Supported:

Leveraging Attendance Data to Ensure Ongoing Success

Attendance Awareness Campaign 2021 — 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
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
   Joline Collins, Program Manager of Leadership Development, IEL

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

III. Panel:
   ❖ Maribel Childress, Superintendent, Gravette School District, Arkansas
   ❖ Todd Rogers, Professor of Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School
   ❖ Charlene Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education
     Connecticut State Department of Education

IV. Closing Reflections
   Kwesi Rollins, Vice President for Leadership & Engagement, IEL
Convening Partners
AAC 2021

See the full list of national and state campaign partners here: https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/partners-2/
Thank You to Our Corporate Sponsors for this Webinar!
Attendance Awareness Campaign 2021
Webinar Series
Register here: https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/webinars/

Webinar 1 (recorded)
Committed: Supporting Attendance and Participation to the Very Last Day of School, Wednesday, April 14, 2021: 11am-12:30pm PT / 2pm–3:30pm ET

Webinar 2 (recorded)
Engaged: Using Summer to Connect with Students and Families, Wednesday, May 26, 2021: 11am-12:30pm PT / 2pm–3:30pm ET

Webinar 3 (recorded)
Welcomed: Embracing Students, Families and Educators in the New School Year, Wednesday, August 4, 2021: 11am-12:30pm PT / 2pm–3:30pm ET

Webinar 4 (today)
Supported: Leveraging Attendance Data to Ensure Ongoing Success, Wednesday, September 29, 2021: 11am-12:30pm PT / 2pm–3:30pm ET

Note: Each session is accompanied by a discussion guide that can be used for webinar parties.
2021 Theme: Rebound with Attendance!

Key Messages

1. Chronic absence reflects and contributes to educational inequity.

2. Building strong, trusting relationships that promote a feeling of belonging is fundamental to improving student attendance and engagement.

3. Students are more likely to attend school if they feel safe, connected and supported.
2021 Theme: Rebound with Attendance!

Key Messages

4. A positive, problem-solving approach driven by data will improve attendance.

5. Keeping students, families and school staff physically and emotionally healthy supports attendance.

6. When the whole community collaborates with families and schools, we can overcome barriers to attendance and engagement.
### Solutions Require Understanding What Factors Contribute to Chronic Absence

<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>
</tr>
<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</td>
<td>Sporadic absences aren’t a problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor transportation</td>
<td>Biased disciplinary and suspension practices</td>
<td>Lack of enrichment opportunities</td>
<td>Attendance only matters in the older grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing and food insecurity</td>
<td>Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations</td>
<td>Lack of academic and behavioral support</td>
<td>Suspensions don’t count as absence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequitable access to needed services</td>
<td>Parents had negative educational experiences</td>
<td>Failure to earn credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etc. and many more!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chronic Absence is an Early Warning that Positive Conditions for Learning are Missing Whether Classes are In Person, Distance or Blended
Back to School Letters

- Keep Safe
- Keep Healthy
- Keep Connected
- Keep Learning

https://www.attendanceworks.org/update-your-communications-with-families-for-back-to-school/
Chronic absence is missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at risk. Chronic absence is defined as missing 10 percent or more of school for any reason.

Chronic absence is different from truancy (unexcused absences only) or average daily attendance (how many students show up to school each day).
What is the relationship between absences and equity?

Chronic absence is a *leading* indicator and a *cause* of educational inequity.
National Data Show that the Impact of Chronic Absence is Disproportionate

National Chronic Absence Rates by Demographic Sub-group - 2017-18

- LEP: 16%  
- 504: 16%  
- IDEA: 23%  
- White: 13%  
- Pacific Islander: 24%  
- Multi-Racial: 18%  
- Hispanic: 17%  
- Black: 23%  
- Asian: 7%  
- Native: 29%  
- Total: 16%

Source: Using Chronic Absence Data to Map Interrupted Schooling, Instructional Loss and Educational Inequity, Attendance Works and Everyone Graduates, February 2021
Present Danger:
Solving the Deepening Student Attendance Crisis

A new report from FutureEd takes a deep dive into 5 large school districts working with EveryDay Labs.

