Welcome!

S. Kwesi Rollins  
Senior 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](http://www.attendanceworks.org)
I. Welcome

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

III. Role of School Nurses
   ❖ Amy Norton, Director of Health Services, Yakima School District

IV. Learner Engagement and Attendance Program
   ❖ Latasha Easterling-Tunquest, M.Ed. Chief of Family Partnership & Student
     Engagement Manchester Public Schools-Welcome Center
   ❖ Kari Sullivan-Custer, State Education Consultant, Attendance, Engagement and
     LEAP Connecticut State Department of Education

V. Success Mentors
   ❖ Scott Hale, Principal, Johnstown Junior-Senior High School

IV. Closing Reflections & Resources
Convening Partners

AAC 2023!

See the full list of national and state campaign partners here: https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/partners-2/
Theme for 2023!

Showing Up Together!

2023 Attendance Awareness Campaign

www.attendanceworks.org
Webinar 1  Belonging & Engagement: The Keys to Showing Up, Thursday, March 30 2023: 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30pm ET (recorded)

Webinar 2  Relationships All Year Round: Nurturing Showing Up Wednesday, May 10, 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30pm ET (recorded)

Webinar 3  A Healthy Return to School: Ensuring Showing Up Wednesday, August 9, 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30pm ET (recorded)

Webinar 4  Bright Spots: Sustain Engagement and Attendance, Wednesday, September 27, 12pm-1:30pm PT / 3pm-4:30pm ET (today)
2023 Theme: Showing Up Together

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.
We Can’t Do It Without You!

Donate today and help propel the push for a full educational recovery for all kids and youth.
Our Nation Faces An Attendance Crisis

• **Pre-pandemic: 8 million (1 out of 6) students were chronically absent** (*missing 10% or more of school for any reason: excused, unexcused, suspension*)

• **Chronic absence is higher than ever.** By the end of School Year (SY) 2021-22, data from multiple states showed chronic absence often doubled and affected more than 1 out of 4 students. Early data from districts and states for 2022-23 data show rates remain high.

• **Economically disadvantaged students and families, as well as Native American, Black, Latino/Hispanic and Pacific Islander students are disproportionately affected.**

• **Chronic absenteeism is higher than ever, especially in early elementary and all throughout high school.**
Alarming Increases Seen in Kindergarten and High School

Chronic Absence in Ohio
SY 18-19 to SY 21-22

Chronic Absence in California
(SY 2018-19 vs SY 2021-22)
Reducing chronic absence requires shifting our mindset

**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 and benefits of being present
- Uses preventative, problem-solving, trauma-sensitive strategies
- Cultivates family & student engagement

### How “Unexcused” Label Can Affect Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response to “Excused”</th>
<th>Response to “Unexcused”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✔ Help with homework</td>
<td>❌ Denial of help or no credit for homework</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Make-up exams</td>
<td>❌ No make-up exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Home tutoring provided</td>
<td>❌ Denial of class credit</td>
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<td></td>
<td>❌ Removal from extracurricular activities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❌ Send notices of truancy</td>
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</table>

*If unexcused absences accumulate despite earlier outreach from schools and districts, courts can:*

- Fine students and parents
- Require a community service program or parenting program
- Charge parents with a misdemeanor
We must tailor our solutions to address underlying challenges

<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>
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<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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<td>• Poor transportation</td>
<td>• Anxiety</td>
<td>• Lack of enrichment opportunities</td>
<td>• Assume students must stay home for any symptom of illness</td>
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<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>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>• System involvement</td>
<td>• Caregivers had negative educational experiences</td>
<td>• Need to work conflicts with being in high school</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of predictable schedules for learning</td>
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<td>• Lack of access to tech</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Community violence</td>
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We must tap into the expertise of students and families

