

Better Together:

Integrating Attendance and Behavior



Moderator



Cecelia Leong
Vice President of Programs
Attendance Works

Agenda

1. Welcome and Overview

Hedy Chang, Attendance Works

Jennifer Freeman, Center on PBIS

2. Integrating Attendance and Behavior at the District Level

Elizabeth McNally, Columbus City Schools

3. Integrating Attendance and Behavior at the School Level

Shari Straffon, Port Huron Schools

4. Questions and Answers

5. Resources



Audience Poll #1

Who is in the audience?

- ☐ District
- ☐ Elementary
- ☐ Middle
- ☐ High school
- ☐ State
- ☐ Regional
- ☐ Other (*type in chat*)

Presenters



Jennifer Freeman
Center on PBIS
Associate Professor
University of Connecticut



Hedy Chang
Executive Director
Attendance Works

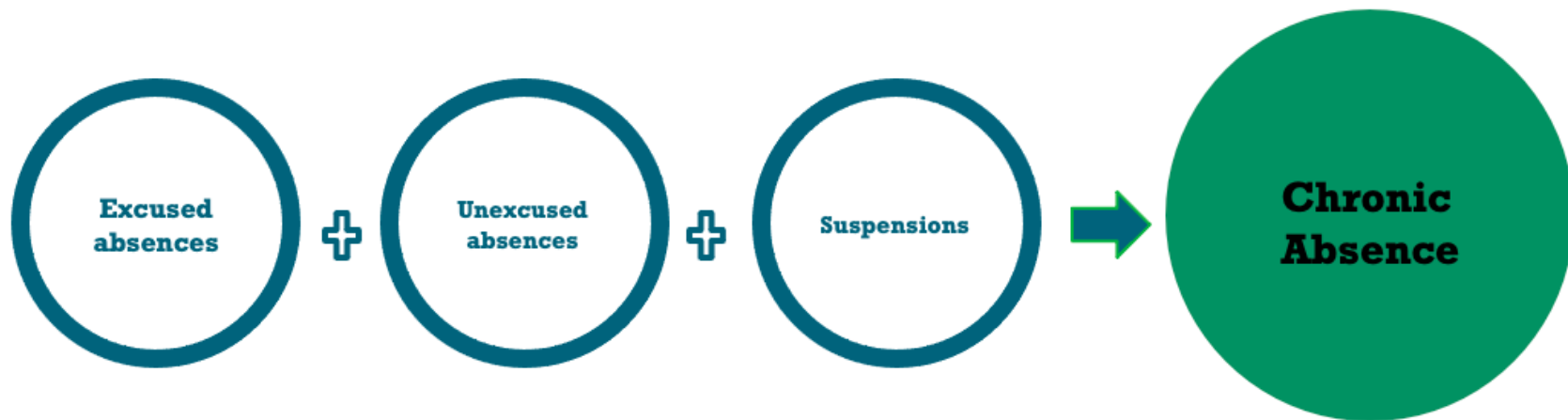
Why better together?

- The scale of the attendance crisis calls for teamwork
- Maximize effectiveness and efficiency - fewer teams, fewer meetings
- Problem solve based on multiple sources of data (for intervention planning and continuous improvement)
- Many contributing factors of chronic absenteeism are already directly addressed with PBIS
- Improving attendance allows more time to support student social, emotional, behavioral, and academic needs.
- Shifts focus from punitive measures to instruction and support
- Focus on systems to ensure fidelity and sustainable implementation



What is chronic absence?

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's the difference between ADA, truancy & chronic absence?

Average Daily Attendance (ADA)

- School level measure (not student level)
- Notices aggregate attendance at certain point in time (e.g., half-days, holidays, bad weather)
- Masks individual student chronic absences

