

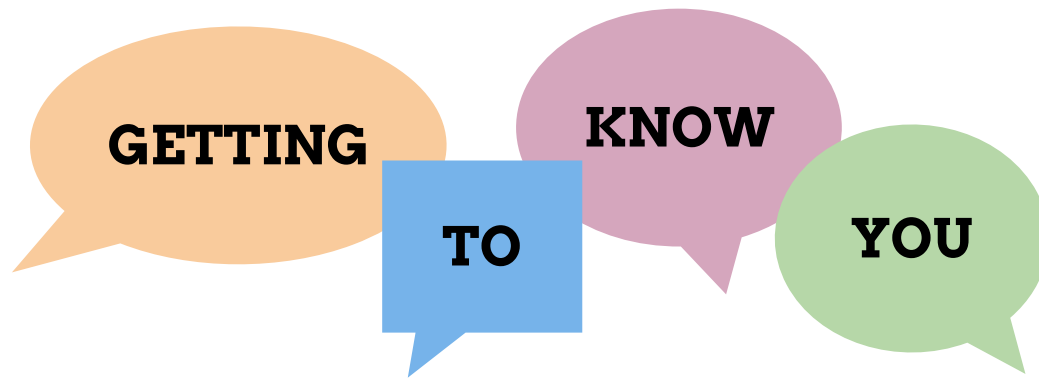
Catalyzing Change in Challenging Times

October 7, 2025



Children
are full
of potential!

TOGETHER
we can help them reach it.



Share in chat:

- ✓ Your name
- ✓ Where are you calling from?
- ✓ Is there something you are particularly interested in learning about today?

Agenda

- I. Why reducing chronic absence is more essential than ever
- I. How Attendance Works is having a huge impact.
 - Hedy Chang, Executive Director, Attendance Works
 - Jennifer Elenes, Santa Clara, California
 - Elizabeth Cook, 50% Challenge Director, Attendance Works
- I. Questions, Reactions, How You Can Support This Work.

Please share in chat:

What do you think are the biggest costs of chronic absence?

2 futures...

Struggling to read in 3rd grade.

Behind in skills and suspended in middle school.

More likely to dropout of high school.

Lack soft and hard skills to succeed on the job



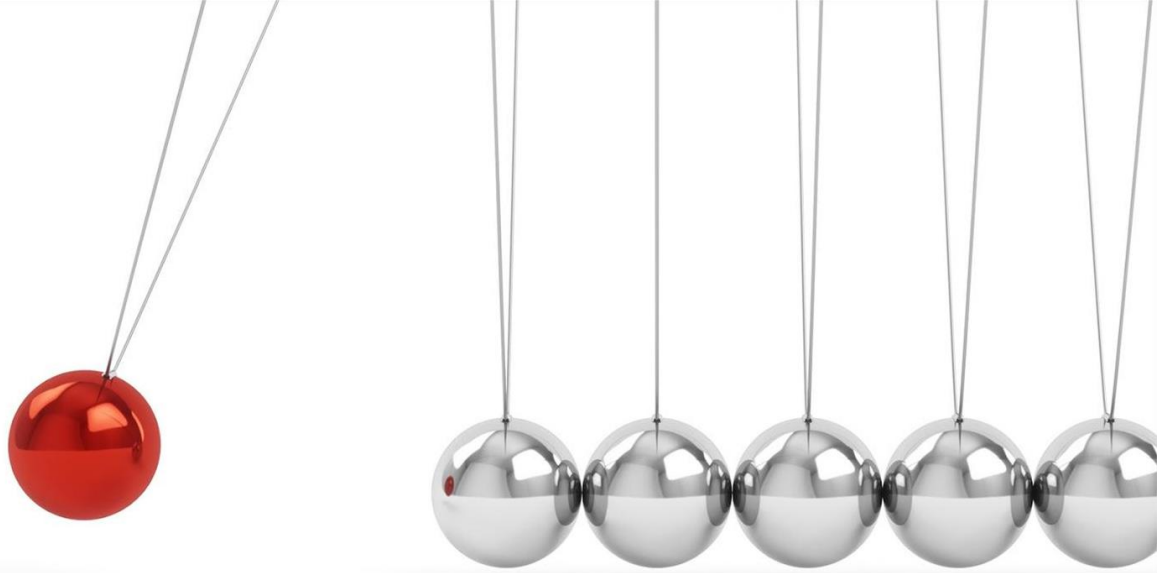
Love reading and comfortable with peers!