- Students have untapped expertise and knowledge that can bring renewed relevance and authenticity.
- Addressing the challenges students experience requires considering their specific realities.
- Understanding when many students and families experience similar challenges allows for scalable solutions.
- It ensures that the engagement strategies you create are inclusive of students and families' cultural norms.
Rather than taking a punitive approach, we must understand that the continued high levels of chronic absence reflect that positive conditions for learning are missing for too many students.
Prioritize outreach and engagement with groups that have the highest rates of chronic absence and largest number of chronically absent students so you can learn more about community assets and barriers to attendance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race / Ethnicity</th>
<th>Chronic Absenteeism Eligible Enrollment</th>
<th>Chronic Absenteeism Count</th>
<th>Chronic Absenteeism Rate</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>308,567</td>
<td>131,285</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>27,485</td>
<td>11,975</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>572,401</td>
<td>65,450</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
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<td>Filipino</td>
<td>138,028</td>
<td>21,416</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
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<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>3,347,968</td>
<td>1,185,092</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
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<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>25,495</td>
<td>10,915</td>
<td>42.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1,256,635</td>
<td>291,879</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
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<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>255,333</td>
<td>62,404</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Reported</td>
<td>63,487</td>
<td>19,318</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
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Report Totals

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Chronic Absenteeism Eligible Enrollment</th>
<th>Chronic Absenteeism Count</th>
<th>Chronic Absenteeism Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statewide</td>
<td>5,995,399</td>
<td>1,799,734</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
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Effective Practices Highlighted During This Webinar

Tier 3 Intensive Intervention

Tier 2 Early Intervention

Tier 1 Universal Prevention

Foundational Supports Which Promote Positive Conditions for Learning

School Nurse

LEAP Home Visits

Success Mentors

https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/
Taking A Year Long Approach

Recommended Steps:

1. Convene your team
2. Review data & identify priority groups
3. Craft engagement strategies and develop your plan
4. Reflect, learn & improve
Panelist

Amy Norton
Director of Health and Wellness Services
Yakima School District
Tell us about Yakima. How do school nurses in Yakima support attendance?
Who We Are

- 15,858 students served.
- 80% minority enrollment (hispanic)
- The YSD Migrant Program has 1,392 students
- 55.2% of all students are economically disadvantaged
- 12% of families have no insurance.
- HRSA has identified Yakima County as both an MUA and HPSA in medical, dental and mental health care.

Data collected from 2022-23 Assessment of District Health Services (OSPI)
School Nurses (typical roles)

- Administer Medication
- Manage and monitor chronic conditions
- Assess symptoms and Mental Health concerns on site
- Build Trust and Relationships
We are on the front lines
We collect and utilize data
We participate in building support teams/meetings
We are trained to recognize mental health issues and interventions
We are trained in Case Management
We are Public Health Experts…

AND we have the staffing numbers to do it
What research show the impact of school nursing on attendance?
Research Supports School Nurses

- In 1902, Lina Rogers was appointed the first school nurse. Her early success in reducing absenteeism led to the hiring of 12 more nurses. Within 1 year, medical exclusion (sending kids home for health reasons) decreased by 99%.

- School nurses associated with improved health status in children with chronic medical conditions, fewer missed school days, and strong academic outcomes (Best et al, 2018; Lineberry & Ickes, 2015; Maughan, 2003; Yoder, 2020).
What supports effective implementation?
What support is needed for effective implementation

LEADERSHIP

- Values-driven
- Influential
- Collaborative
- Purposeful
- Learnable

TRAINING

- Advising
- Development
- Ability
- Teaching
- Goal
- Learning
- Knowledge
- Instruction
- Mentor
- Coach
- Workshop
- Skill
- Guad

FUNDING

Strengthening Community Through Education
How does Washington provide sustainable funding for school nurses?

- Initial resources from ESSER helped jumpstart
- State funding increased for Student Support Services (RCW 28A.150.260)
  - Prototypical model now supports .7 FTE per 600 high school students
- School Nurse Corps, program offers additional nurse consultants to small and rural districts Educational Service Districts
Conclusion
Panelists

Kari Sullivan-Custer  
*State Education Consultant*  
*Attendance, Engagement and LEAP*  
*Connecticut State Department of Education*

Latasha Easterling-Turnquest  
*Chief of Family Partnership & Student Engagement*  
*Manchester Public Schools, Welcome Center*
LEAP: A Tier II Intervention

14 districts in Connecticut receive LEAP funding.