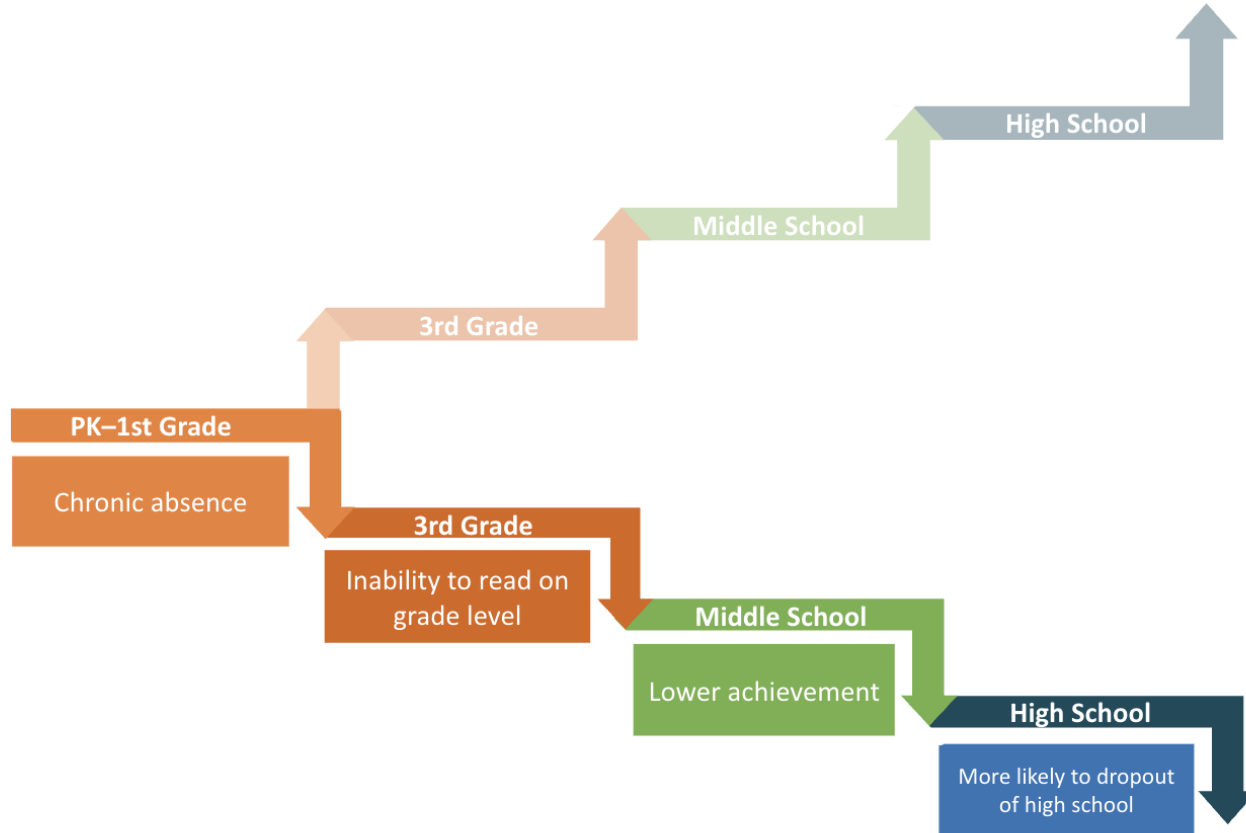
Truancy

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

Chronic Absence

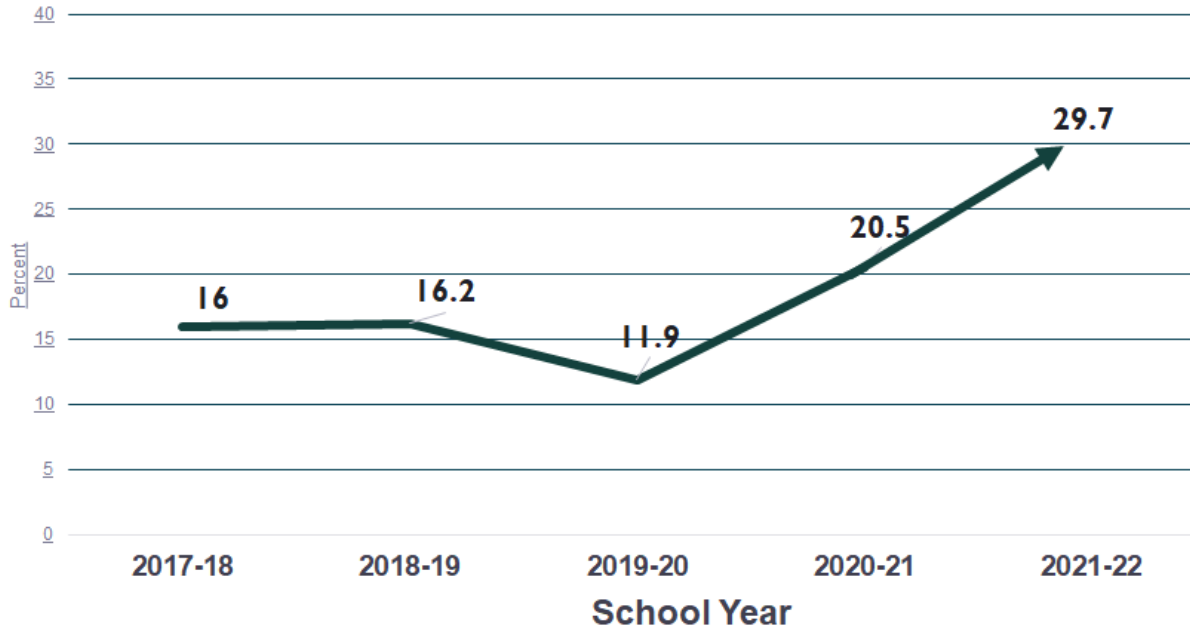
- Counts **ALL** absences (*excused, unexcused, and suspensions*)
- Emphasizes impact of missed days and the benefits of being present
- Uses preventative, problem-solving, trauma-sensitive strategies
- Cultivates family and student engagement

Improving Attendance Matters



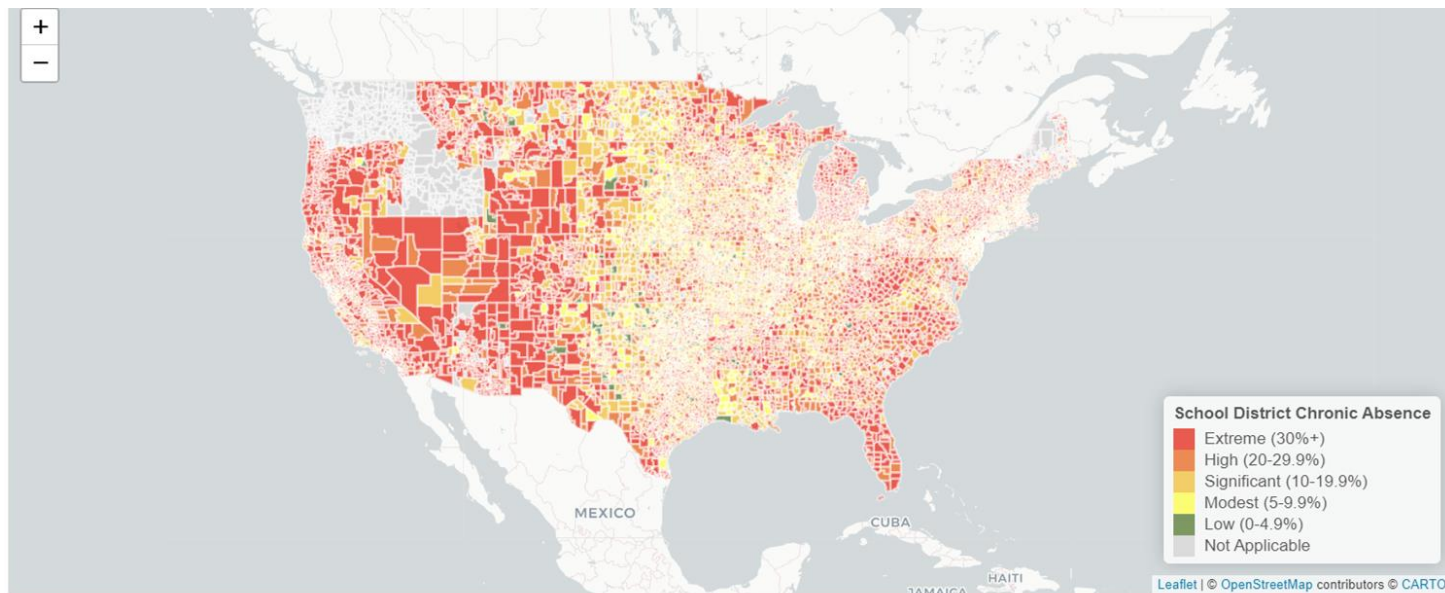
National Chronic Absence Crisis

Percentage of Students Chronically Absent Nearly Doubled Nationwide Between SY 2017-18 to SY 2021-22



- ✓ The number of chronically absent students grew from 8,095,132 to 14,660,261.
- ✓ State data from 2022-23 indicate rates remain high.

Interactive Map of Chronic Absence in U.S. School Districts: 2021-22



SOURCE: [Everyone Graduates Center](#) and [Attendance Works](#) analysis of data from the [U.S. Department of Education](#) and [U.S. Census Bureau](#).

