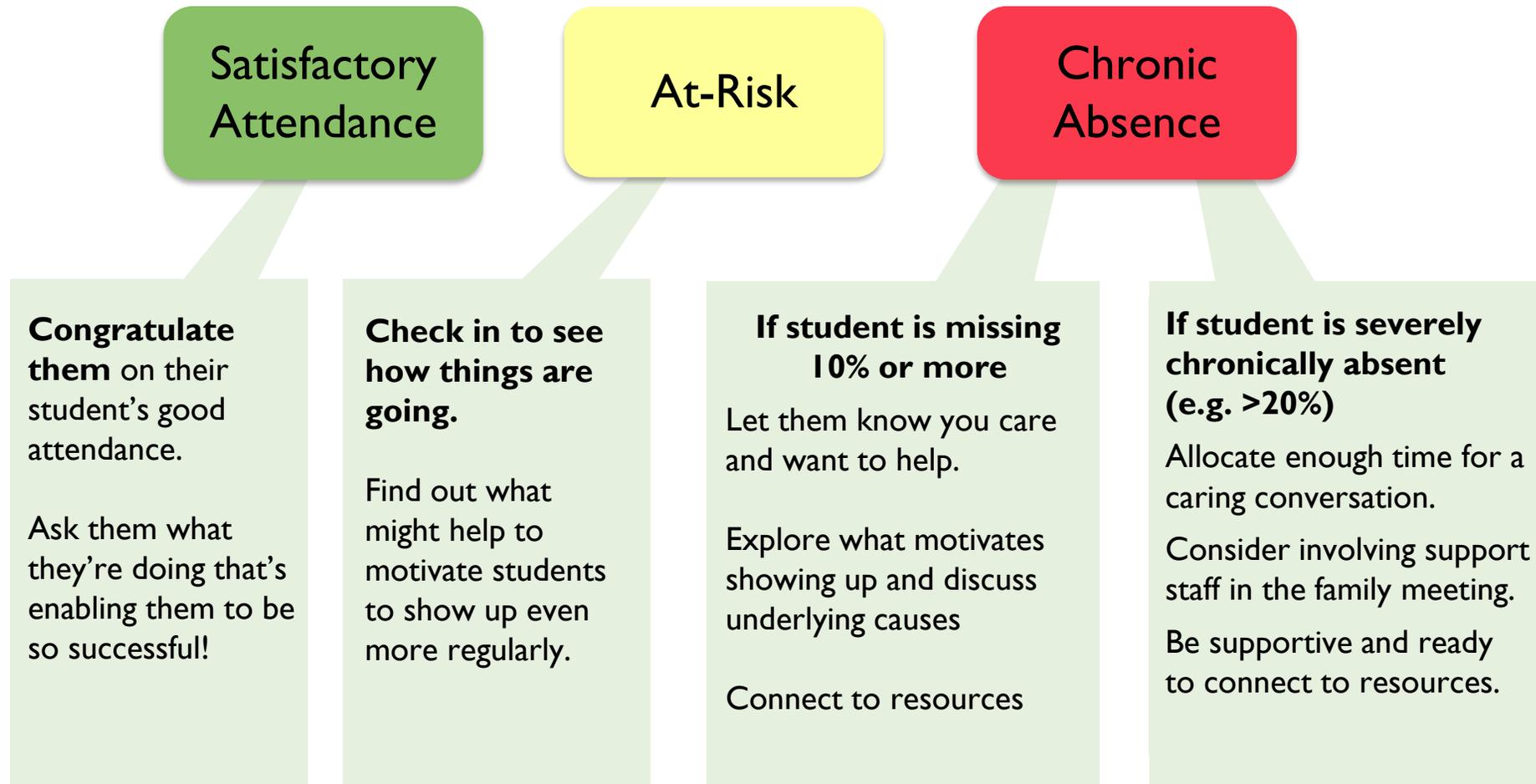
## **2. Adopt effective attendance messaging**

- a. Share that students were missed and feel welcome when they return.
- b. Convey the learning opportunities missed when students are absent.
- c. Recognize good and improved (not just perfect) attendance
- d. Emphasize attendance at strategic points throughout the year

