What Works to Sustain Attendance and Engagement?

Attendance Awareness Campaign 2022 – Webinar 4 of 4
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
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:
   ❖ Kari Sullivan Custer, Education Consultant for Chronic Absence, Attendance and Truancy, Connecticut State Department of Education
   ❖ Francisco Baires, Education Specialist - Family Engagement, Capitol Region Education Council, CT
   ❖ Wendell Waukau, Superintendent, Menominee Indian School District, WI
   ❖ Charmayne Turner, Vice President of Operations, Youth Development, The Y In Central Maryland

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

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

❖ 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/
EveryDay Labs uses behavioral science and proven family-school communication strategies to increase attendance and family engagement. It accomplishes this by making information, resources, and learning opportunities more accessible by removing barriers that keep families and students from accessing supports.
Our Foundation is YOU!
Donate $10 – or more – to celebrate 10 years of the Attendance Awareness Campaign!

DONATE
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)

✔ SY 2021-22: chronic absence has at least 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.
What’s the Difference Between Chronic Absence vs. Truancy?

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

**Chronic Absence**
- Counts ALL absences (excused, unexcused & suspensions)
- Emphasizes impact of missed days
- Uses preventative, problem-solving, trauma-sensitive strategies
- Cultivates family & student engagement


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Reducing chronic absence requires addressing the challenges that keep students from getting to school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Aversion</th>
<th>Disengagement</th>
<th>Misconceptions</th>
</tr>
</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>
</tr>
<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>• Biased disciplinary and suspension practices</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>• Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations</td>
<td>• Failure to earn credits</td>
<td>• Suspensions don’t count as absence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• System involvement</td>
<td>• Parents had negative educational experiences</td>
<td>• Drawn to low-wage job vs. being in high school</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of predictable schedules for learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of access to tech</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Etc. and many more!</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Barriers: Chronic and acute illness, Family responsibilities or home situation, Trauma, Poor transportation, Housing and food insecurity, Inequitable access to needed services, System involvement, Lack of predictable schedules for learning, Lack of access to tech, Etc. and many more!
- Aversion: Struggling academically and/or behaviorally, Unwelcoming school climate, Social and peer challenges, Anxiety, Biased disciplinary and suspension practices, Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations, Parents 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, Drawn to low-wage job vs. 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, Sporadic absences aren’t a problem, Attendance only matters in the older grades, Suspensions don’t count as absence
 Tier 3
Intensive
Intervention

Students Missing 20% or More

Tier 2
Early Intervention

Students Missing 10% - 19%

Tier 1
Universal Prevention

All Students and Families

All Students and Families

Foundational Supports
Which Promote Positive Conditions for Learning

https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/
Positive Conditions for Learning Lead to Students Being Engaged and Attending Regularly

- Restorative check-ins
- Access to health care & mental health supports
- Trauma-informed practice
- Staff self-care

- Access to tech & internet
- Learning supports
- Project-based learning
- Credit recovery opportunities
- Internships/community service
- Alternative scheduling options

- Healthy learning environments
- Welcoming, safe school climate
- Access to food & other basic needs
- Restorative circles

- Active student & family engagement
- Advisories/meetings to build community
- Enrichment & clubs
- Positive peer connections
**Tier 1: Universal Attendance Supports**

- Clear, concise and consistent communication about schedules and expectations
- Routines, rituals and celebrations related to attendance and engagement
- Personalized communication to families when students are absent
- Recognition of good and improved attendance
- Impact of attendance on whole child widely understood
- Connection to a caring adult in the school
- Every child and their family encouraged to develop a success plan that includes attention to attendance
Tier 2: Early Interventions Layer in Support and Remove Barriers to Attendance

❖ Common community and school barriers identified and addressed
❖ Individualized student success plan that includes attention to attendance
❖ Attendance strategies added to IEP
❖ Family visit
❖ Mentors
❖ Intensive tutoring
❖ Check in, check out
❖ Expanded learning opportunities
❖ Small group interventions and supports for students
❖ Restorative alternatives to discipline and suspension
Tier 3: Intensive interventions

- Educational support champions / advocates
- Interagency case management
- Housing stability supports
- Student attendance review board
- Community-based, non-criminal truancy court
- Individualized learning and success plan leading to graduation
- Legal Intervention (as a last resort)
Pathway for Change

Mindset  Actionable Data  Capacity  Strategies
Build upon assets to take and strengthen a systemic approach

- Capacity Building
- Actionable Data
- Positive Engagement
- Strategic Partnerships
- Shared Accountability
- Adequate, Equitable Resources
- District
- Community
- Schools
- Students & Families
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 resources that help students keep up with classwork if they must isolate and access to resources to help address instruction missed the prior year.