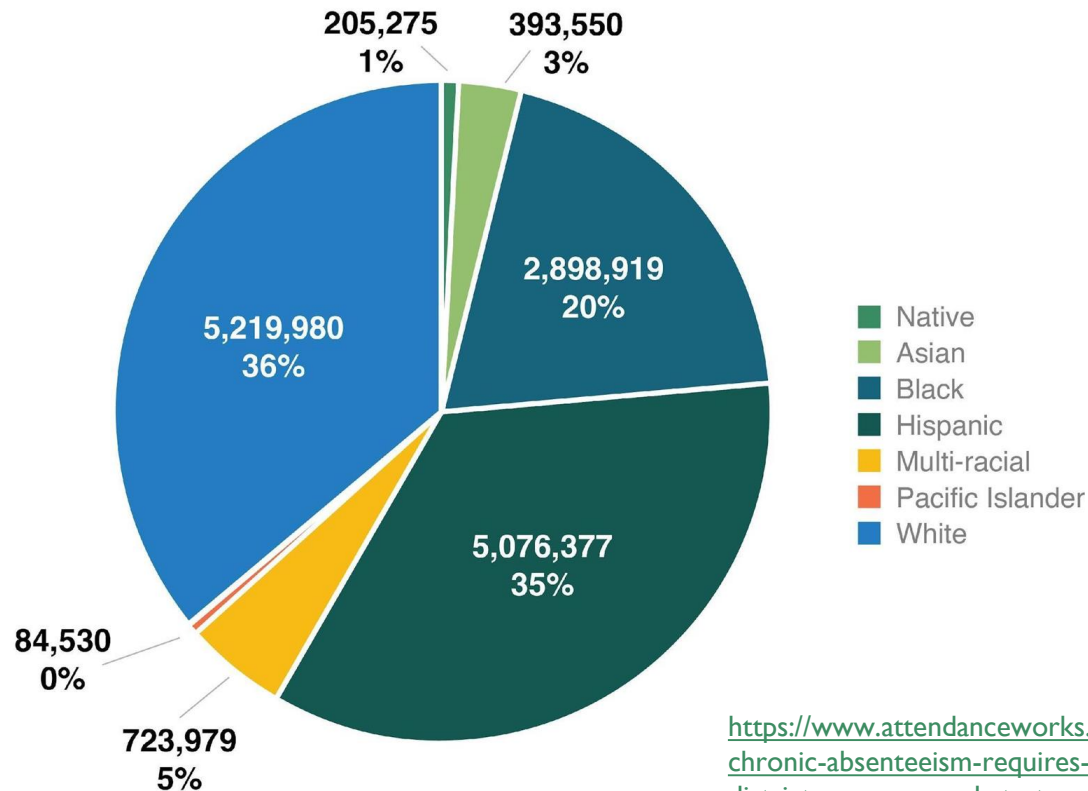
[Interactive Map](#)

https://edu-dsi.shinyapps.io/chronic_absence/

www.attendanceworks.org

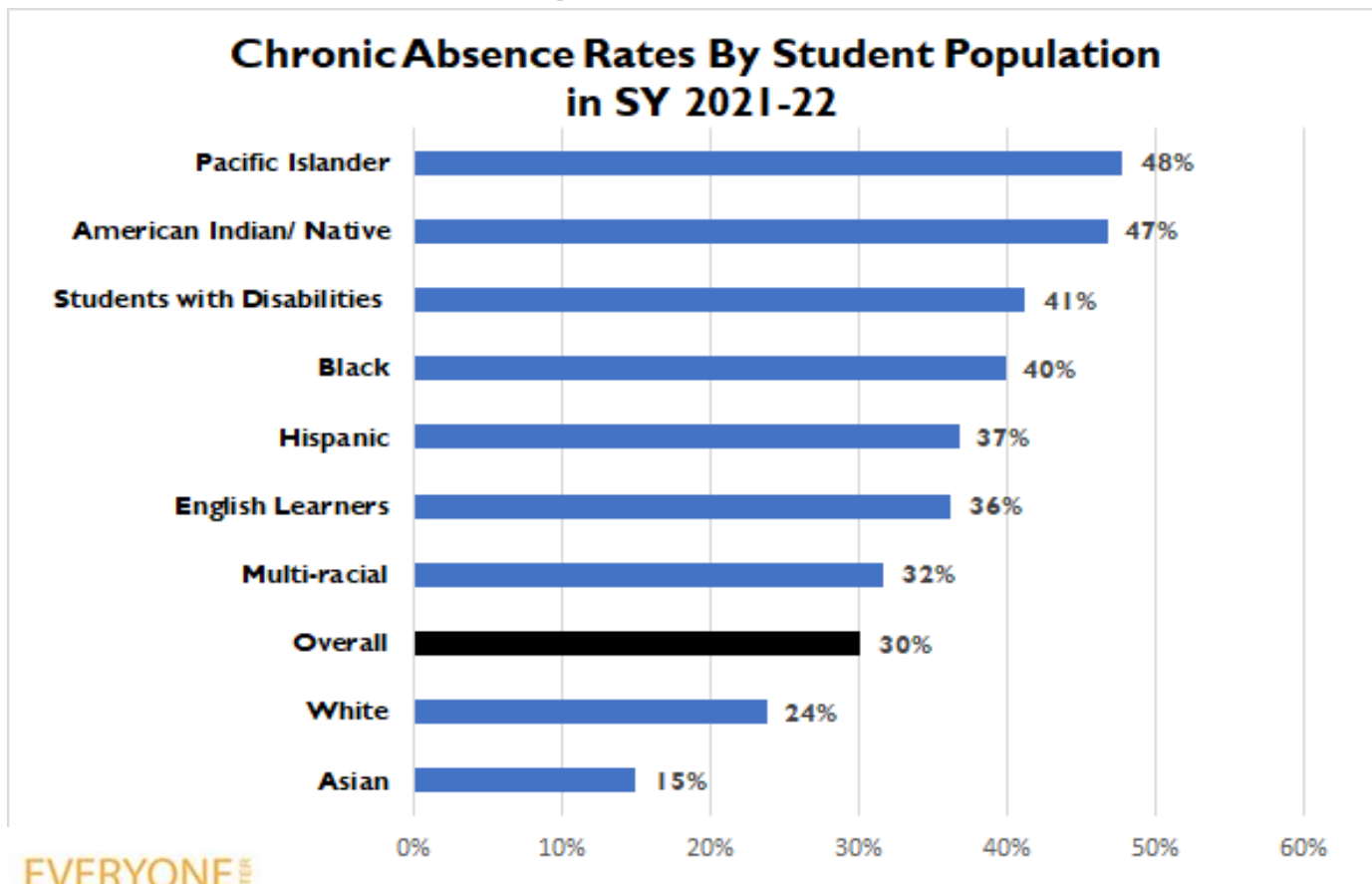
Who are chronically absent students?