# Teachers at the Front Line:

How Can They Leverage Their Role to Nurture Showing Up to School Every Day

## 3. Engage families at student/teacher conferences



# Teachers



**Isis Blass**  
Teacher  
Camelback High School  
Phoenix Union High District, AZ



**Laura Tellez**  
Dual Language Academy Teacher  
Campus Park Elementary  
Livingston Union School District, CA

# Panelists



**Kaaren Andrews**  
National Director  
Center for High School Success



**James Arndt**  
Principal  
Camelback High School  
Phoenix Union High  
School District, AZ

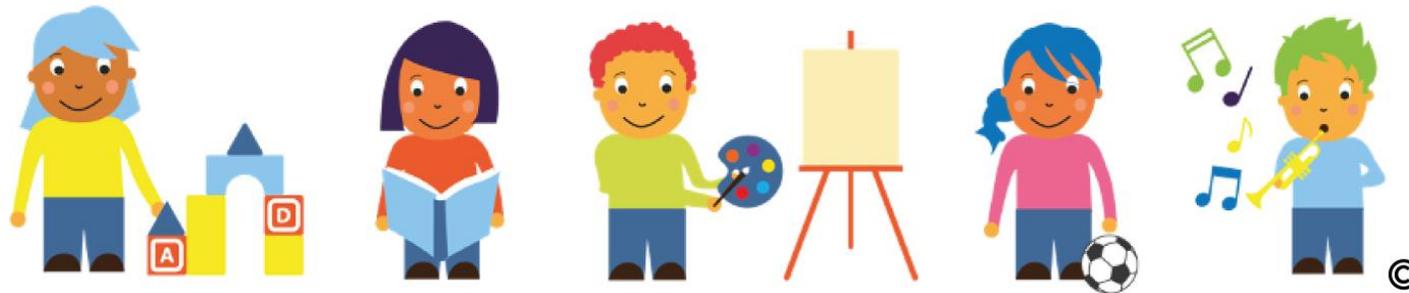


**Mayte Ramirez**  
Principal  
Campus Park Elementary  
Livingston Union School  
District, CA

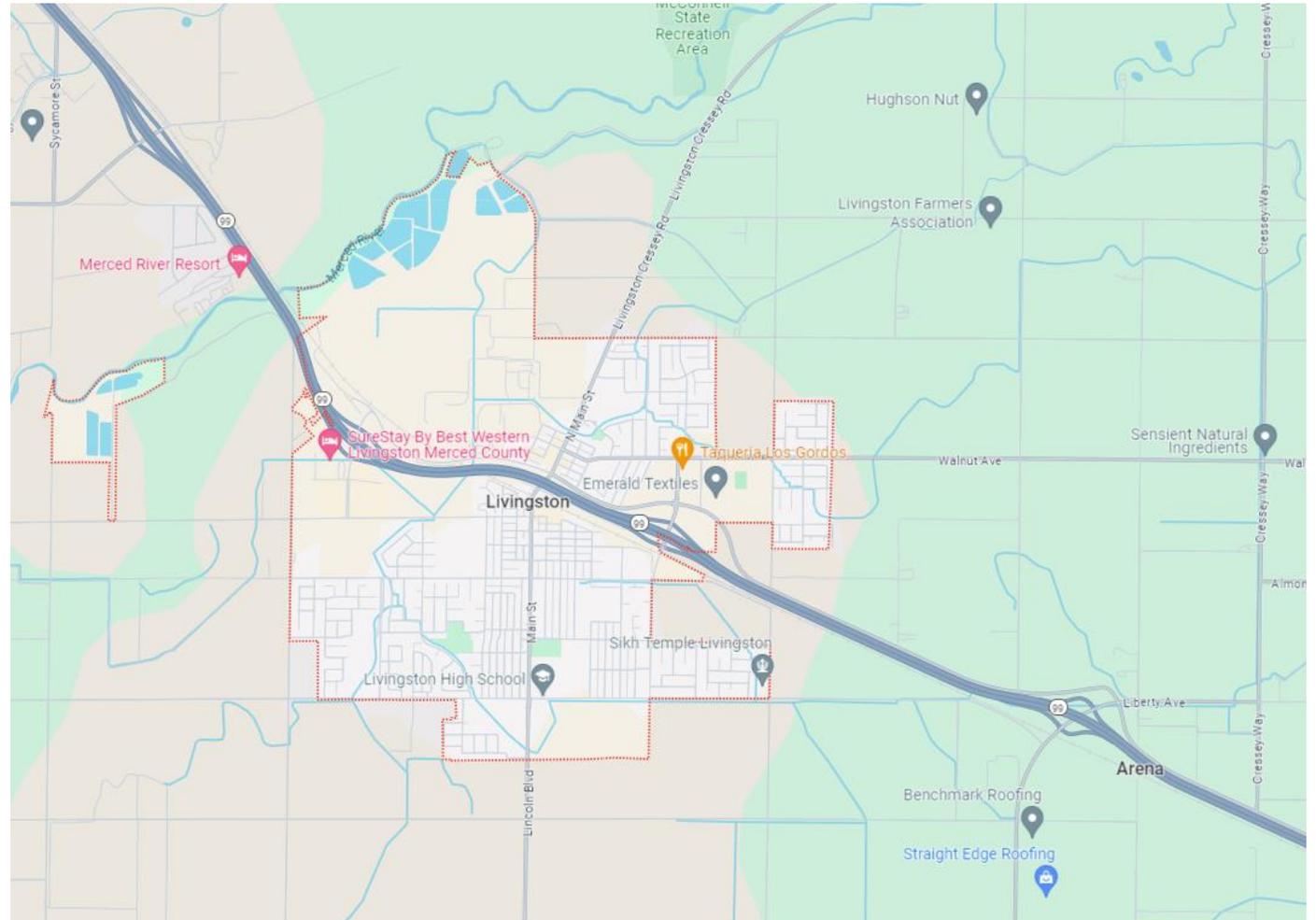


**Maria Torres-Perez**  
Director of Categorical  
Programs & Special Projects  
Livingston Union School  
District, CA

**Tell us about your community, and how you know your efforts around attendance and engagement are working?**



The city of **Livingston** is located directly along highway 99 in the San Joaquin Valley between Sacramento and Fresno California. Livingston enjoys the benefits of a small community in a rural setting. Rich farmland sustains the local economy which is primarily agricultural. The Livingston Union School District, located in the City of Livingston, is a rural school district covering 80 square miles. It serves approximately 2,500 students within its four schools, Campus Park Elementary, Selma Herndon Elementary, Yamato Colony Elementary and Livingston Middle School.