Engaged and achieving in middle school.

Graduating and excited about the future!

Employed & showing up

When students
don't **show up**
to a classroom...



It impacts
everyone:

absent student
other students
students working in groups
all teachers
entire school

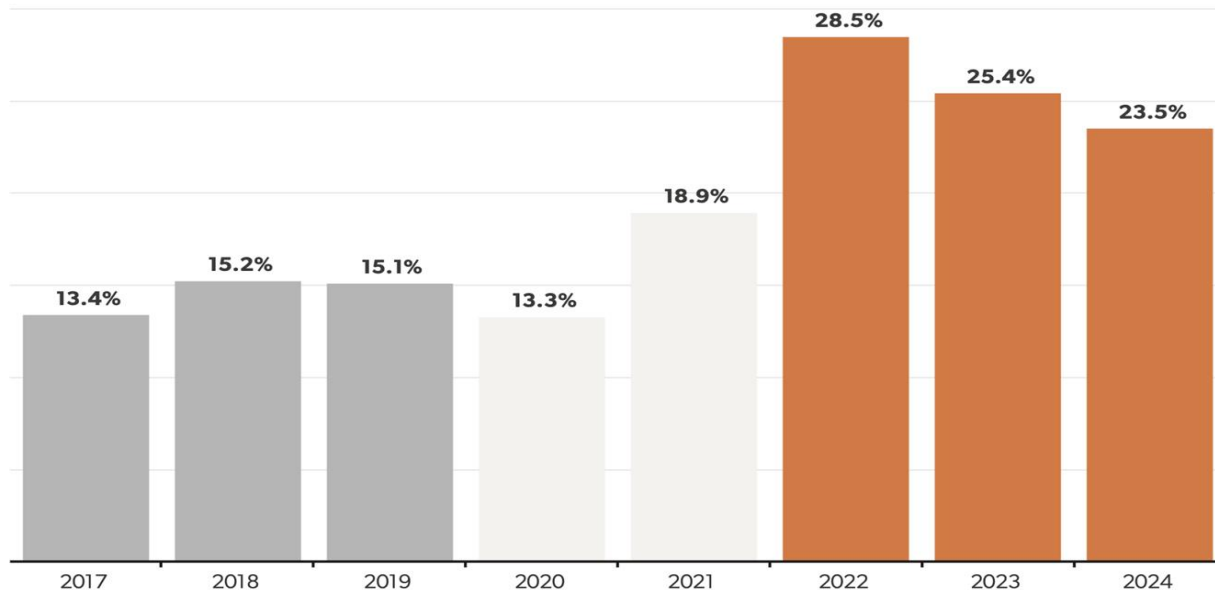
Reducing chronic absence matters because it:

- Improves student outcomes
- Increases parent engagement at work
- Increases state funding to school districts

It's a triple bottom line!

Chronic Absence Nearly Doubled and Remains Too High

Figure 1. US Chronic Absenteeism Rates: School Years 2017–24



Source: Return to Learn Tracker, "Chronic Absenteeism: 2017–2024," American Enterprise Institute, <https://www.returntolearntracker.net>.

Note: Pre-pandemic years are in grey, pandemic years that had potentially unreliable attendance data are in light grey, and post-pandemic years with reliable data are in orange. School years are referred to by the spring year.