2021-22 Chronically Absent Students by Demographic Background



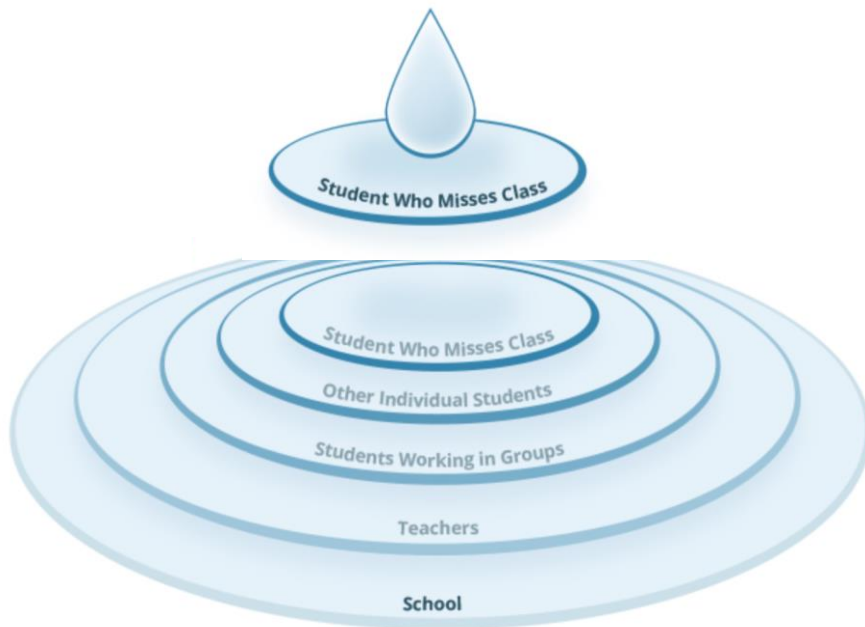
<https://www.attendanceworks.org/todays-chronic-absenteeism-requires-a-comprehensive-district-response-and-strategy/>

Chronically absent students are from all backgrounds. But some groups are more affected.





When a Student Misses School, the Impact Ripples



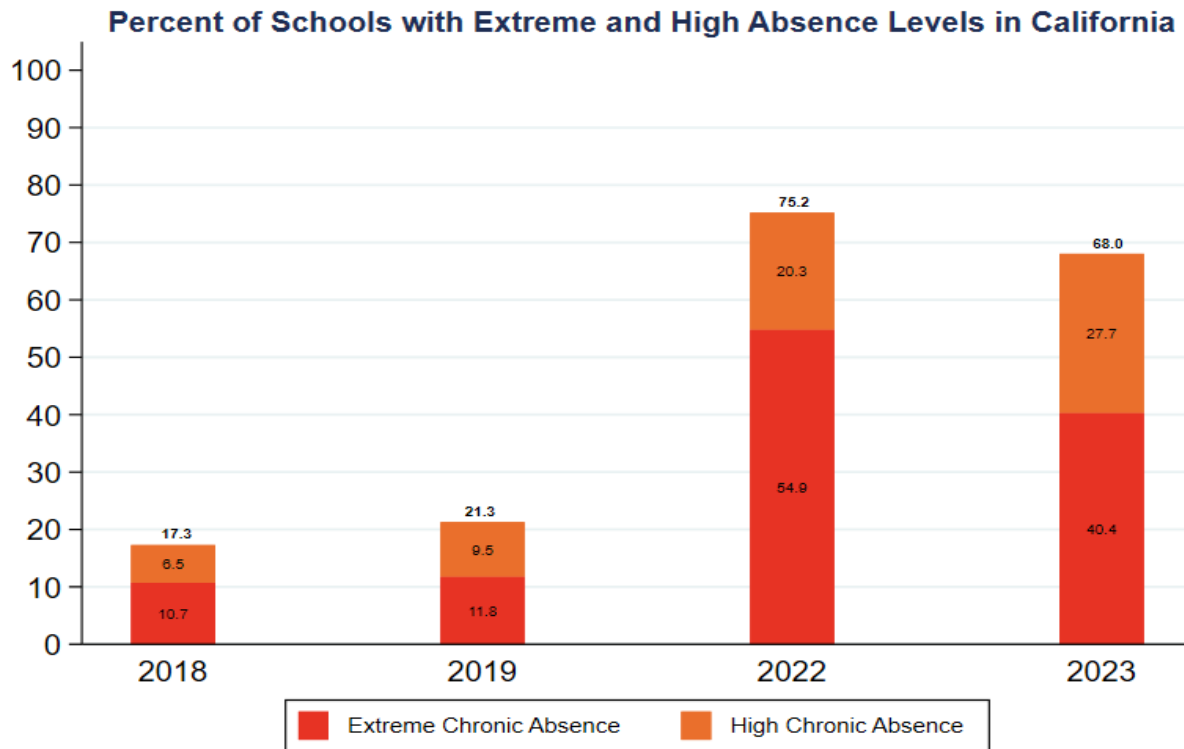
66% of students
attend a school
with 20% or
more
absenteeism
(*SY 2021-22*)
versus
25% prior to the
pandemic

**The vast majority of schools experience high chronic absence.
The largest increase has occurred among elementary schools.
Nearly 20,000 have extreme chronic absence.**

2021-22 School Year	Elementary Schools		Middle Schools		High Schools		All Schools	
	2017-18	2021-22	2017-18	2021-22	2017-18	2021-22	2017-18	2021-22
Number of Schools with 30% or more students Chronically Absent	3,550	19,828	1,353	6,430	6,433	11,778	12,493	39,890
Number of Schools with 20% or more students Chronically Absent	9,233	31,362	3,640	10,541	10,474	16,126	24,912	60,379

For more information, see: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/rising-tide-of-chronic-absence-challenges-schools/>

2. The percentage of schools with high (20–29 percent of students) and extreme (30 percent or more of students) levels of chronic absence more than tripled during the pandemic