- Not only are more students missing school, they’re missing many more days. The extent of “extreme chronic absenteeism,” missing half the school year, is way up.
- Absenteeism rates are rising faster among younger students.
- Disadvantaged students see the biggest jumps in chronic absenteeism rates in every community.
- Enrollment declines are most severe in the early grades.
- Perfect attendance rates are also up, likely a mirage created by the changes in measuring attendance in the pandemic.

Expanding How to Measure the Opportunity to Learn

Working Contact/Enrollment + Connectivity & Access

Positive Relationships + Regular Participation In Distance Learning

Regular In Person Attendance = Increased Opportunities to Learn
Ensuring Attendance Requires A Team

The Attendance Strategy should be led by the school principal and the leadership team. Teams working on improving student attendance could include the school’s: Nurse, Counselor, Social Worker, Administrative support staff, Special education staff, Teachers, Early education staff, Community School Directors and Coordinators, Expanded Learning program staff, Family Resource Center Directors and Coordinators, Pupil Personnel Workers, Child Welfare and Attendance Officers, Child Welfare and Attendance Officers.

Members should be able to bring the perspectives of the student demographics. Teams should incorporate input from families and students along with the community.
Take a Tiered Approach to Engagement

https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/
Begin with a strong, “relationship centered” foundation

- Physically healthy learning environment
- Access to tech equipment and connectivity
- Welcoming, safe, trauma-informed school climate

Enrichment activities and clubs
- Access to Learning Supports
- Home rooms and/or Advisory

Positive relationships
- Routines, rituals and celebrations
- A published schedule of classes

Support for families to facilitate learning at home
- A culture of continuous improvement
- Active engagement of families in planning

Foundational Supports

Given the uncertainties of Covid-19, this relationship building foundation should be in place and sustainable across in-person and remote learning.

Recommended Steps:

1. Establish your team
2. Review data & identify priority groups
3. Craft engagement strategies
4. Reflect, learn & improve

Find the toolkit here:
Chronic absence in prior year or 1st Month of School = Need for Additional Support

- Chronic absence (missed 10% or more of school) in the prior year, assuming data is available.
- And/or starting in the beginning of the school year, student has:

  - In first 2 weeks: 2 absences
  - In first month (4 weeks): 2-3 absences
  - In first 2 months (8 weeks): 4 absences

Note: Quarantine creates chronic absence in the first month of school if students do not have access to learning opportunities.
Tier 2 Strategies Layer in Support, Strengthen Relationships, and Take a Problem-Solving Approach

- Assign caring mentors
- Student Attendance Success Plan
- Expanded learning opportunities
- Attendance goals and supports added to IEP
- Small group supports
- Personalized Early Outreach

Attendance Playbook: [https://www.future-ed.org/attendance-playbook/](https://www.future-ed.org/attendance-playbook/)
Implementation Guide: [https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/attendance-playbook/](https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/attendance-playbook/)
We Must Examine How to Scale, Adapt and Tailor Tier 2 Supports

Scale: (Potential Approaches)
✓ More people
✓ Add virtual options
✓ Group students

Adapt:
✓ Identify and address common barriers e.g. lack of access to health care, poor transportation, housing instability, etc. for groups of students with disproportionately high levels of chronic absence.

Support:
✓ Allocate more funding
✓ Add training
### Pay Attention to Transition Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Why pay attention to transition in these grades?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>What happens when children enter formal schooling helps lay the foundation for future success. Families often do not recognize how absences add up quickly for young children and are often very concerned about their children’s health and safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>The shift to middle school is an important transition often marking when parents rely upon students to show up to class on their own. Academic and behavioral success during this transition year is crucial for later school success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>Students on-track in the 9th grade are <em>almost four times</em> more likely to graduate than off-track students. Students may not recognize the impact of absences on passing courses and gaining needed skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th</td>
<td>Senior year is a critical time for ensuring students complete all the requirements for graduation and enrolling in post-secondary education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Panelists

Maribel Childress  
Superintendent  
Gravette School District  
Arkansas

Todd Rogers  
Professor of Public Policy  
Harvard Kennedy School

Charlene Russell-Tucker  
Commissioner of Education  
Connecticut State Department of Education
Gravette School District
Gravette, Arkansas
Gravette School District 2021–2022