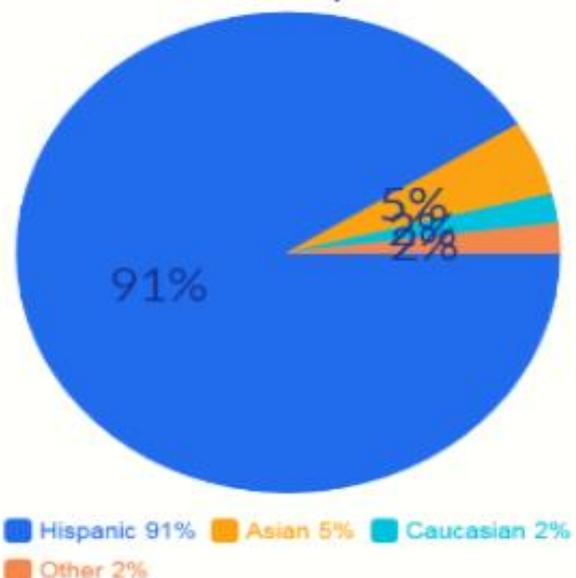
# Campus Park Elementary

1845 H Street, Livingston, CA

## Student Enrollment



## Demographics



Principal: Mayte Ramirez

Teachers: 24

Grades: TK-5



52%

English Language Learners

78%

Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch



91.4%

Average Daily Attendance



## Campus Park Elementary Attendance Rates

<b>Levels</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>2023-2022</b>	<b>2022-2021</b>	<b>2021-2020</b>	<b>2020-2019</b>	<b>2019-2018</b>	<b>2018-2017</b>
<b>Chronic Absenteeism</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>3.3</b>
<b>Average Daily Attendance</b>	<b>91.4</b>	<b>87.7</b>	<b>92.4</b>	<b>98.9</b>	<b>92.1</b>	<b>97.2</b>	<b>96.7</b>

We believe that in 2023-2022 our rates were higher than other years because we were transitioning from COVID guidelines to the “new normal.”

# Camelback High School

2,200 Students

- 76% Hispanic
- 11% Black-African American
- 6.5% White
- 3.5% Native American
- 2% Other or Multiple Races