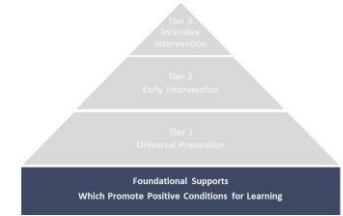
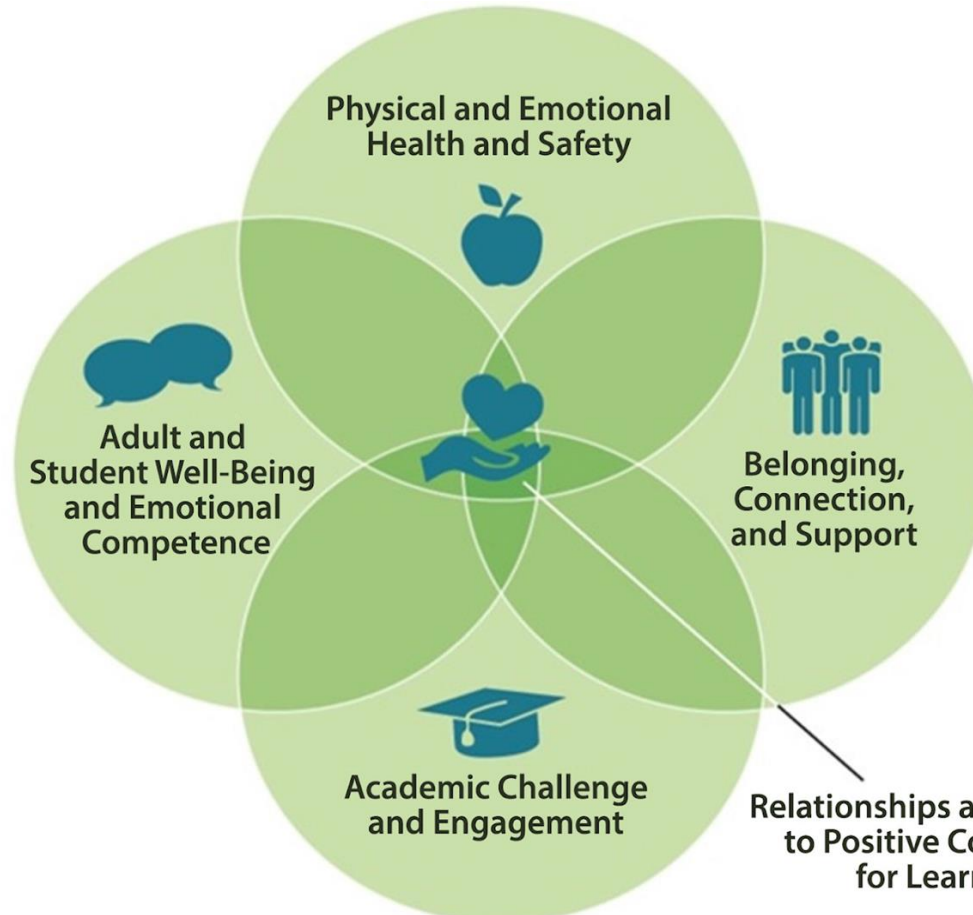


Reducing chronic absence requires addressing underlying causes of chronic absence including challenges worsened or created by the pandemic

Barriers	Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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• Community violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Struggling academically and/or behaviorally• Unwelcoming school climate• Social and peer challenges• Anxiety• Biased disciplinary and suspension practices• Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations• Caregivers had negative educational experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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• Need to work conflicts with being in high school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused• Missing 2 days per month doesn't affect learning• Lose track and underestimate TOTAL absences• Assume students must stay home for any symptom of illness• Attendance only matters in the older grades• Suspensions don't count as absence

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/root-causes/>

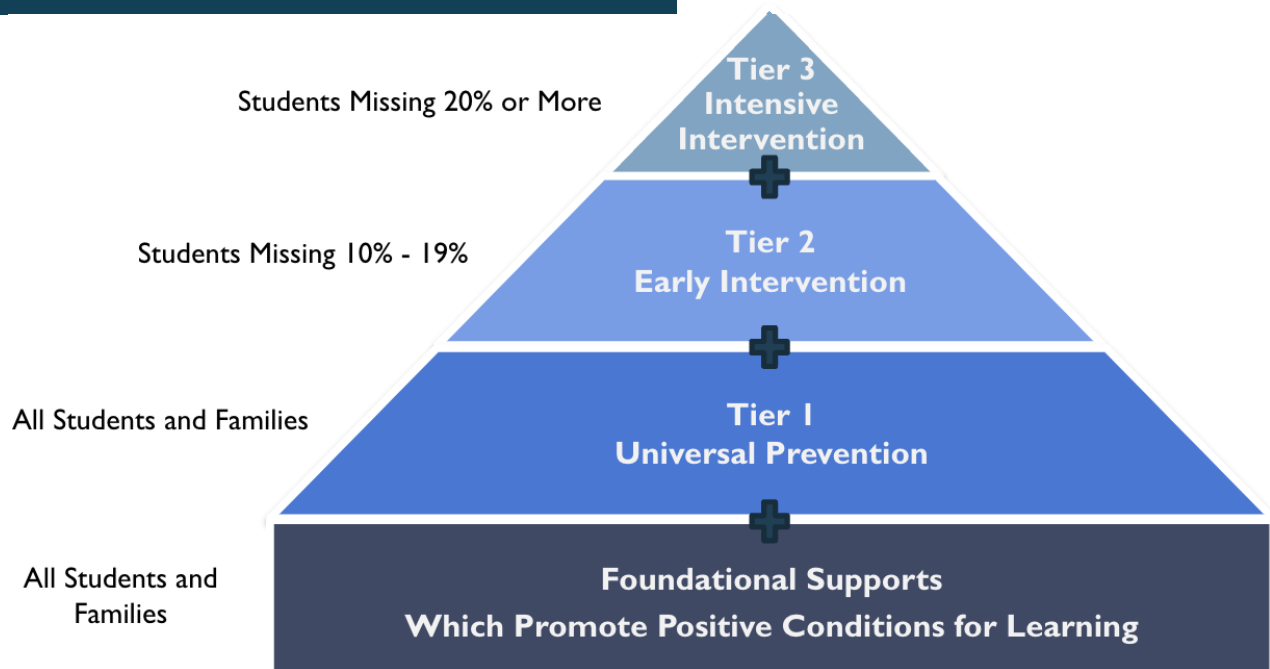
High levels of absence reflect an erosion in positive conditions for learning



Relationships are Essential
to Positive Conditions
for Learning

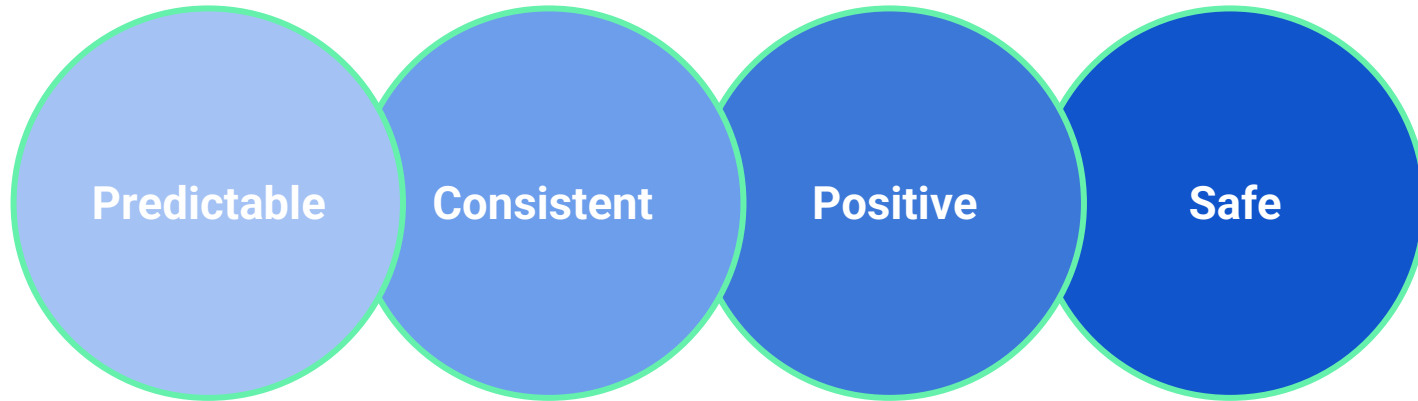


Multi-tiered System of Support for Attendance



Creating Positive Conditions for Learning

The fundamental purpose of PBIS is to make schools more effective, efficient and equitable learning environments.