- Located in the northwest corner of Arkansas
- 1,970 students enrolled in PK-12th grade, 1,957 in 2019, 1,914 in 2020
- 50% of students are identified low income
- 84% White
- 7% Hispanic/Latino
- 4% Two or more races
- 2% American Indian
- 4% English learners
- 14% Special education students

★ PK-10th grade's only learning option is face-to-face, onsite 5 full days/week

★ 11th-12th grade may choose face-to-face onsite instruction, 100% virtual school, or a hybrid model
  - 6 students are currently enrolled in virtual school

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Gravette School District
Ready for Learning Plan

HIGHLIGHTS

1. Stay home when sick *
2. Physical distancing when possible
3. Frequent handwashing
4. Use good respiratory etiquette
5. Extra attention to cleaning and disinfection
6. Increased ventilation
7. Water bottle filling stations available at each school
8. Individual desk screening for elementary students
9. Contact tracing in combination with quarantine and isolation
10. Mask wearing is optional - we will encourage, support and show kindness to the choices each family makes in regards to mask wearing
Physical distancing when possible, according to updated guidance
  - CDC recommends schools maintain 3 feet between students
  - CDC recommends schools maintain 6 feet between students and adults, and between adults who are not fully vaccinated

Seating will be arranged to allow for minimal close contact among students

Seating charts will be maintained and updated within each classroom

Ongoing cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted by the custodial staff

Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottle for use each day. Water bottles can be filled in the school’s water bottle filling station.

Handwashing and/or hand sanitizer is provided for each classroom

Individual desk screening will be provided for elementary students
Families and friends, we need your help to keep our students safe and healthy and attending school! We continue to have large numbers of students being quarantined because a classmate came to school for 3-4 days with symptoms before going to get tested or while awaiting test results. A little sniffling or a sort-of sore throat or a headache that seems harmless, could be COVID. In the past, when one of my children was "a little sick" I would send them to school if they didn’t have a fever. We can’t do that anymore and keep our student body healthy and engaged in onsite learning. The very best way to prevent the spread of COVID and eliminate quarantines is for those with any kind of symptoms to stay home until they know for certain they do not have COVID. Thank you so much for your help! It is greatly appreciated! We want our students in school, learning and growing and having fun with us every day!
I don't understand if things are not what they used to be like you announced on the school app. How is she unexcused without a doctor's note? And she should be at school if not running a fever. But should be kept home with a cough or sore throat!? I keep her home with cough or sore throat she will be unexcused if she has no fever. I'm basically being told two different things by two different school staff members.

So what I'm saying is none of this makes any sense. You're saying one thing the nurse is saying basically the opposite. And how is keeping our kids home without fever excused during this entire mess!? 

How do you balance encouraging attendance while encouraging families to keep children home when they are sick?
Strategies for Supporting the Needs of Quarantined Students

- Director of Academic Success to support building administrators, teachers, students and families
- One to one technology
- Provide internet hotspots if needed
- Synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities
- Instructional videos and assignments posted to Google Classroom
- After school tutoring by teacher and by content
- Quarantine Catch Up
- Seat time recovery
2020-2021 Chronic Absence Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>Absence Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PK-2nd grade</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd-5th grade</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th-8th grade</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th-12th grade</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who is most at-risk?

★ Kindergarten students
★ 9th grade students/high school freshmen
★ Students whose parents work the night shift
Strategies for Supporting At-Risk Students

- Director of Academic Success to support building administrators, teachers, students and families
- Relationship building
- Home visits
- Strategic communication with families and youth
  - Attendance Education Campaign for kindergarten parents
  - Attendance Education Campaign for 9th grade parents
- Purposefully leaning in to targeted at-risk students on day one
- Collaboration with community partners
  - Heroes Mentors
  - Student Success Center
  - Bright Futures
- Engagement activities
  - Creating projects to enter in the county fair
- Summer school
- Credit recovery opportunities
Todd Rogers,
Professor of Public Policy

HARVARD Kennedy School
• Be clear on *purpose*
• People are busy
• People skim
• People prefer accessible writing

• **Well written** different than **effectively written**
“Well Written” Messages…

“Lengthy emails [are] disrespectful of the reader…”
Writing for Busy Families

1. More is less
2. Write so skimmers can navigate
3. Write accessibly
4. Make response easy
Closing the Attendance Gap in 2021: Insights from Leaders Doing the Work

Thursday, January 14 | 3:00-4:00 pm ET | Virtual

Corticom, an online learning platform, has always been a complex issue since barriers to attendance are often the result of systemic inequity. As the urgency to improve attendance heightens, it’s critical to look beyond the headlines and at the data.