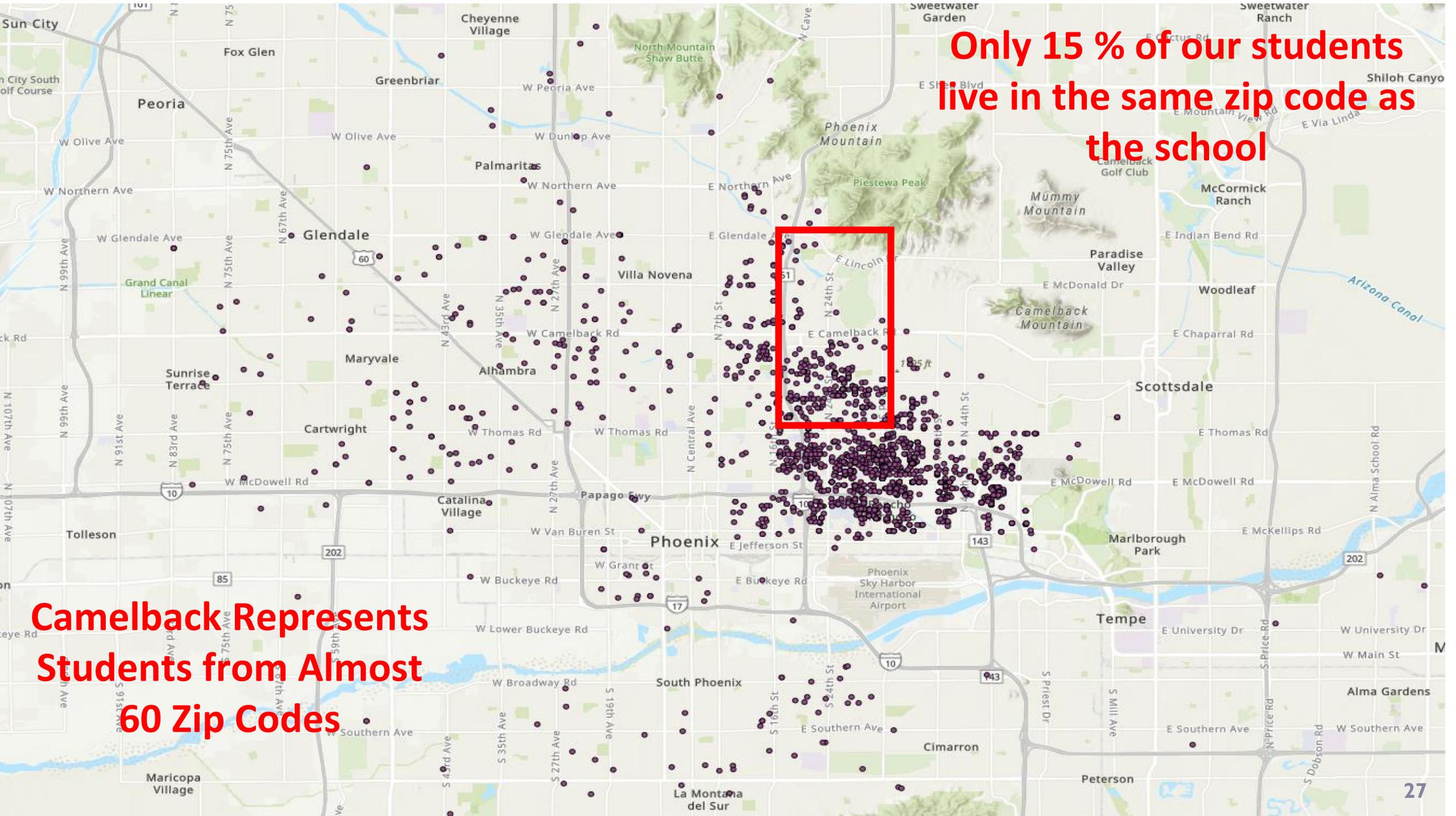
43 Feeder Schools

92% Title 1 Population

15% ELD Population

21% ESS Population

**Only 15 % of our students live in the same zip code as the school**



**Camelback Represents Students from Almost 60 Zip Codes**

## Camelback Freshman Chronic Absenteeism Rates

Chronic Level	23-24	22-23	21-22	20-21	19-20
Chronically Absent	25.40%	38.46%	45.61%	34.88%	44.83%
Nearly Chronic	16.35%	17.95%	14.04%	11.63%	15.52%
Ok	42.54%	33.33%	33.33%	44.19%	31.03%
Trending Chronic	15.71%	10.26%	7.02%	9.30%	8.62%

**Chronic Absenteeism reduced 20 PERCENT since we started our 9<sup>th</sup> grade success program!**

**What helps kids to attend school?  
As a teacher, what is your role in helping students show up?**



**What challenges keep students from getting to school?  
How have you addressed them?  
Who do you turn to for support?**



**How can others support teachers in addressing attendance and engagement? What has worked best for helping teachers create engaging and supportive classrooms?**





# Things We Do At Campus Park...

## Schoolwide

Greeting parents and students in the morning

Teachers communicate with our parents via Parent Square or Class Dojo

Teachers help clear absences

Professional Development

- Trauma Informed Practices
- Challenging Behaviors
- Social Emotional Learning
- Other topics as they come up

Full Time Counselor

Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)  
After School Programs - THRIVE and Assets

## In the Classroom

Building relationships with students and parents

Create a positive learning environment

Morning Check-ins

Social Emotional Learning Lessons (2nd step Program)

Counselor provides lessons in every classroom about different topics- Attendance is one we focus heavily

Exit ticket- How are you feeling before you go home?

Communication with parents

Communication with principal, attendance clerk, counselor, nurse about absences



### **Attendance Team**

Principal  
Parent Liaison  
Counselor  
Attendance Clerk  
Nurse

We meet with parents twice a month to address chronic absenteeism.

Our attendance clerk - keeps the team informed about our students and issues we need to address

### **Our approach-**

How can we help? Transportation, health, alarm clock, counseling and/or conversation

**We are a team!**

### **We work together!**

**Communication starts with Teachers, Parents, support staff.**

### **We provide support...**

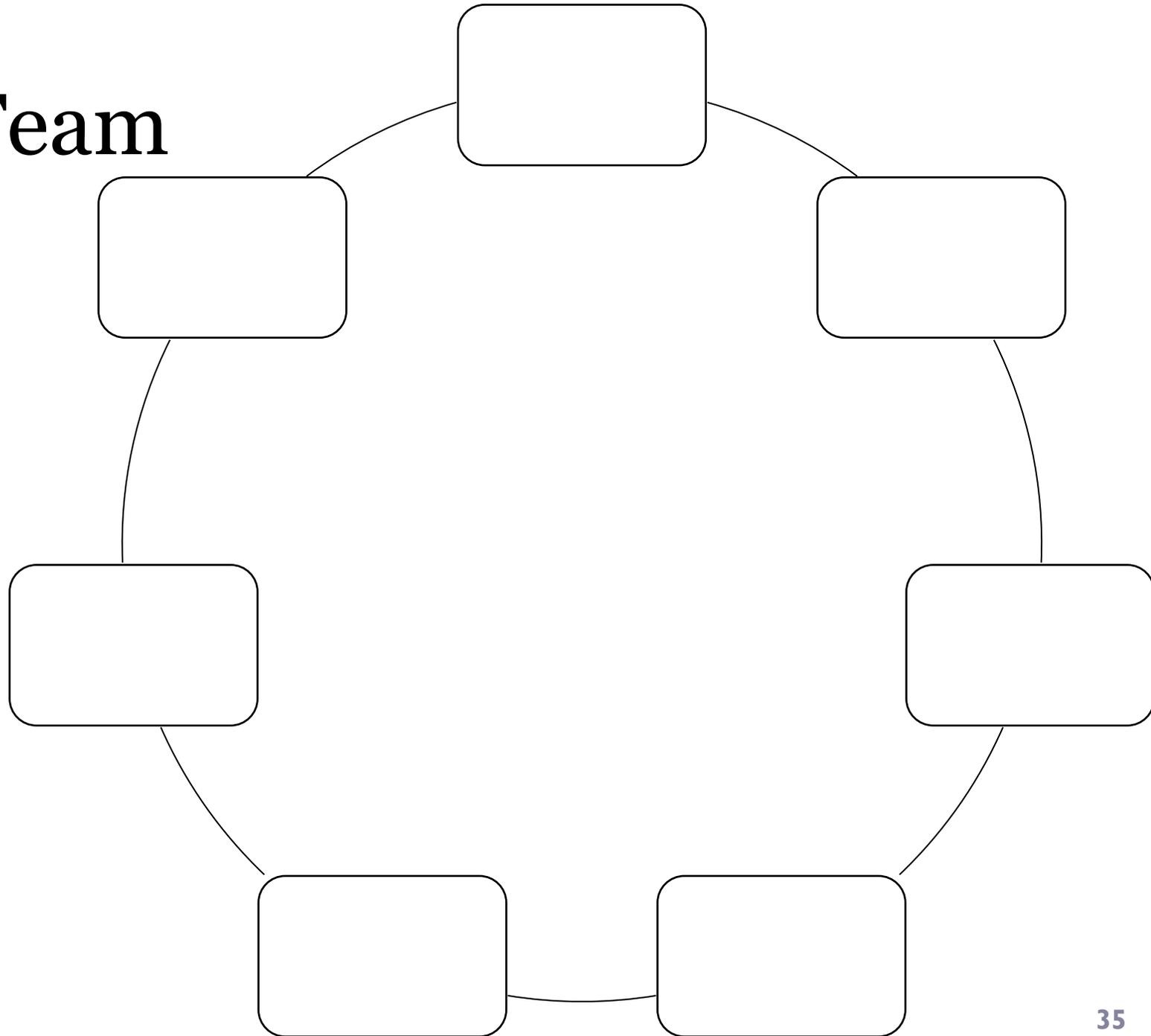
Professional Development - various topics  
Communication  
Information  
Counselor lessons  
BCBA  
Connect with outside agencies