LEAP is a Connecticut State Department of Education research-based, relational home visit model proven to increase student attendance and family engagement.
Is LEAP a Multiple Home Visit Model?

LEAP
Learner Engagement & Attendance Program

Home Visit #1
Goals
Begin building a positive relationship
Learn about family and student
Offer resources and supports if needed.

Follow-up Calls
Goals
Reconnect
Check in on student + family
Follow up with requests for information

Home Visit #2
Goals
Build relationship
Connect student to teacher and school
Provide helpful attendance and school resources

Home Visit #3,4,5…
Goals
Deepen relationship
Check in on well-being of student
Ask family if they want to continue visits
Manchester Public Schools
6,019 students

SES'(LEAP Home Visitors) in every elementary school

We prioritize chronic absenteeism

Attendance Teams look at data through an Equity Lens
Calibrated Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Staff</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 7% Absent</td>
<td>No Risk</td>
<td>Office Para</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8% - 9% Absent</td>
<td>At Risk</td>
<td>Office Para / Student Engagement Specialist / Attendance Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% -15%</td>
<td>High Risk</td>
<td>Student Engagement Specialist / Attendance Staff / Social Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 15% Absent</td>
<td>Very High Risk</td>
<td>Administrator / Social Worker / District Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 25% Absent</td>
<td>Severe Risk</td>
<td>District Staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Monitoring

Office para checks the absent list by 10:00 every day to see if any students coded as monitoring are absent. If they are absent, regardless of whether the parent / guardian has called, the office para calls home to find out the reason. Office para also notifies Student Engagement Specialist who adds student to caseload immediately.

High level monitoring

Student Engagement specialist calls families on high level monitoring list (using the Learner Education Attendance Program (LEAP) list.

Student Engagement Specialist walks school **first thing in the morning** ensuring all students on the high level monitoring list are in school. At 10:00, Student Engagement Specialist calls the parents / guardians of those students who are not in school. If the phone is not answered, a home visit is conducted on the same day. After 2 absences, the administrator is notified and reaches out to the family.
Calibrated Process

- Attendance team convenes within 1-2 days of Chronic Absence Report
- Students **at risk and at high risk** are discussed with the team and Infinite Campus is reviewed (use calendar view) to assign to either monitoring or high monitoring
  - Monitoring - Students will be monitored by the office para / clerical support staff
    - Example: Student who has an extended illness but no other absences and will come off the list 20 days from now if they do not miss any other days
  - High level monitoring - All other students between 8% - 15% absent will be monitored by the Student Engagement Specialist / Attendance Staff
Tell us about the research showing the effectiveness of LEAP.
Tell us about the research showing the effectiveness of LEAP

The Center for Connecticut Education Research Collaboration (CCERC) conducted the largest most robust study ever completed of a home visit program.

The research shows that when implemented with fidelity, the LEAP model has a positive impact on students and families.
Data from CCERC Study

- Visits that were made **in-person had more impact** than virtual visits or phone calls
  - 1 month after the initial home visit = 4% point increase in attendance
  - 6 months after the initial home visit = 10% point increase PK to Gr. 5
  - 6 months after the initial home visit = 20% point increase for Gr. 6-12

- Results did not differ based on:
  - Title of personnel conducting the home visit (certified/non-certified)
  - Whether the home visitor was from the school/district or from a community-based organization
Unexpected Benefits of LEAP Home Visits

- Improved Family-School Relationships
- Increased Student Attendance
- Increased Student Engagement
- Increased Student Achievement
- Increased Feelings of Belonging
- Greater Gratitude and Appreciation

Full CCERC Report:
What supports effective implementation of LEAP?
What supports effective implementation of LEAP?