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

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

Kari Sullivan Custer
Education Consultant for Chronic Absence, Attendance and Truancy, Connecticut State Dept. of Ed.
About Kari

Francisco Baires
Education Specialist - Family Engagement, Capitol Region Education Council, CT
About Francisco

Wendell Waukau
Superintendent Menominee Indian School District, WI
About Wendell

Charmayne Turner
Vice President of Operations, Youth Development, The Y In Central Maryland
About Charmayne

www.attendanceworks.org
1. Tell us about your community and work.
2. How have you used chronic absence data?
3. What are your outcomes to date?
Connecticut’s Educational Landscape

513,615 Students
• 51% Nonwhite
• 40.6% Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals
• 16.6% with Disabilities
• 8.8% English Learners

201 School Districts
• 1,505 Schools/Programs
• 52,135 Certified Staff
• ~66,000 Non-certified Staff

Source: EdSight
Setting the Stage to Identify Needs

- Maintained a standard definition of attendance (i.e., showing up to school for half of a day)
- Published state guidance on hybrid and remote learning which included the state's definition of attendance.
- Collected attendance data monthly versus at the end of the year with data reported separately for in-person and remote learning.
- Released monthly data reports comparing current and prior year attendance and chronic absence.
- Reviewed district data submissions on an ongoing basis and offered districts opportunities to submit corrected data.
- Created recurring virtual learning communities to support reviewing data and learning about best practices for implementing a multi-tiered approach to improving attendance.
- Established a state team to review the data, research best practices and coordinate the work across departments.
Growth in Number of Students Chronically Absent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>60,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>56,171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>55,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>50,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>51,439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-18</td>
<td>55,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>53,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>62,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020-21</td>
<td>94,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021-22</td>
<td>117,513</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
● **Urgent need** for capacity to reach out personally to the large number of students who were chronically absent in the past school year and who are disengaged from school due to Covid-19

● **Expand people power** beyond teachers who may not currently have bandwidth, at this time, to engage in outreach given other responsibilities on their plate.

● **Leverage assets of community-based organizations** who successfully connect to families

● **Need common approach** to conducting assessment of assets and challenges and analyzing collective results
1. **LEAP home visits are voluntary, scheduled opportunities** for a school district member or partner to go to the home of a student with prior chronic absence (or other location) to meet with a parent or guardian for the purpose of strengthening the school-family relationship in a positive and relational manner.

2. The conversation is **focused on families’ strengths and capabilities, as well as their aspirations for their child**. The visitors are there to learn from families, not to enforce attendance policies or sanctions.

3. Families receive multiple home visits that support building relationships over time.
LEAP Home Visit Series

**Home Visit 1**
- Begin building a positive relationship
- Learn about family and student
- Offer resources and supports if needed

**Follow-up Calls**
- Reconnect
- Check in on how student and family are doing
- Follow up with requests for information

**Home Visit 2**
- Build relationship
- Connect student to teacher and school
- Provide helpful attendance and school resources

**Home Visit 3, 4, 5...**
- Deepen relationship
- Check in on well-being, especially for students who continue to be chronically absent
- Ask Family if they want to continue visits
Selection of LEAP Districts

In order to ensure each RESC receives sufficient funding to support its priority districts, LEAP allocated $10.68M across 15 high-need districts using an algorithm designed by the Office of the Governor and CT State Department of Education.

The algorithm identified the 15 districts by ranking them along five key input variables:

1. percent of students eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch (FRL);
2. student enrollment;
3. attendance rate;
4. percent English learners (EL); and
5. number of weeks of in-person school.

![Monthly Data Collection Diagram]
Chronic Absence Trends by Grade Level
The LEAP program has not only enabled Bridgeport staff to strengthen relationships and provide resources to families; it has enabled us to identify barriers to engagement and implement change. In our summer outreach to Kindergarten families, we learned that many families did not have access to the information necessary for their children to start the school year. Access to technology and language barriers were cited as key reasons why information was not received. Multilingual Home visitors have been calling and visiting families to assist in the registration process and provide information about the first day of school, school supplies, uniforms, bus routes.

- Lynn Stephens, Bridgeport Public Schools
  - Coordinator of Family and Community Engagement
  - LEAP District Coordinator
Y in Central Maryland Community Schools
Attendance Strategy

Lead Agency - 23 Community Schools
15,000 Youth & Families of Color
Communities of Concentrated Poverty

Maryland State Department of Education
Baltimore City & County Schools
Family League of Baltimore
Baltimore City Mayor’s Office

Y Integrated Touchpoints/Continuum of Services
Early Childhood
Out of School Time
Youth Well-being

Community School Technical Assistance
23,000 Youth & Families of Color

A charitable, cause-driven organization working for community well-being.
The Y.™ For a better us.
Community School Supports to Increasing Attendance & Reducing Chronic Absence

Family & Community Engagement
Advanced Academics
Health & Social Supports
Community Development
Youth Development
College & Career Readiness

A charitable, cause-driven organization working for community well-being.
The Y.™ For a better us.
Community School Site Level Attendance Strategy

A charitable, cause-driven organization working for community well-being.