PBIS is...

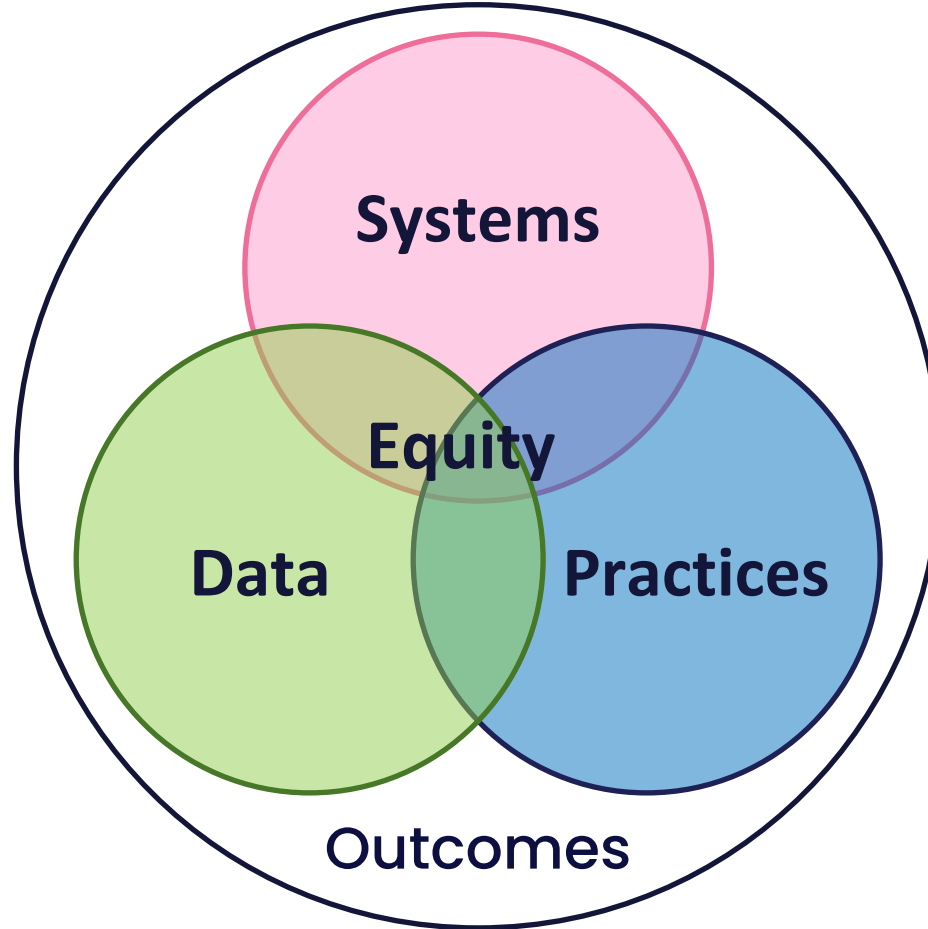
Framework for enhancing adoption & implementation of

Continuum of evidence-based interventions to achieve

Academically & behaviorally important **outcomes** for

All students

Critical Features of PBIS



PBIS supports Attendance Outcomes

Improved Student Outcomes

academic achievement

(Angus & Nelson, 2021; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nelson et al., 2002)

prosocial behavior

(Metzler et al., 2001; Nelson et al., 2002)

attendance

(Flannery et al., 2020*; Freeman et al., 2015*)

emotional regulation

(Bradshaw, Waasdorp, & Leaf, 2012)

reduced bullying behaviors

(Ross & Horner, 2009; Waasdorp, Bradshaw, & Leaf, 2012)

decreased rates of drug/alcohol use

(Bastable et al., 2015*; Bradshaw et al., 2012)

social & academic outcomes for SWDs

(Lewis, 2017; Tobin, Horner, Vincent, & Swain-Bradway, 2012)

Reduced Exclusionary Discipline

office discipline referrals

(Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2012; Bradshaw et al., 2021*)

(Elrod et al., 2022*; Flannery et al., 2014*; Freeman et al., 2015*; Horner et al., 2005; Horner et al., 2009; Metzler et al., 2001; Nelson et al., 2002; Solomon et al., 2012)

suspensions

(Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010*; Freeman et al., 2015; *Gage et al., 2018; Gage et al., 2019; Nelson, 1996; Nelson et al., 2002; Solomon et al., 2012)

restraint and seclusion

(Reynolds et al., 2016; Simonsen, Britton, & Young, 2010)

racial inequities

(Fox et al., 2021; Gion et al., 2022; McIntosh et al., 2018; McIntosh et al., 2021a; McIntosh et al., 2021b; Muldrew & Miller, 2021; Payno-Simmons, 2021; Swain-Bradway et al., 2019)

Improved Teacher Outcomes

teacher efficacy & well-being

(Kelm & McIntosh, 2012; Ross & Horner, 2006; Ross, Romer, & Horner, 2012)

teacher-student relationships

(Condliffe et al., 2022)

student engagement & instructional time

(Algozzine & Algozzine, 2007; Condliffe et al., 2022; Flannery et al., 2020*)

school culture & organizational health

(Bradshaw et al., 2008; Bradshaw et al., 2009; McIntosh et al., 2021; Meng et al., 2016)

climate & safety

(Elrod et al., 2022*; Horner et al., 2009; McIntosh et al., 2021)

When Implementing Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) with Fidelity

* identifies research conducted in high schools

Build a Continuum of Supports

- **Direct skill-based instruction**

- Transportation systems
- Job application process
- Study skills
- Self-management skills
- Problem solving skills

- **Family Support**

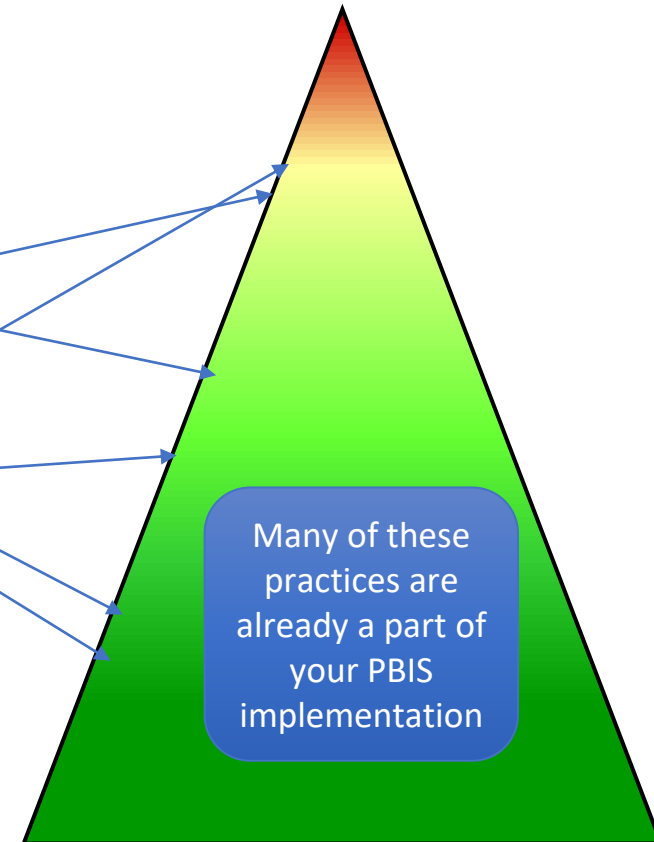
- Increased communication
- Establishing positive relationships (regular positive calls for at risk students)
- Case management support