# Beliefs in Actions

1. Common Prep
  - a. Master Schedule changes to prioritize this
2. Teams are aligned for wraparound support
  - a. Counselor, safety, social workers etc.
3. Planned collaboration around student data
  - a. Academic, social and anecdotal data
  - b. Inquiry based approach for the whole child
4. Common language for success
5. Relational approach student behavior (inquiry)

# FROSH Success Team

- Meet WEEKLY!
- Align Tier 1 systems
- Focus Tier 2 support  
(triangulate data)
- 120 students per team



Select ALL that apply to your needs: \*

- Food
- Clothing
- Help finding a place to live
- Dealing with family issues
- Struggling with mental health
- Dealing with personal issues
- Feeling isolated and alone
- Dealing with bullying on campus
- Dealing with dating issues

Please use the scale to rate your agreement with the following statements: \*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I have the social/family support at home to be successful in school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel connected to at least one student at school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel connected to an adult who cares about me at school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

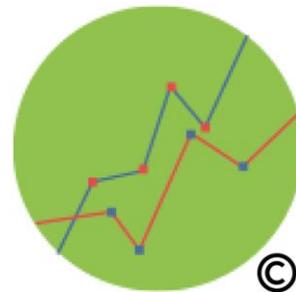
"Attached is data for students who responded "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" to feeling connected to an adult on campus. For students who appear to still feel disconnected, please take time to check-in and help to foster relationships"

I have the social/family support at home to be successful in school.	I feel connected to at least one student at school.	I feel connected to an adult who cares about me at school.
Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree

# Data Triangulation Informs Interventions

Perm ID	Course Title	2nd Pr	Teacher Name	Team	Advisor	Which of the followin	I have the soc	I feel connec	I feel connec	What will "su	What would I	Do you need
	English 1	F		FH-D		I am interested in joini	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	passing my cl	doing my wor	No
	Biology 1	F		FH-D		I am not interested in	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	straight A	doing my wor	No
	Biology 1	F		FH-D		I am not interested in	Agree	Agree	Agree	When i get m	Getting good	No
	Biology 1	F		FH-D		I am interested in cont	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	For me will be	paying attent	No
	Biology 1 M	F		FH-D		I am interested in cont	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	finishing all as	asking for hel	No
	Biology 1	F		FH-D		I am interested in cont	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	passing my cl	paying attent	No
	Biology 1 M	F		FH-D		I am interested in cont	Agree	Agree	Agree	To stay out o	Go to school	No
	Biology 1 M	F		FH-D		I am interested in joini	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	support	No
	Biology 1	F		FH-D		I am interested in cont	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	I want to mak	Asking other	No
	Biology 1	F		FH-D		I am interested in cont	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	have good gr	not getting of	No
	Biology 1	F		FH-D		I currently participate i	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Attendance/g	My attendanc	No
	Digital Photog	F		FH-D		I am interested in joini	Agree	Agree	Agree	to join foot ba	finish all my w	No
	Biology 1	F		FH-D		I currently participate i	Agree	Agree	Agree	making new f	by asking the	No
	Biology 1	F		FH-D		I am interested in cont	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Staying on to	not getting in	No
	Biology 1 M	F		FH-D		I am not interested in	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	For my succe	By studying	Yes
	Biology 1	F		FH-D		I currently participate i	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Haveing good	Doing all my v	No
	Freshmen Co	F		FH-D		I am interested in joini	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	passing	not get off tas	No

**How can we provide teachers with the data that they need to take data informed action?**



# ACTIONABLE ATTENDANCE DATA

*Attendance Matters, Teachers Matter*

- Use multiple attendance data reports (10-Day, 30-Day, period absence, time of day), not just ADA across the year
- Use qualitative data – **why** is the student missing school?
  - Surveys, Empathy Interviews, Family Outreach
- Set Tier 2 attendance KPIs, and empower teacher teams to respond
- If we address students needing Tier 2 interventions, we reduce the overwhelming number of students needing Tier 3 wrap-around support and keep high school students on-track to graduate