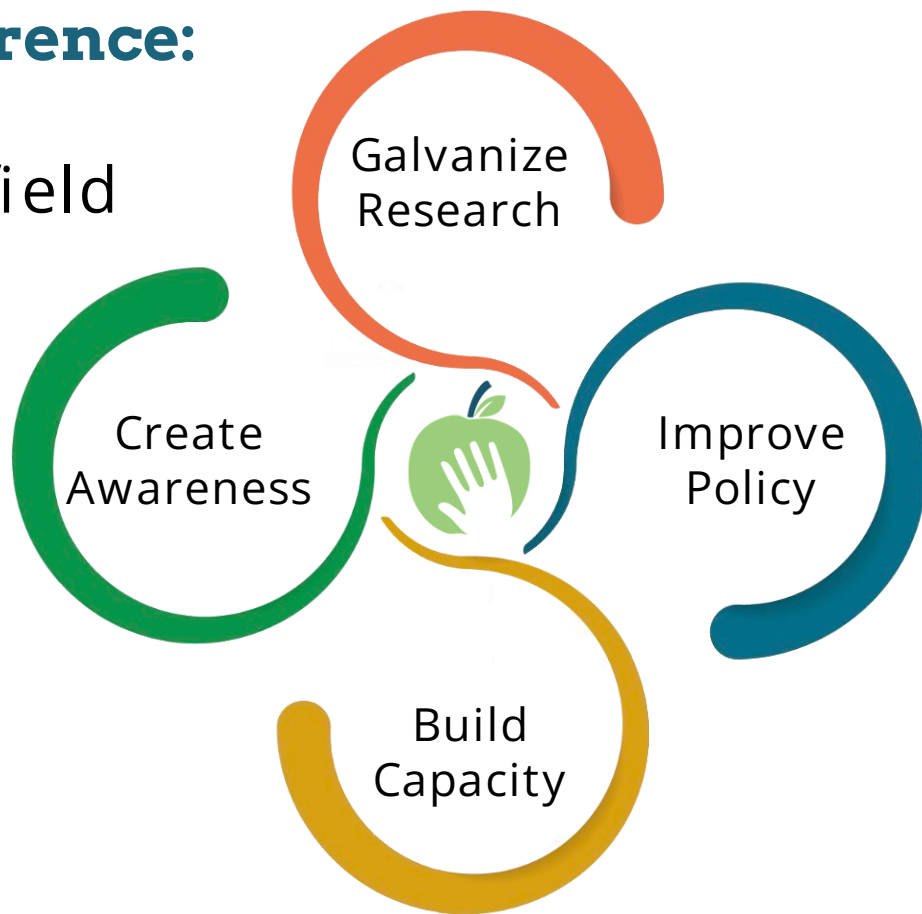
The key to reducing chronic absence
Is identifying and addressing the root causes.



How we make a difference:

Attendance Works is a field catalyst organization.

We recognize districts as the units of change and states as the vehicles for scale.



With Your Investments, Attendance Works has:

- Equipped at least half a million educators to help millions of students attend school more regularly
- Expanded the reach of the 50% Challenge to 17 states serving a third of all public school students
- Shifted state policy & practice to publicly sharing data and investing in prevention *versus* punitive responses
- Tripled media coverage – making chronic absence one of most discussed educational topics in the nation

Leveraging AW resources for local change:

Jennifer Elenes
Santa Clara, California

Scaling the impact of our work: The 50% Challenge

Elizabeth Cook
50% Challenge Director



Core Aim

Reduce chronic absence through a bi-partisan, data-driven, and prevention focused approach