- **Incentive based strategies**

- Token economies
- Group contingencies
- Monetary incentives

- **Mentoring**

- Check and Connect
- Success mentors



Consider
causes of
absenteeism
when
building your
continuum
of supports

Disengagement /
Misconceptions

Aversion

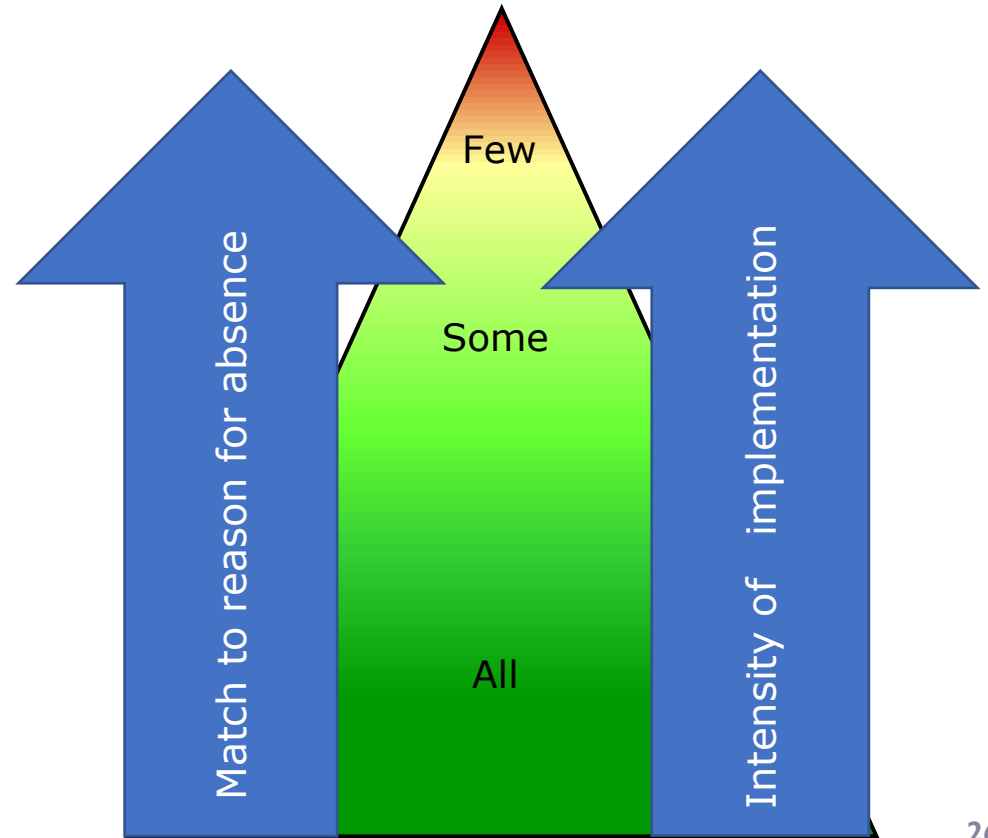
Barriers

- Promote wellness (e.g., hand washing, school cleaning procedures, nutrition)
- Remove barriers (e.g., transportation)
- Clear procedures for preventing and handling harassment and bullying
- Positive, predictable safe school climate
- Intentional focus on relationships
- School-wide attendance incentives
- Information about importance of attendance
- Promote family engagement and wellness and remove barriers for specific student groups or areas of the community
- Small group skills support
- Mentorship and friendship supports
- Intensify procedures for monitoring and addressing harassment and bullying.
- Small group incentive systems
- Mentorship and friendship supports
- Clarify connection between curriculum and “real life”

- Individualized problem solving and coordination with family and community agencies

Build a Continuum of Supports

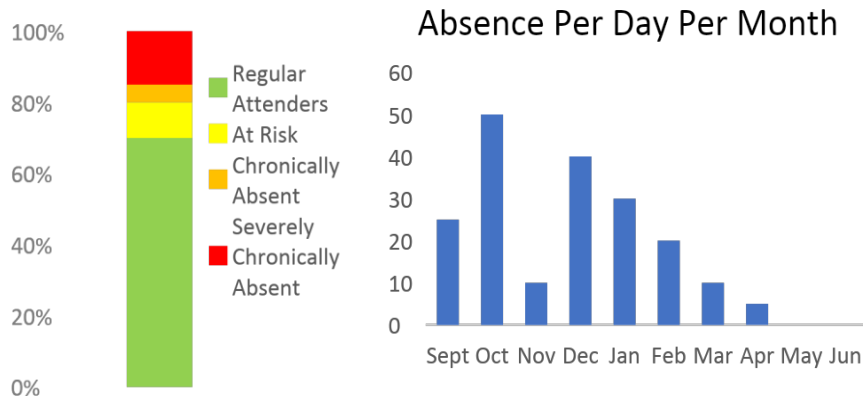
- Start with what you are already doing!
- Consider “causes of absenteeism”
- Need for match between reason (function) and intervention increases as the severity of the problem increases



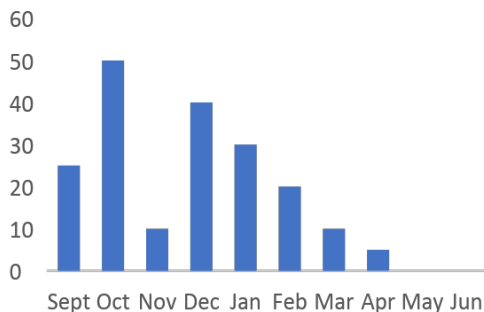
Use Data to Guide Intervention

- What percent of students are experiencing attendance problems at each level?
- What day of the week or month are the most problematic?
- What time periods are the most problematic?
- What grade levels or classes have the highest absence rates?
- What student sub-groups are most affected?
- Are attendance problems clustered in specific neighborhoods?