Cornerstones to LEAP Approach

- Trusting Relationships
- Flexible
- Collaborative
- Data Driven
- Culturally Responsive
- Voluntary for All

Operational Components

- Tier II Intervention
- Multiple Visits Focused on Relationships
- Data Informed
- Professional Development Hub
- Home Visitors from the School or Community
- Delivery System & Structures
What Supports Effective Implementation of LEAP??

Matt Geary - Superintendent of MPS
Leadership Buy in and 100% Support

Hiring and properly onboarding and training the right staff

Creative & Low cost/No cost Incentives
How has this work been taken to scale in Connecticut and what has made that possible?
How is LEAP Funded?

- The Governor’s Office + the Connecticut State Department of Education
- COVID relief money to fund LEAP
- 15 targeted school districts
  - $10.7 million = 2021-2022
  - $7 million = 2022-2024
  - $7 million = 2024-2026
What supports effective implementation of LEAP?

- **Connecticut Home Visit Hub**
  - To build capacity to conduct home visits, the CSDE created a professional development home visit hub housed at CREC, one of the state’s six RESCs. The Hub offers a variety of professional development opportunities including:

- **LEAP 101 Trainings** are designed to teach staff who are new to the LEAP home visiting approach. These virtual sessions focus on preparing home visitors for their initial contacts with families and the first visit through role plays and discussion. Trained coaches assist participants with role-playing and deepening their understanding of the home visit experience.

  - **Connection Sessions** offer home visitors virtual space and opportunities to share their experiences with home visits, learn from and be inspired by each other, and to flag areas where they need additional resources or training.
  - **Social Emotional Health and Wellness & Mental Health First Aid Trainings** are opportunities for home visitors to learn from experts in order to be well-versed in how to respond to a variety of related needs that a family may share.
  - **Talk Tuesdays**, offered by CSDE every other Tuesday, are informal, virtual discussion opportunities open to all Connecticut school district and community partner staff interested in conversations and learning about all things attendance and engagement-related in order to build broad capacity and best practices statewide. Talk Tuesdays are hosted by SERC, Connecticut’s State Education Resource Center; they are recorded and available online.
  - **District Coordinator Meetings** are monthly opportunities for district LEAP Coordinators to come together with CSDE LEAP leadership to share updates, learn from one another, identify any implementation challenges, ensure fidelity of implementation, and make any necessary course corrections.
  - The **LEAP Family Roundtable** is an opportunity for families to share insights about their experiences with LEAP in order for the program to continuously improve. This work is in partnership with the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC).

- The Home Visit Hub initially trained home visitors from the 15 districts who received funding. It has expanded and is currently also conducting statewide trainings for districts across Connecticut, as well as interested states around the country, and in Canada. The Hub has trained more than 1,700 home visitors in the LEAP approach.
New Resource

- **Systems and Structures that Support LEAP Implementation**
  - Dedicated District and School LEAP Coordinators – Each district and school ideally has a person responsible for coordinating implementation, informing the School Attendance Team, bridging relationships with classroom teachers, and engaging in ongoing problem solving.
  - Opportunities to Hear Family and Student Voices – Student and family voices are essential to understanding the realities facing students, including what helps motivate them to show up to school and what barriers impede attendance. LEAP training emphasizes collecting, documenting, and sharing insights gleaned from conversations with students and families.
  - Attendance Teams that Meet with Fidelity – As a Tier II intervention, the LEAP program should be embedded within a larger tiered approach to improving attendance that is coordinated and supported by a team. The team should also help to share responsibility for ensuring students receive needed support or resources identified through the home visit process. It is also important for attendance teams to work with LEAP coordinators to monitor implementation and measure impact of home visits.
  - Collaboration with Community Partners – Community partners are essential for ensuring home visitors have access to supports and services needed to support student engagement and address barriers to attendance. Home visitors need to know what types of resources are available in the community and how to ensure families can access them.
  - Timely and Accurate Data Collection/Monitoring – Each district should ideally already have a system in place to monitor data on attendance, chronic absence, achievement, and behavior, and provide real-time reports at the student and school level.
  - Consistent Use of a Home Visit Log – Home visitors maintain home visit logs to identify common barriers and needs of families. Data is submitted to the state to allow for analysis across the state and regions as well as within districts. Substantive attention is paid to coordination and reducing duplication with data collected by other surveys, as well as improving the log over time.