With COVID-19 exacerbating the equity gap, stakeholders across learning communities need to work collectively to remove barriers to attendance for students and families. Join a panel of district leaders to discuss this important topic, including:

- How are you using data to inform your strategy?
- Priorities they have found effective for addressing absences and learning loss
- How are you supporting and engaging families

Panelists:

- Dr. Carletha Shaw-Rolle, Chief Operating Officer, Broward County Public Schools (FL)
- Shannon Trejo, Chief Academic Officer, Dallas Independent School District (TX)
- Doris Little, Deputy Chief of Academics (Programs), Dallas Independent School District (TX)

Moderated by:

- Dr. Todd Rogers, Professor, Harvard University, Chief Scientist, EveryDay Labs

Register Now!

Original: 190 words

Shortened: 75 words

Original > Short 93% online

Closing the Attendance Gap in 2021: Insights from Leaders Doing the Work

+204% sign up rate

Dr. Carletha Shaw-Rolle, Chief Operating Officer, Broward County Public Schools (FL)
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Register Now!
We’ve finished our newsletter draft. We think it’s good.

What experiment do you propose?

Done.

Sent half our list of 50k the Original and half the Shortened one…

Whoa!! Shortened had **2x as many clicks** compared to Original.

Great! How about you cut the words by 50%? It’ll be hard, but maybe try?

Result??
6 seconds to figure out:

As a parent receiving this message at the end of a full day with kids asking about dinner…

what’s the most important info for you?
Dear XYZ District Families and Staff,

Today the district was informed that an individual with COVID-19 was at ABC School while potentially infectious. By law, we must maintain this person’s confidentiality, which prevents us from further identifying the individual and his/her reason for being in the school. We are working collaboratively with the JKL County Department of Health to identify any students and staff who may have been in contact with this person.

Individuals who were in close contact must be quarantined for 14 days from the last exposure date and should monitor for symptoms.

We will take the following actions:

● ABC School will initially remain closed for 48 hours.
● ABC School is the only building closing on xx/yy/zz and xx/yy/zz.
● ABC will deliver instruction virtually this week on xx/yy/zz and xx/yy/zz.
● The school building will be disinfected following DOH and CDC guidelines.
● The school will begin contact tracing that will be communicated to the department of health.

The JKL County Department of Health has a contact tracing system in place for JKL County when there is a confirmed case of COVID-19. The intent is to identify those who have been in close contact with a positive person. **Close contact means being within six feet of a person with COVID-19 for more than 10 minutes.**

If your child is identified as a close contact of the person who tested positive, you will receive a call from a contact tracer. For such calls, your caller ID may read NYS Contact Tracing or display a phone number with a (518) area code. Please answer these calls promptly and provide the Contact Tracers with the information they need to protect us all.

Furthermore, the district will also send emails to families notifying them if their children have been identified as having contact with an individual that is positive. If you do not receive an email in the next 48 hours, your child is NOT believed to have any risk of exposure.

As a reminder, if you believe at any point you and/or your child may have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you and/or your child should self-quarantine and be tested.


Visit the ZX State Find a Test Site Near You page at [https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you) to find a list of testing sites. If you go to a testing site run by New York State, the test is free. For more information on COVID-19, please call (888) 364-3065 or visit the Westchester Department of Health homepage.

Please be assured that we will be transparent about any COVID-19 cases in our district, and we will keep you informed if more information needs to be communicated. Please contact your child’s school administrators or 555-555-5555 ext. 1234 if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Dr. Superintendent
As a parent receiving this message at the end of a full day with kids asking about dinner…

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If you suspect your child is becoming ill, your child should stay home. Symptoms of COVID-19 are listed on the CDC website: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html. You should consult with your physician for medical advice.