# ACTIONABLE ATTENDANCE DATA

*Attendance Matters, Teachers Matter*

**What can you do with average attendance? Going beyond average attendance reports to root cause, support, and belonging.**



Javon

**10-Day Attendance Report:**

0 absences

**Average Attendance:**

80% (trending up)



Mario

**30-Day Attendance Report:**

15 consecutive excused absences

**Average Attendance:**

78% (trending down)



Tonya

**90-Day Attendance Report:**

7 unexcused absences, all on Mondays

**Average Attendance:**

81% (steady)



Fernando

**Average Missed Days per Month:**

5 unexcused absences (30 missed classes), no full-day absences

**Average Attendance:**

75% (steady)

# ACTIONABLE ATTENDANCE DATA

*Attendance Matters, Teachers Matter*

The Center for High School Success (CHSS) partners with high schools and districts to improve graduation rates by raising 9th Grade On-Track Rates.

## ATTENDANCE IS HIGH WHEN SCHOOLS:

- ✓ Promote a sense of belonging connection
- ✓ Make learning engaging
- ✓ Meet the basic needs so all students have the opportunity to get to school
- ✓ Build awareness about how absences can easily add and lead to lost instruction time

## CHSS CAN HELP YOU INCREASE ATTENDANCE!

- ✓ Take a deeper look at root causes that contribute to chronic absenteeism
- ✓ Identify responsive intervention to address barriers to attendance
- ✓ Support development and implementation of school-level attendance plans
- ✓ Set attendance goals and track progress

**9TH GRADE MATTERS MOST!**

Students who finish 9th Grade On-Track are **3X** more likely to graduate than their off-track peers.

# What is the role of districts?





## **Family Engagement**

Engage district families via ongoing communication regarding the importance of school attendance

- School newsletters
- Attendance campaigns
- Sharing of resources via the district's school-home communication platform

Engage community partners inclusive of the local Health Clinics and the County Office of Education, county agencies that provide homeless and housing services, and the District Attorney's Office to help us address root causes

## **Strategic Use of Funds**

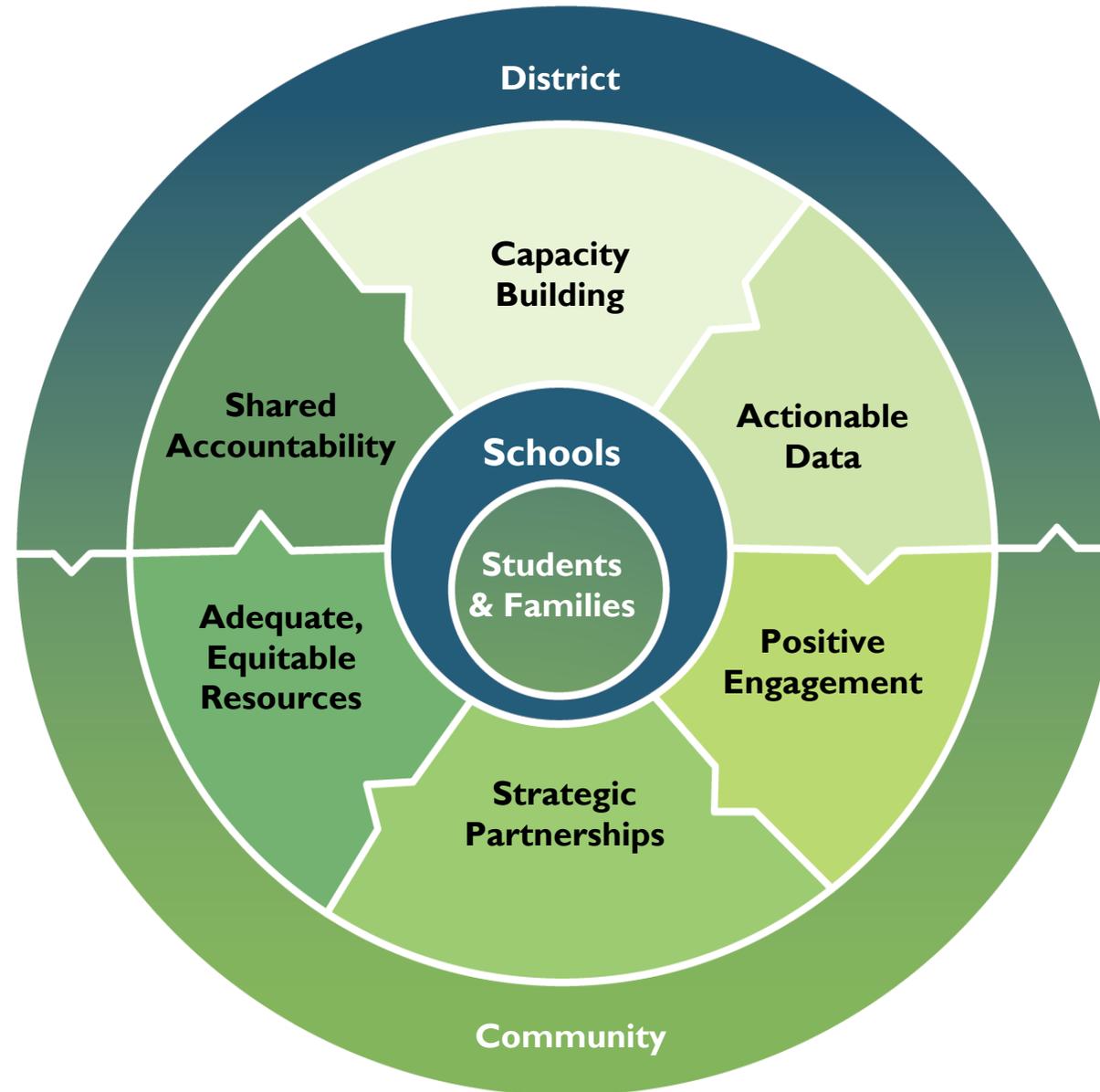
Prioritize resources through the Local Control Accountability Plan process