www.ct.gov/LEAP
Panelists

Scott Hale
Principal
Johnstown Junior-Senior High School
Tell us about Johnstown. What is the *Success Mentor* program, and how does it operate?
How do you know that success mentors helped improved attendance?
Chronic Absenteeism Trend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>SY 21-</th>
<th>SY 22-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JJSHS</td>
<td>35.33%</td>
<td>29.45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warren St.</td>
<td>26.91%</td>
<td>17.20%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

40%
Success Mentor Data
Improvement in Attendance

Warren Street (Gr. 3-6)
n=45 students

- 39 of 45 attended 5 or more days
- 14 of 45 attended 20 or more days

JJSWS (Gr. 7-12)
n=96 students

- 55 of 96 attended 5 or more days
- 13 of 96 attended 20 or more days
A Year of learning...

- Chronic absenteeism causes
- Changing our communication

STEP ONE (2019 - SUMMER 2020)

STEP TWO (2020 - 2021)

Development of Attendance Teams

- Focused on present and historical data
- Tier I Attendance Initiatives
- Pilot Program - Grade 6

STEP THREE (2021 - PRESENT)

Creation of Success Mentor Program K-12

"I really like having a mentor. We get to do things with them and have fun. I thought about staying home today and I decided I better come because I already missed a lot of days of school. I like it a lot." - 8th grade Mentee
What has supported effective implementation?
TIER 1
ATTENDANCE ACTIVITIES

MYSTERY ATTENDANCE DAYS
Grades K-6

ATTENDANCE AWARDS
Grades K-12

COMPETITIONS
Grades K-6

OPEN ENRICHMENT
Grades 7-12

5 OR FEWER
Grades K-12
### Student Success Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student's Name:</th>
<th>Warren Street School 2022 - 2023 Calendar</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentor's Name:</td>
<td></td>
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#### November 22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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#### December 22

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#### Medical Appointment - Excused

3-absences due to parents visiting from out of country

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In 2021-22 SY, this student had 21 absences, 8 early dismissals & 1 tardy. This year, the student has only been absent 5 days and graduated in January from the Success Mentor Program!
"CAN WE DO THIS EVERYDAY? I'D WAKE MY MOM UP EVERY MORNING EVEN IF SHE YELLED, IF I COULD HAVE BREAKFAST WITH YOU! "

TIER III

Individualized Plans
UNINTENTIONAL RESULTS

"IF IT WASN'T FOR MY SUCCESS MENTOR I WOULDN'T BE PASSING 7 CLASSES. I WENT FROM A 44 AVG. TO AN 81.48 IN MATH. SHE HELPED ME CHANGE MY ATTITUDE TOWARDS SCHOOL. I HAVE GOTTEN HELP FROM MANY OTHER TEACHERS NOW, TOO, TO HELP ME IN MY SUCCESS."

-8TH GRADE MENTEEO
How are you sustaining this work?
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

Join us for webinar #4, Sustaining Success: Investing in Showing Up! on September 27

Sign up for updates:
www.awareness.attendanceworks.org
2023 Count Us In! Toolkit

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

★ Tips
★ Templates
★ Proven strategies

https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/
Opportunities to Promote AAC 2023!

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

✔ Like us on Facebook

✔ Tweet using #schooleveryday  @attendanceworks

✔ Follow us on Instagram and LinkedIn!

✔ Add a badge to your signature line or materials
AAC 2023 Proclamation!

Mayors and other elected leaders, school boards and superintendents can signal the importance of school attendance and engagement by declaring that **September is Attendance Awareness Month**.

We've updated the template Proclamation for 2023!

Find it here: [https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/proclamations-2023/](https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/proclamations-2023/)
Check out our health guidance!

