Ensuring a Welcoming, Healthy and Restorative Start to School

Attendance Awareness Campaign 2022 – Webinar 3 of 4

August 3, 2022
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
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
Agenda

I. Welcome
   Pele Le, Events and Operations Programs Associate, IEL

II. Attendance Awareness Campaign and Key Concepts
   Kwesi Rollins, Vice President for Leadership & Engagement, IEL
   Hedy Chang, Executive Director, Attendance Works

III. Panel:
    ❖ Charles Amey, Principal, Edward Harris, Jr. Middle School,
      Elk Grove Unified School District, CA
    ❖ Lisa Levasseur, Director, Dept. of Family and Community Engagement,
      Elk Grove Unified School District, CA
    ❖ Elizabeth Cook, Senior Director, Whole Child Health, Alliance for a Healthier Generation
    ❖ Karen Pittman, Partner, Knowledge to Power Catalysts

IV. Closing Reflections
   Kwesi Rollins, Vice President for Leadership & Engagement, IEL
Theme for 2022!

Stay Connected, Keep Learning!
Convening Partners AAC 2022!

See the full list of national and state campaign partners here: https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/partners-2/
Welcome to Our Newest State Collaborating Partner!

The Delaware Afterschool Network (DEAN) works with its partners to create a long-term policy voice for afterschool programs and advocate for policies that support high-quality programs and the afterschool workforce.

Visit [www.deasn.org](http://www.deasn.org)
Attendance Awareness Campaign 2022 Webinar Series

Register here: [https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/webinars/](https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/webinars/)

**Webinar 1** *(recorded)*
Keep Kids Engaged and Showing Up for Learning: Relationships, Routines and Partnerships, Wednesday, April 6, 2022: 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30pm ET

**Webinar 2** *(recorded)*
What Promotes Engagement and Attendance? Insights from Students, Parents and Educators, Wednesday, May 25, 2022: 12pm -1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30pm ET

**Webinar 3** *(today!)*
Ensuring a Welcoming, Healthy and Restorative Start to School, Wednesday, August 3, 2022: 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30pm ET

**Webinar 4**
What Works to Sustain Engagement and Attendance *(working title)*, Wednesday, September 28, 2022: 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm- 4:30pm ET

Note: Each session is accompanied by a discussion guide that can be used for webinar parties.
2022 Theme: Stay Connected, Keep Learning!

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.

See: https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkit-2022/what-are-the-key-messages/
Thank You to Our Corporate Sponsors for this Webinar!

**Kaiser Permanente’s** 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.

**Safe and Civil Schools** empowers educators to create safe and supportive school environments that promote student learning and lifelong success.
Support Attendance Works

Our Foundation is YOU!

Donate $10 – or more – to celebrate 10 years of the Attendance Awareness Campaign!

DONATE

Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages
What do we know from national and local data?

✔ Pre-pandemic: 8 million students chronically absent (missing 10% or more of school for any reason)

✔ Now: chronic absence has more than doubled.

✔ Higher than ever, especially in early elementary and high school.

✔ More students experiencing extreme levels of absenteeism.

✔ The risk is greatest for students with more remote learning.
Chronic absence is a *leading* indicator and a *cause* of educational inequity.
Reducing chronic absence requires addressing challenges many worsened or created by the pandemic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Aversion</th>
<th>Disengagement</th>
<th>Misconceptions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Chronic and acute illness</td>
<td>• Struggling academically and/or behaviorally</td>
<td>• Lack of challenging, culturally responsive instruction</td>
<td>• Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Family responsibilities or home situation</td>
<td>• Unwelcoming school climate</td>
<td>• Bored</td>
<td>• Missing 2 days per month doesn’t affect learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trauma</td>
<td>• Social and peer challenges</td>
<td>• No meaningful relationships to adults in the school (especially given staff shortages)</td>
<td>• Lose track and underestimate TOTAL absences</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Poor transportation</td>
<td>• Anxiety</td>
<td>• Lack of enrichment opportunities</td>
<td>• Sporadic absences aren’t a problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Housing and food insecurity</td>
<td>• Inequitable access to needed services</td>
<td>• Lack of academic and behavioral support</td>
<td>• Attendance only matters in the older grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inequitable access to needed services</td>
<td>• System involvement</td>
<td>• Failure to earn credits</td>
<td>• Suspensions don’t count as absence</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of predictable schedules for learning</td>
<td>• Lack of access to tech</td>
<td>• Drawn to low-wage job vs. being in high school</td>
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<tr>
<td>• etc. and many more!</td>
<td>• Etc. and many more!</td>
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Take an all-hands-on-deck “team” approach to rebuilding positive conditions for learning in our schools
Offer a multi-tiered approach that begins with prevention