- Transportation to and from school
- School counselors at all district schools
- Health services staff at all district schools
- School attendance support staff
- Parent liaisons
- Funding to support school climate actions

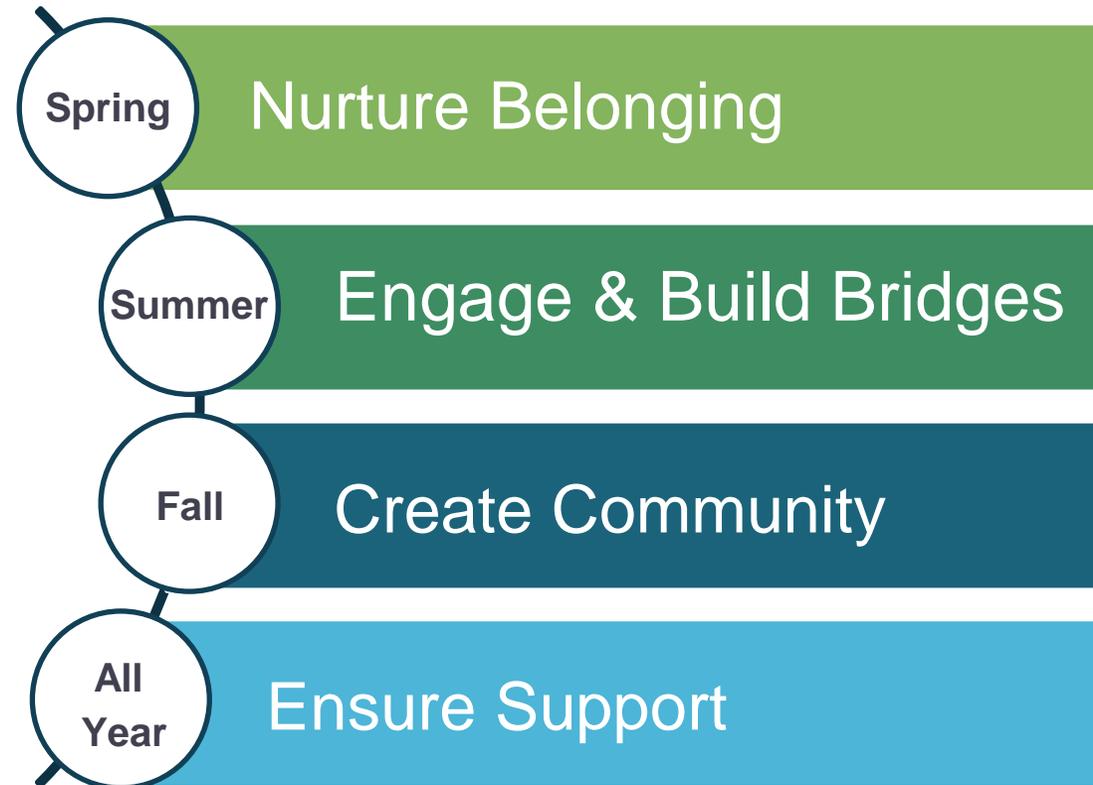
## **Coordination of Services**

- Support with coordination of Tier 2 and 3 interventions
  - Availability of attendance data
  - School Attendance Review Team
  - School Attendance Review Board

# How Can Districts Support Teachers Around Engagement & Attendance



# Taking A Year Long Approach



# What is the role of community partners?



# Q & A





## Key Resource: Attendance Awareness Website

- ✓ Download our free social media materials and share with local districts
- ✓ Proclaim September Attendance Awareness Month building off our sample proclamation
- ✓ Join our listserv: 44,000+ members

# PROMOTE THE CAMPAIGN

Attendance  
Awareness  
Campaign 2024

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connected & Learning Today!

[Learn More](#)

Sign up for updates:  
[www.awareness.attendanceworks.org](http://www.awareness.attendanceworks.org)