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**Health Guidance for Going to School**

**Showing up to school every day is critical for children’s well-being, engagement and learning.**

Make sure to send children to school if they are:
- Generally healthy and well.
- Participating in usual day-to-day activities.
- Children can even go to school if they:
  - Have a mild cold, which may include a runny nose and/or cough.
  - Have eye drainage without fever, eye pain or eyelid redness.
  - Have a mild stomachache.
  - Have a mild rash with no other symptoms.
  - Have head lice. Though they are annoying and should be treated, lice are not a reason to exclude a child from school.
  - Haven’t had a fever overnight and they have not taken fever-reducing medicine during that time.

Avoid keeping children at home unless they are too sick to participate. Please see the back of this handout for details. Note that in most situations, a health-care provider’s note is not needed to return.

Children may also avoid school due to anxiety (symptoms may include decreased appetite, feeling tired, stomachache, headache etc.). If you are worried that your child may be suffering from anxiety, talk with your teacher, the school nurse, social worker or other school staff to discuss the challenges and identify what can help your child stay in school.

If your child has a compromised immune system or is at high risk for complications from common illnesses, please talk to your school (school nurse if available) about developing a plan with you and your child’s health-care provider to keep your child healthy and safe while attending school.

Please note: This document is not meant to take the place of your local health department/school district guidelines including about contagious illnesses such as COVID-19 and the flu.

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**Reasons to keep me home from school and what needs to happen before I can return**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is my symptom?</th>
<th>When should I stay home and when to seek medical care?</th>
<th>When can I return to school?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fever</td>
<td>I have a fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher. Seek medical care if I have fever and any of the following: ear pain, sore throat, rash, stomachache, headache or tooth pain.</td>
<td>If I have not had a fever overnight without the use of fever-reducing medication and I am feeling better.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vomiting and/or diarrhea</td>
<td>If I have vomited 2 or more times in the last 24 hours, if my stool is watery and I may not make it to the toilet in time. Seek medical care if I have stomach cramping and fever; I have bloody or black stools, or I am showing signs of dehydration (tired and sleepy, dry mouth and not urinating at least once in the last 8 hours).</td>
<td>If I did not vomit overnight and I am able to drink liquids without throwing up. If my diarrhea has improved.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persistent cough or trouble breathing</td>
<td>Seek medical care if I have a persistent cough, difficulty breathing or trouble catching my breath or I develop a fever with the cough. These symptoms may be signs of COVID-19 or flu and should be evaluated by a health-care provider.</td>
<td>Once I am feeling better and I have been cleared for return by my health-care provider. If my symptoms were due to asthma, please make sure that I have permission to use breathing medication at school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rash</td>
<td>Seek medical care if the rash has blisters, is oozing, is painful, looks like bruises and/or I develop a fever. Rash has healed or I have been cleared for return by my health-care provider.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Eye irritation</td>
<td>Seek medical care if I have eye swelling, eye pain, trouble seeing or an eye injury.</td>
<td>Once I am feeling better.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sore throat</td>
<td>Seek medical care if I have drooling, trouble swallowing or a fever and/or rash.</td>
<td>Once I am feeling better. If I was prescribed an antibiotic by my health-care provider, then I can return 24 hours after the first dose. I am not without fever and I am feeling better.</td>
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https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/health-handouts-for-families/
Other Resource 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/
Qualitative Data Tools
Gather information about why students do or don’t attend school

- **Scan of Environment and Attendance Tool (SEAT):** Identify strengths and opportunities to promote positive school culture and strong attendance

- **Empathy Interviews:** Targeted, one-on-one conversations with a small group of students

- **2x10:** Relationship and trust building strategy; spend two minutes per day for 10 days talking with a student

- **Student Focus Groups:** Moderated small group discussions to explore experiences and perspectives

- **Attendance Café:** Engage parents in discussions about attendance

- **Student and Parent Surveys:** Ask about reasons behind their absences

  [https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/qualitative-data/](https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/qualitative-data/)
Please let us know how we can improve:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AAC-September-2023

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, Like You!