Students Missing 20% or More

Students Missing 10% - 19%

All Students and Families

All Students and Families

Tier 3
Intensive Intervention

Tier 2
Early Intervention

Tier 1
Universal Prevention

Foundational “Whole School” Supports

Working across silos is essential!

https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/
Reinvest in the foundational building blocks of school that promote engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundational “Whole School” Supports</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy learning environments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to tech equipment and connectivity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welcoming, safe school climate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enrichment activities and clubs</td>
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<td>Challenging and Engaging Curriculum</td>
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<td>Traditions and celebrations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisories or Morning Meetings to Build Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Supports</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active family and student engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support for families to facilitate learning at home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to Food and Other Basic Needs</td>
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It is an opportunity to...

✓ **Build Routines**  
*Daily attendance routines can reduce stress and create a sense of safety and security especially after chaotic transitions.*

✓ **Increase Engagement**  
*Being in school helps build relationships with peers and school staff that nurture engagement.*

✓ **Provide Access to resources**  
*Schools provide access to meals, health and mental health services, tutoring, mentoring, technology, extracurriculars (sports, clubs, music, etc.), afterschool and summer programs.*

✓ **Support Learning**  
*Showing up to school regularly helps students become proficient in reading and math and graduate from high school.*
Four Key Steps

1. Explain Why Attendance Matters

2. Cultivate a Culture of Engagement and Attendance With Students and Families  (*NEW resources for Back-to-School!*)

3. Use Data to Determine Need for Intervention and Additional Support

4. Engage Community Partners  (*updated materials!*)

Find it here:  [https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/showing-up-matters-for-real/](https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/showing-up-matters-for-real/)
Essential Lessons Learned from the Pandemic

1. We must shift from encouraging students to stay home as a strategy for keeping healthy to emphasizing that showing up to school matters for health, well-being and learning, and here is how to show up safely!

2. We must provide meaningful distance learning options during quarantine so students can show up safely and keep up with classwork.

3. We must collaborate across silos, agencies and staff.

4. We must partner with and listen to the voices of families and youth.
Panelists

Charles Amey
Principal, Edward Harris, Jr. Middle School, Elk Grove Unified School District, CA
About Charles

Lisa Levassuer
Director, Dept. of Family & Community Engagement, Elk Grove Unified School District, CA
About Lisa

Elizabeth Cook
Senior Director, Whole Child Health, Alliance for a Healthier Generation
About Elizabeth

Karen Pittman
Partner, Knowledge to Power Catalysts, AW Advisory Board
About Karen
1. What are key components of a warm, welcoming & restorative return to school, especially given current concerns about health & safety?
Key Components to Provide a Warm, Welcoming and Restorative Return

Be validated

Be Heard

Be Seen
Key Components to Provide a Warm, Welcoming and Restorative Return

- Love & respect for all populations
- Servant Mindset
- Knowledgeable about climate & protocols
- Outreach & partnerships
- Communication

Districts & schools must have
Safe & Healthy Return to School

Healthy People

Healthy & Supportive Systems
Healthy People

Connection  Nutrition  Movement  Health  Rest & Play
Healthy Systems

**Connection**
- Community building
- Family engagement
- Social-Emotional Learning

**Nutrition**
- Breakfast programs
- Snack & hydration
- School lunch participation
- Farm-to-school

**Movement**
- Physical activity in the classroom
- Student voice & choice for PE
- Alternative seating

**Health**
- Screening
- Referral pathways
- Access to supports in & outside of school

**Rest & Play**
- Downtime & breaks
- Engaging activities
- Meaningful co-curriculars
Non-Negotiables for Optimal Learning

Apply to All Types of Learning Settings

**Formal** – curriculum driven instruction, often graded or credentialled, sometimes required

**Flexible/Informal** – interest driven learning experiences, usually voluntary, with instructors, guides, coaches

**Free-choice** – independent, self-guided learning experiences in physical or virtual settings

Sources:

2. How do we engage & secure the support of all staff in adopting these strategies?
Engaging and Securing the Support of Staff and Families

- Relevant Professional Development
- Staff Meetings
- Hiring the right people

Relationships, Relationships, Relationships
3. How do you use data to inform action?
4. How should the work be tailored to address the needs of younger students or older students?
Foundations for Young Adult Success: A Developmental Framework

Developmental Experiences Can Happen in All Settings

Children are shaped by their interactions with the world, the adults around them, and how they make meaning of their experiences no matter where they are.

Youth Readiness is More Than a Diploma

The 2015 Chicago Consortium on School Research Report, Foundations for Young Adult Success, helps us understand how the skillsets and mindsets build and interconnect in children and adolescents and why flexible learning opportunities are important.
5. How can we adapt strategies to different populations? Rural vs. urban or suburban communities? Different ethnic groups?
Adapting Strategies for Successful Implementation

Contextual Fit
- How does this resonate with my school community?
- What are the benefits and who might this burden?
- How does this align with our efforts?