The Y.™ For a better us.
Capacity Building Outcomes Through An Equity Lens

- Building Relationships
- Understanding Dimensions of Diversity
- Eliminating Language Barriers
- Removing Bias and Judgement
- Healing Centered Engagement
  - Focus on Assets
  - Social & Emotional Trauma Responsive
Menominee Nation

- Wisconsin’s oldest continuous residents
- Only WI Tribe inhabiting ancestral lands
- Treaties reduced Tribal lands from 10 million acres to the current 235,523 acres
- Maintains the country’s largest sustainable forest
- 9,000 Tribal members, 4,000 residing on the reservation
- Tribal members have shown tremendous resilience
- Ranked 72 out of 72 WI counties in Public Health Outcomes
Menominee Indian School District (MISD)

- Established in 1976
- About 1000 students attending 4 schools
- 92% American Indian (AI)
- 88% Free & reduced
- 16% Chronic Absenteeism Rate (Pre-Pandemic)
MEDICINE WHEEL
# 90 Day Implementation Plan Worksheet

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION**
Improve School Attendance Across the Menominee Reservation

**ACCOMPLISHMENT TITLE (WHAT)**
Improving Early School Attendance Ages 6 Weeks to 14 Years

**INTENT (WHY)**
School attendance is critical to a child’s development and contribution to our greater Tribal Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION STEPS (HOW)</th>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Identification of/Outreach to Stakeholders</td>
<td>2. Attendance Work Group</td>
<td>2. On Going</td>
<td>2. Invites to meetings, sharing information (post-MOU) via team meetings/email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Identify the Gaps/Needs and the Resources</td>
<td>3. Attendance Work Group</td>
<td>3. August 24, 2022</td>
<td>3. A survey will be provided to families at the Back to School Night at the FACE Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Listening sessions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Team will review the data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Identify chronic absenteeism issues in schools (Percentages/Trends)</td>
<td>4. Attendance Work Group</td>
<td>4. Next Meeting</td>
<td>4. Schools will do a data dig into their systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Start off with event at Face Center (August 24th 5:30- 7:30 pm)</td>
<td>6. Attendance Work Group</td>
<td>6. Initial Requests for</td>
<td>6. Place 90 Day Plan in second Legislative meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Food</td>
<td></td>
<td>a. Casey Family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Separate Listening Groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**START DATE:** Jul 1, 2022

**END DATE:** September 30, 2022
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Date/Meeting Details</th>
<th>Location/Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c. Activities</td>
<td>Programs (We will request)</td>
<td>at second July Legislative Meeting</td>
<td>Team will reach out to Gary Pyawasay in July via phone call or email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Tent, Tables, and Chairs</td>
<td>b. Attn. Team</td>
<td>Send request to Transportation Agency in July (for Aug. 24th event)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Flier of Agencies that are available</td>
<td>c. Casey</td>
<td>for July 2022</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Gifts/prizes/childcare/activities</td>
<td>d. Casey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Transportation</td>
<td>e. Shawn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Advertising/Fliers/Tribal TV/School Websites/Blackboard connect messages</td>
<td>f. Casey</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g. Transportation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>h. Casey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Follow up mtg to discuss Back to School Kick-off (i.e. Parent Cafe discussions)</td>
<td>Attendance Work Group</td>
<td>Sept 21, 2022 1:30-3pm</td>
<td>FACE Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Report out @ CEW meeting on 90 day plan</td>
<td>Mary K &amp; Wendell W</td>
<td>September 13, 2022</td>
<td>Menominee Casino Resort</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Coordinator:** Mary Kramer, Wendell Waukau

**Collaborators/Partners:**
- MTFS
- MISD
- TRIBAL SCHOOL
- YOUTH SERVICES
- HEAD START

**Evaluation Measures:**
- State Skyward Attendance System
- Attendance Works Program

**Budget Considerations:**
- PR Costs
- Public Awareness Campaign
- Speakers
- Student Reward Program

**Next Meeting Date(s):**
- July 21, 2022
- Sept 21, 2022
Q & A
SY 22–23 is a critical moment for attendance and engagement. EveryDay Labs’ Back-to-School Toolkit can help with:

• Understanding the scope of the challenge and root causes

• Sustainable strategies for addressing chronic absence and disengagement

• Checklists for fostering attendance and engagement

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/
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!*

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.

Find it here: https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/data-tools/calculating-chronic-absence/
Key Resource: Attendance Awareness Website

✔ Download our free social media materials and share with local districts

✔ Join our listserv: 35,000+ members

✔ Download the 2022 Key Messages about attendance

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


Thank you!
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