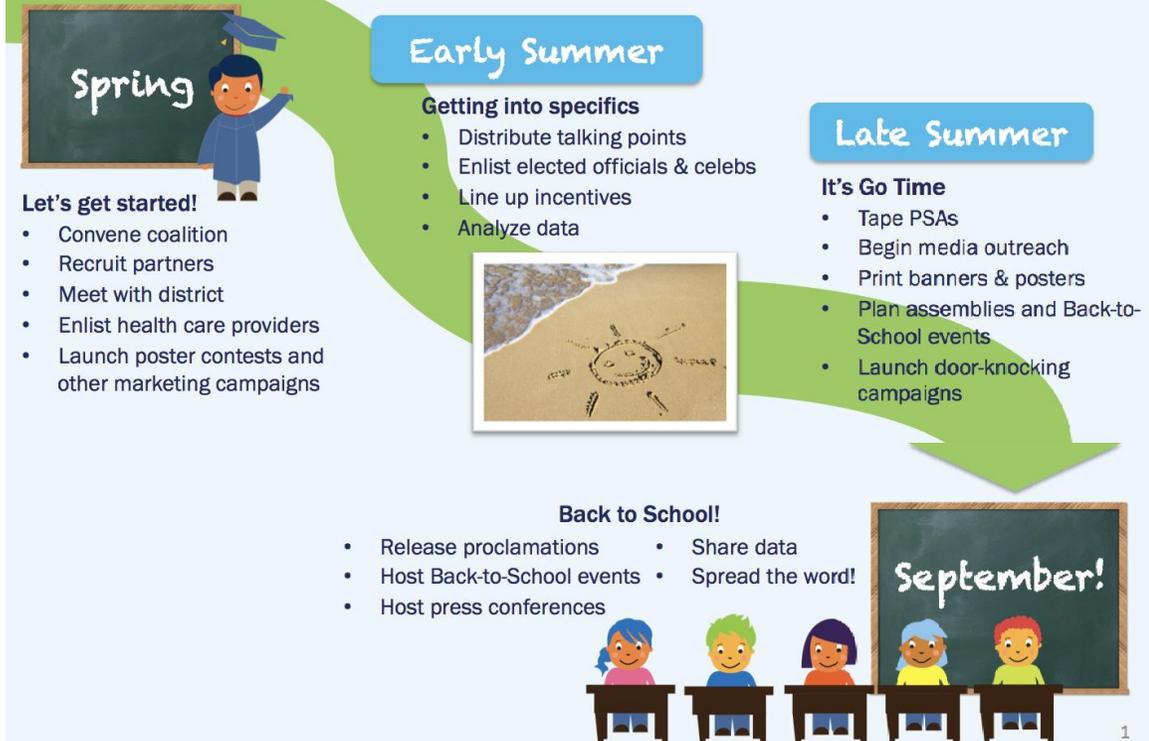


# 2024 Count Us In! Toolkit

An easy on-ramp for developing or expanding a local or statewide attendance awareness campaign.

- ★ Tips
- ★ Templates
- ★ Proven strategies

## What to Do When: At a Glance



<https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/>



## Opportunities to Promote AAC 2024!

Share the Attendance Awareness website:  
<http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/>

- ✓ Like us on Facebook 
- ✓ Tweet using #schooleveryday @attendanceworks 
- ✓ Follow us on LinkedIn 
- ✓ Add a badge to your signature line or materials





## AAC 2024 Proclamation!



Mayors and other elected leaders, school boards and superintendents can signal the importance of school attendance by declaring that **September is Attendance Awareness Month**, especially while we are still experiencing impacts from the Covid-19 pandemic.

**We will update the template Proclamation for 2024 in May!**

Find it here: <https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/proclamations-2023/>



## More Resources from Attendance Works



# Showing Up Matters for R.E.A.L.

A Toolkit for Communicating with Students and Families

- Step 1: Explain Why Attendance Matters**
- Step 2: Cultivate A Culture of Engagement and Attendance for Students and Families**
- Step 3: Use Data to Determine Need for Intervention and Additional Support**
- Step 4: Engage Community Partners**

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/showing-up-matters-for-real/>



## Parent Handout on Anxiety

**This new, 2-page handout provides answers to key questions:**

- ❖ What are the symptoms?
- ❖ When does anxiety become a problem?
- ❖ What can families do to support their child?
- ❖ How can schools and health providers help?
- ❖ Where can I find additional information?

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/take-action/community-and-agency-partners/health-care-providers/>



### Is your child missing school due to anxiety?

**Definition of anxiety:** Feeling of fear and uneasiness about everyday situations.

**If your child is suffering from anxiety, you are not alone.** The good news is that in most situations, anxiety is normal and temporary. Anxiety becomes a concern if it persists - it can impact relationships with family, peers and teachers, contribute to academic challenges, and lead to school avoidance/refusal. Addressing anxiety is important for a child's overall well-being, not just attendance.

In addition, if your child starts to complain of symptoms like a headache or stomach ache, it is important to **quickly determine** if this is related to anxiety or a physical illness which might require missing school. If the challenge is anxiety, then staying home may worsen the situation.



### What are the symptoms of anxiety?

**Persistent anxiety can present in many ways, making it difficult to recognize.**

Symptoms may vary depending on the age of the child, and some children may keep worries to themselves or have difficulty explaining their feelings making it hard to identify symptoms. Anxiety symptoms can include, but aren't limited to, the following:

- Feeling tired, irritable or easily tearful
- Having trouble separating from parents
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Trouble getting out of bed or dressed for school
- Lack of appetite
- Trouble concentrating which may lead to difficulty starting tasks, problems with homework and falling behind in school
- Physical symptoms, including stomachaches and headaches
- Avoiding activities they previously enjoyed
- Negative or continuous thoughts that something bad is going to happen



**Register today!**

## **2024 National Community Schools and Family Engagement Conference** May 29-31 | Atlanta, GA

Atlanta, May 29 - 31

**SUCCESS FOR UP LEVEL 2024**

NATIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOLS & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT CONFERENCE

**IEL** Institute for Educational Leadership  
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## Webinar Recording

We will post a recording of this webinar  
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## Feedback

Please let us know how we can improve:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AAC-April-2024>

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