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Sincerely,

Dr. Superintendent
Dear XYZ District Families and Staff,

**ABC School will be closed for at least the next 48 hours.**

Today the district was informed that an individual with COVID-19 was at ABC School while potentially infectious.

**How will you know if your child is a close contact?**

If your child is identified as a close contact of the person who tested positive, you will receive a call from a contact tracer. For such calls, your caller ID may read NYS Contact Tracing or display a phone number with a (518) area code. Please answer these calls promptly and provide the Contact Tracers with the information they need to protect us all.

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As a reminder, if you believe at any point you and/or your child may have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you and/or your child should self-quarantine and be tested.

See below signature for details on close contacts.

**What to do if you or your child is sick?**

If you suspect your child is becoming ill, your child should stay home. Symptoms of COVID-19 are listed on the CDC website: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html. You should consult with your physician for medical advice.

Visit the ZX State Find a Test Site Near You page at https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you to find a list of testing sites. If you go to a testing site run by New York State, the test is free. For more information on COVID-19, please call (888) 364-3065 or visit the Westchester Department of Health homepage.

**What is ABC School doing?**

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Please know that we will be transparent about any COVID-19 cases in our district, and we will keep you informed. Please contact your child’s school administrators or 555-555-5555 ext. 1234 if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Dr. Superintendent

**More on close contact definition**

Close contacts must be quarantined for 14 days from the last exposure date and should monitor for symptoms. By law, we must maintain this person’s confidentiality, which prevents us from further identifying the individual and his/her reason for being in the school. We are working collaboratively with the JKL County Department of Health to identify any students and staff who may have been in contact with this person.

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How Randomized Experiments Work

Random Assignment

Intervention A

Nothing (control)
How Randomized Experiments Work

Random Assignment

Intervention A

Nothing (control)
How Randomized Experiments Work

Random Assignment

Intervention C

Intervention D
How Randomized Experiments Work

Random Assignment

Intervention C

Intervention D
Hi from XYZ Unified Casey has missed 14 days this school year.

[CUSTOM MODULE]…just text SUPPORT!

55% More Effective
Hi from XYZ Unified Casey has missed 14 days this school year.

Hi from XYZ Unified! Casey missed 2 days last week.

Cumulative Absences

Last Week Absences

Cumulative absences ~2x as effective
Hi - Casey has missed more than 14 days this school year.

[CUSTOM MODULE] …just text SUPPORT! – XYZ Unified

Hi - Casey has missed 15 days this school year.

[CUSTOM MODULE] …just text SUPPORT! – XYZ Unified

Surveys: families think data less reliable!

Exact days 22% improvement
Free Webinar!

The Science of Communicating with Busy Families & Educators

Friday, October 22, 2021 @ 10am PT / 1pm ET

With schools and districts sending more than the usual number of communications, making sure messages are read and understood is paramount. Attendance Works and the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) are delighted to invite Todd Rogers of Harvard University to share the science of writing so busy families and educators read, understand and take action based on our messages.

In this webinar, Rogers will illustrate that most of us don’t carefully read practical communications (emails, texts, forms and mail). We skim. This has surprising implications for how we should write. Rogers will share an actionable checklist for individuals and teams, and six easy-to-apply principles for writing that is more effective, inclusive and kind.

Note: Because this is a highly interactive session, it will not be recorded or posted afterwards.

Register here: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wrNy6FIKTSG_JJsZhap8TA
Supported: Leveraging Attendance Data to Ensure Ongoing Success

Commissioner Charlene M. Russell-Tucker
September 29, 2021
Connecticut’s Educational Landscape

513,079 Students
- 50% Nonwhite
- 42.7% Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals
- 16.2% with Disabilities
- 8.2% English Learners

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

Chronic Absenteeism Rates
- 2012-13: 11.5%
- 2013-14: 10.8%
- 2014-15: 10.6%
- 2015-16: 9.6%
- 2016-17: 9.9%
- 2017-18: 10.7%
- 2018-19: 10.4%
- 2019-20: 12.2%*

*Chronic absenteeism calculations are based only on in-person school days until mid-March 2020

Source: EdSight
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

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**Leveraging Data to Inform Policy:**

**CSDE’s Initial Attendance Response to COVID-19**

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*Source: EdSight*
Connecticut is uniquely positioned to analyze how patterns of chronic absence differ across learning modes, grades and student groups.