Capacity
- Do we have the people resources?
- Do we have the internal infrastructure?
- Do we have the buy-in?
Example: Mental Health Supports

- How do the parents and youth in my community feel about mental health supports?
- Who will be most able to access? Are these the individuals who are in greatest need?
- Who may be harmed by our process?
- How does this align with our other social-emotional efforts?
Example: Mental Health Supports

- Do we have the internal and external people necessary?
- Do we have infrastructure (transportation, internet, privacy)
- Is our staff prepared?
- Are our students prepared?
- Are our families prepared?
Q & A
**UPDATED! Data Tracking Tools**

**What?** Attendance Works District and School Attendance Tracking tools!

**Why?** These tools will help you analyze your local data, and can better capture information about students experiencing extreme chronic absenteeism (missing 50% or more of school).

**When?** Before the new school year begins is an excellent time to examine who was chronically absent last year.

Student Attendance Success Plans - Help parents/caregivers track their student’s attendance and work with teachers to set appropriate goals.

My Family's Help Bank - Encourage families to think about their back up plans for getting to school even when challenges come up.

*Both handouts tailored for PreK – 12!*

*Each comes with a 2022-23 school year calendar!*

*(Translated versions available by 8/10/2022)*

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: 34,000+ members

PROMOTE THE CAMPAIGN

Sign up for updates:
www.awareness.attendanceworks.org
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.

Download our template Proclamation for 2022!

Find it here: https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/proclamations-2022/
Opportunities to Promote AAC 2022!

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

✓ Like us on Facebook

✓ Tweet using #schooleveryday @attendanceworks

✓ Add a badge to your signature line or materials
Feedback

Please let us know how we can improve:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AAC-August-2022

Thank you!
Webinar Recording

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

http://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/webinars/
And special appreciation to our philanthropic partners!

Heising-Simons Foundation
And individual donors
Appendix
Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD)

**STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS & ENGLISH LEARNERS CALPADS (2020-21)**

- 48% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged
- 16% English Language Learners
- 13% Students w/ Disabilities
- 1% Foster Youth
- 1% Homeless

**TOTAL ENROLLED STUDENTS - 63,947 CREDITS (2020-21)**
- 32,549 Grades TK-6
- 31,398 Grades 7-12

**TOTAL EGUSD CONTRACTED EMPLOYEES - 6,538**
- 2,765 Classified
- 3,535 Certificated
- 238 Administrators

**67 TOTAL SCHOOLS**
- 42 Elementary Schools
- 18 Middle/High Schools
- 7 Alternative/Other Schools
**Vision**

Coordinate and accelerate equitable funding, policy, and practices to advance the health and learning connection so that every school succeeds, every educator excels, and every child thrives - that means better health and academic outcomes.

**Activities**

Facilitating inclusive, transparent conversations that began with the creation of guiding principles, mission, and vision creation and will culminate in the roadmap content.

Leveraging knowledge and expertise of NSHC members and other key stakeholders;

Collaborating on content, planning grants for 2022-2032 activation

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### 10 Priorities for 10 Years

1. **Create shared goals that recognize the importance and interdependence of all elements of a healthy school.**

2. **Institute adequate and equitable funding models at the Federal, state, and local levels to create and sustain healthy schools.**

3. **Bolster the quality of local health systems, health care services, and social service organizations’ capacity to provide consistent primary care.**

4. **Provide healthy spaces to learn, play, and work for every student and educator.**

5. **Optimize existing funding streams.**

6. **Strengthen the knowledge of the interdependence between education and health among various stakeholders.**

7. **Improve data regulation, collection, transparency, privacy, and interoperability.**

8. **Address workforce shortages by attracting, developing, championing, and retaining educators who reflect the population of students in communities where they work, live, and play.**

9. **Support the public, particularly families, in becoming partners in strengthening health and learning outcomes.**

10. **Enhance the ability of community-based organizations to identify, and mobilize people and communities around issues related to healthy schools.**
The Knowledge to Power (KP) Catalysts is a small, nimble team of action-focused thought leaders who share a big goal: to accelerate change towards equitable learning and development ecosystems. From one-on-one coaching to facilitating large-scale, cross-system collaboratives, we challenge organizations and initiatives across ecosystem to be bold, inclusive, science-informed, and equity focused in their work with and on behalf of young people. Our flagship project, Changing the Odds Remix, seeks to elevate new ways of thinking, seeing, and acting to build toward equitable learning and development ecosystems.

Partners: Katherine Plog Martinez | Karen Pittman | Merita Irby