Why 50%

An achievable target to restore absence rates to pre-pandemic levels



Timeframe

A 50% percent reduction within 5 years of a flexible baseline



Sponsoring Partner Collaboration



Data Analysis

Dep. Director Ed Policy, Nat Malkus



**Attendance
Works**

Peer Network and Resources

President, Hedy Chang



Advocacy

President, Denise Forte

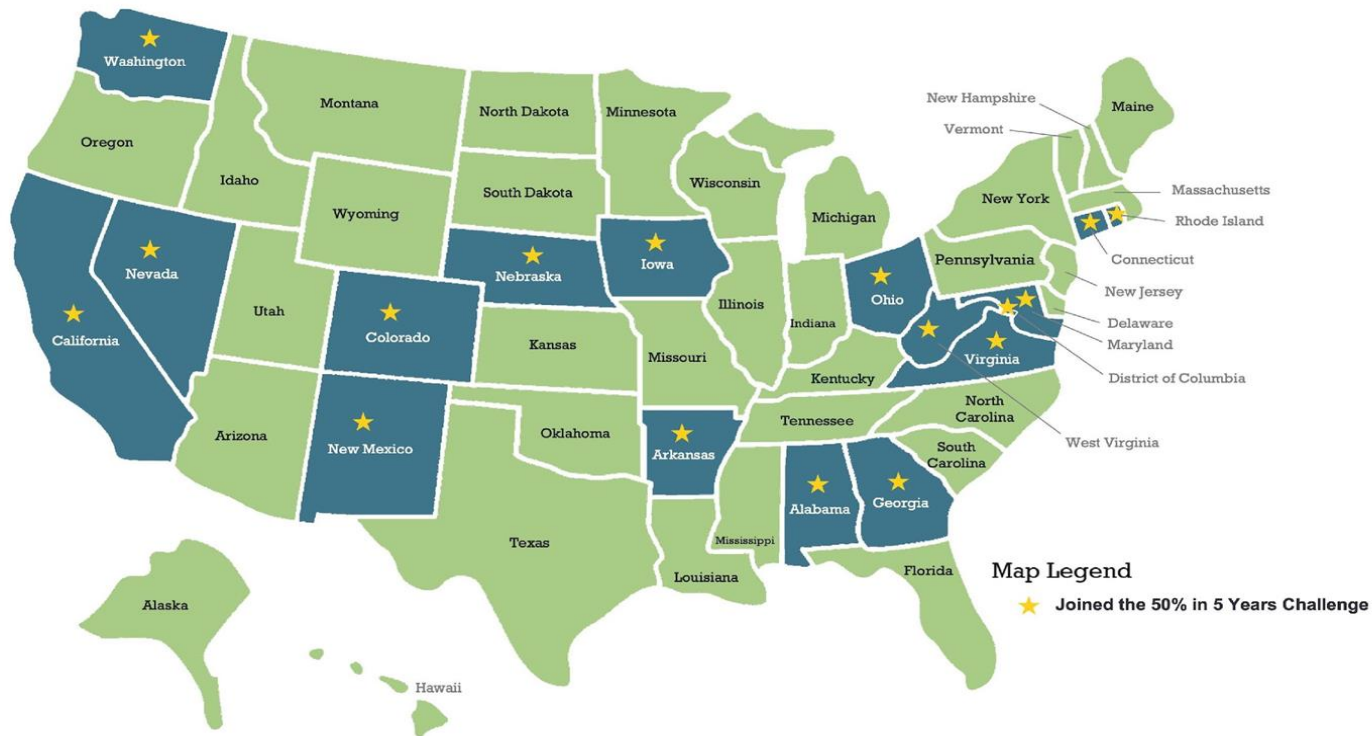


Shared Media Opportunities

Annual Event:

2025: The Power of Presence

Strategic Thought
Partnership



Success Stories



Ohio
29% ➔ 24%

HIGHLIGHT: Private-Public Partner with Cleveland Browns

Stay in the Game



California
30% ➔ 20%

HIGHLIGHT: Issued state-wide guidance

California Attendance Guidance

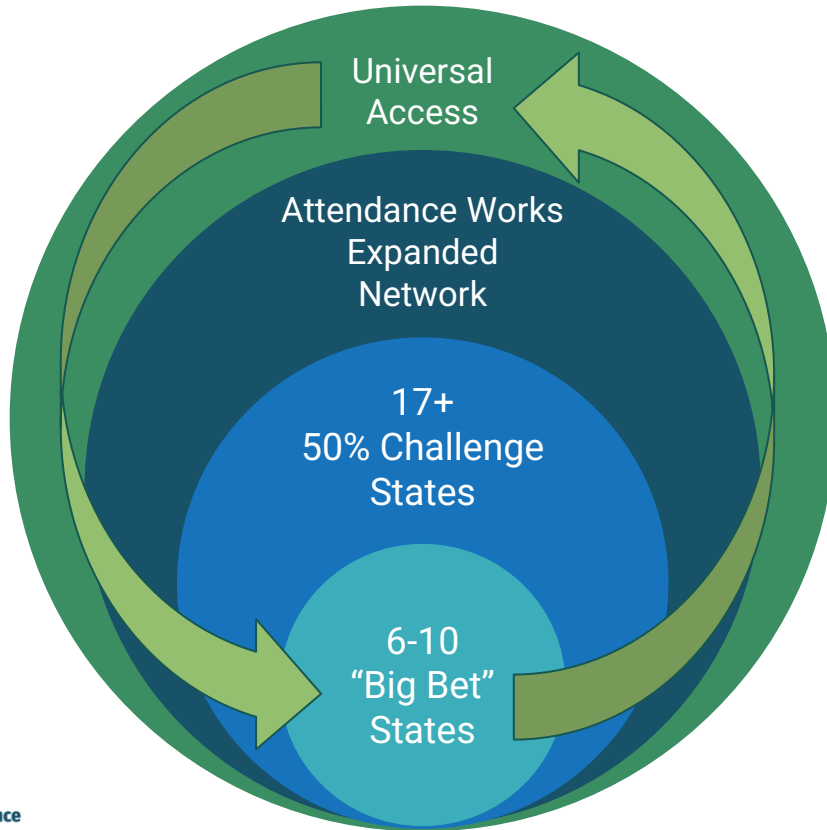


Virginia
20% ➔ 14%

HIGHLIGHT: Deep collaboration with pediatricians & focus on early grades

ALL in VA

What is our strategy for scaling impact?



Generating and sharing tools and resources that can be tailored and used by all states and districts.

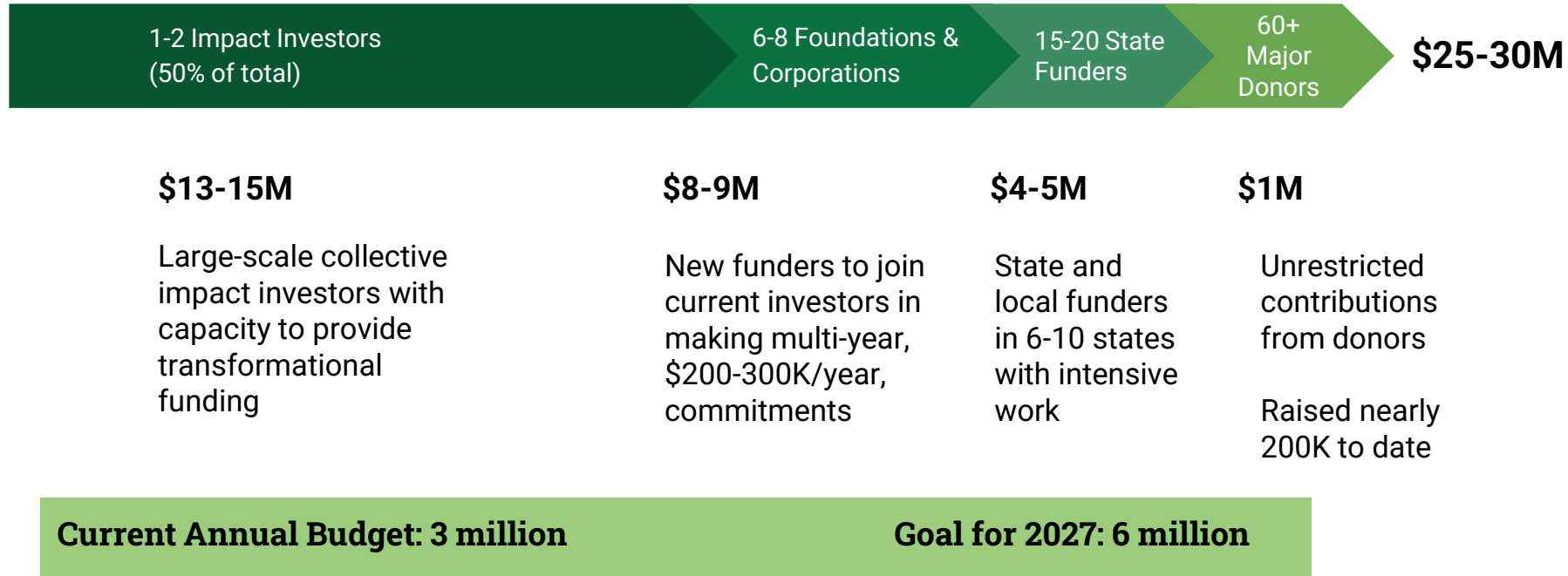
Equipping ally organizations to advance the work.

Providing one-on-one and cohort-based support for all 17 participating states.

Delivering customized support in 6-10 states simultaneously.

Investment Vision and Goals

Expand private funding to address unmet need despite uncertainty in fee-for-service revenues and scale impact.



Questions & Reactions



How can you get involved?

- Donate and help us raise \$1M over 5 years from individual donors committing to multi-year gifts
- Help us engage more donors
- Offer advice about how we can have an even more catalytic impact
- Other ideas?