Report discusses key findings from analysis of Connecticut’s attendance data

Encourages other states to adopt policies and implement data collection efforts similar to Connecticut’s.

“Connecticut is uniquely positioned to analyze how patterns of chronic absence differ across learning modes, grades and student groups.”
Patterns of chronic absence by learning mode and grade were not the same across racial and ethnic groups.
Thanks to CSDE’s data systems and longstanding work on attendance and engagement, the Agency was able to collaborate with the Office of the Governor and Regional Educational Service Centers to launch LEAP.

- **Targeted support** to 15 districts based on multiple data points that the CSDE had collected.
- Conducts home visits to meet students and families where they are and find out what they need to reengage with their school community.
- Provide students and families with resources from backpacks to technology to referrals to health services.
- As of September 13, *more than 2,400 visits* have been conducted.

See the press release.
Targeted Back-to-School and Attendance Campaigns

- Campaigns **aimed at families**
- Continued use of data to geographically target promotions
- **Multilingual**
- Social media, radio, and TV
- **BackToSchoolCT.org** features resources for families on the safe return to in-person learning
Strategic Use of Federal Funding

Selected State-level Initiatives
• Targeted supports for high-needs student groups to boost attendance and engagement
• Providing social-emotional learning tools and supports for districts
• Grassroots marketing campaign aimed at families
• Continued guidance and support for districts and families
• Collaborating with Attendance Works to support LEAP development and monthly Attendance & Engagement Community of Practice for districts

Selected District-level Initiatives
• Procuring a secure platform for two-way school-to-home communication
• Hiring a family liaison specifically for ethnically diverse and/or multilingual families
• Developing Parent/Caregiver Academies to provide opportunities and strategies to support students’ education
Providing Ongoing Support for Districts and Families

- Continued public reporting of attendance data
- Collaboration with other state agencies and within CSDE to support the whole student
- Student Attendance & Engagement Advisory Team
- Talk Tuesdays
- Communicating and addressing health and safety concerns
- Commissioners’ Roundtable for Family and Community Engagement in Education
Tracking Daily Attendance on Remote Days in 2021-22

State Board of Education Policy (2008):
“"A student is considered to be ‘in attendance’ if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip), for at least half of the regular school day.”

A remote student can be considered as being ‘in attendance’ on a particular day if the total time spent on one or more of the following activities equals at least half the school day.

- Synchronous virtual classes
- Synchronous virtual meetings
- Time logged in electronic systems
- Assignment submission/completion

= At least half the school day
LESSONS LEARNED

- Cultivate strong, cross-sector partnerships
- Develop trusting relationships with stakeholders
- Focus on students, schools, families, and communities
- Deploy data-informed policies
- Build capacity at the state and local levels
- Identify and leverage bright spots
- Build awareness
- Foster accountability
- Use data to promote action

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Thank you!
Cross Cutting Panel Discussion

Maribel Childress
Superintendent
Gravette School District
Arkansas

Charlene Russell-Tucker
Commissioner of Education
Connecticut State Department of Education

S. Kwesi Rollins
Vice President for Leadership & Engagement
Institute for Educational Leadership
Key Resource: Attendance Awareness Website

✓ Count Us In! toolkit for 2021

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

✓ Proclaim September Attendance Awareness Month building off our sample proclamation

✓ Join our listserv: 32,000+ members

PROMOTE THE CAMPAIGN

Count Us In! toolkit for 2021

Download our free social media materials and share with local districts

Proclaim September Attendance Awareness Month building off our sample proclamation

Join our listserv: 32,000+ members

Sign up for updates:

www.awareness.attendanceworks.org
Opportunities to Promote AAC 2021!

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
And special appreciation to our philanthropic partners!

GRoW @ Annenberg

The Heising-Simons Foundation
Webinar Recording

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

http://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/webinars/
Please let us know how we can improve:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AAC-webinar4-Supported

Thank you!