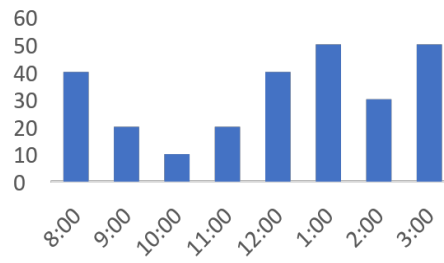
Triangle Data Report



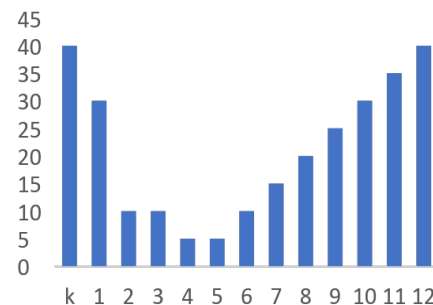
Absence Per Day Per Month



Absence by Time (or Period)



Absence by Grade Level





Audience Poll #2

How many of you have teams addressing:

- ☐ PBIS
- ☐ Attendance
- ☐ Combined PBIS and attendance
- ☐ School improvement
- ☐ Other (*type in chat*)

Presenter



Elizabeth McNally, Ph.D.

Interim Executive Director
Whole Child Supports
Columbus City Schools, Ohio

Columbus City Schools: At A Glance



AT A GLANCE: OUR DISTRICT

THE MISSION OF COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS:

Each student is highly educated, prepared for leadership and service, and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community.



CCS Is Ohio's LARGEST School District

44,981 Students In **113** Schools

Employing **Over 9,000** Teachers And Staff

Our People



65.6%

Teachers Hold
A Master's Degree

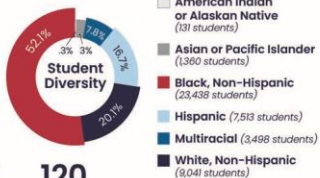
15:1

Student To
Teacher Ratio

120

Countries Represented
By Our Student Population

41% Administrators • 45% Certificated • 72% Classified
% Of Staff Who List Columbus As Their City Of Primary Address



Financials

Our Seven-Member Board Of Education Oversees A **\$1.6 Billion** Budget

Spending Per Pupil:



**MAY 2023
5-YR FORECAST**

Cash Balance Deficit Of
\$67 Million
Projected By FY27
Projected To Increase To
Over \$1.2 Billion
By End Of FY32

Columbus
Alternative
High School
(28)

Centennial
High School
(220)

Fort Hayes
Arts and
Academics
High School
(319)

Whetstone
High School
(391)

Columbus
International
High School
(426)

Eastmoor
Academy
(491)

six District High Schools Ranked In The **Top 500** In Ohio



**COLUMBUS
CITY SCHOOLS**

Updated 10/12/23

District Attendance

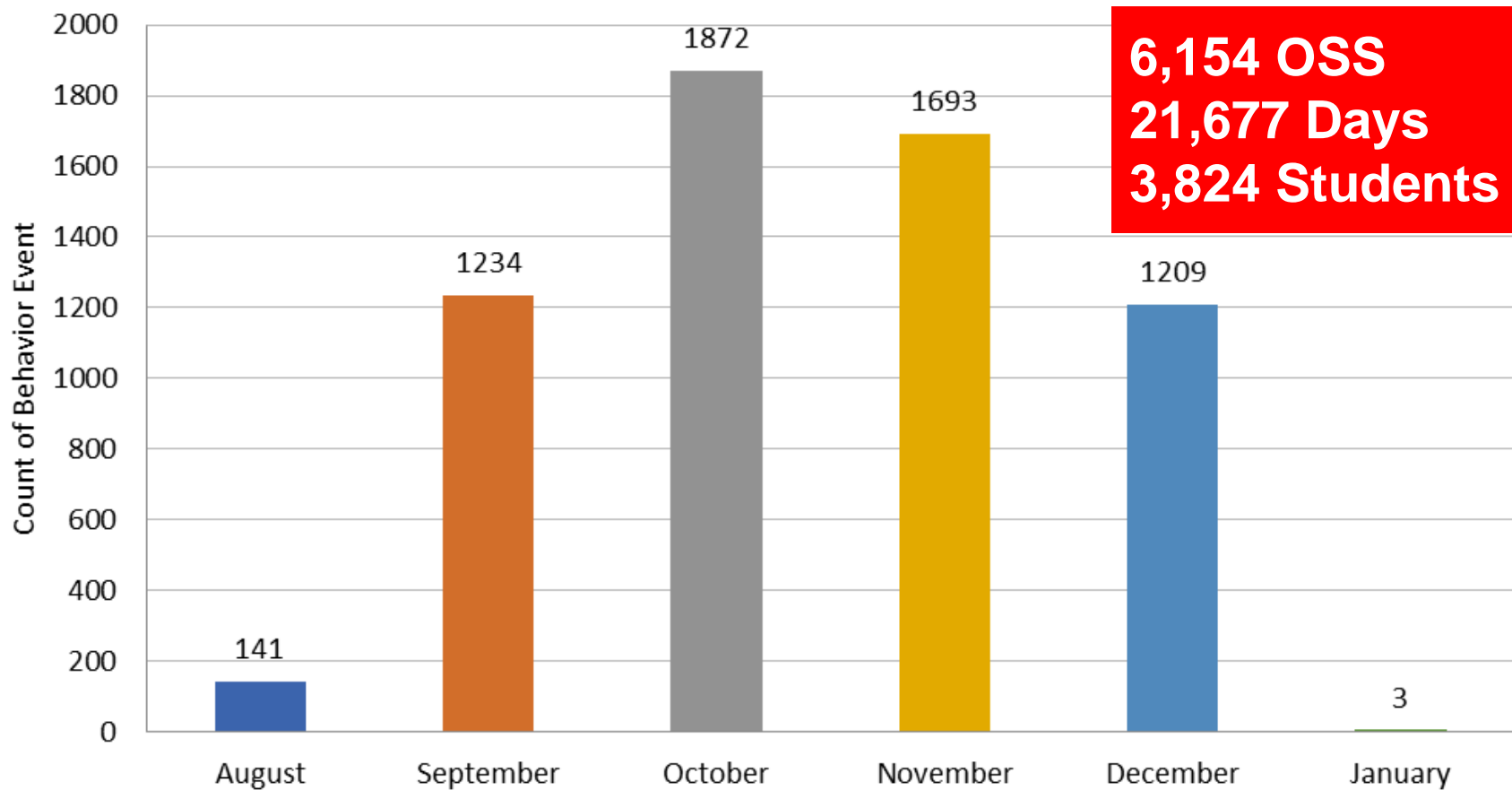
January 18, 2023

January 18, 2024

ONE YEAR CHANGE

	Satisfactory	At Risk	Moderate Chronic	Severe Chronic	ALL CHRONIC (moderate + severe)		Satisfactory	At Risk	Moderate Chronic	Severe Chronic	ALL CHRONIC (moderate + severe)		Satisfactory	At Risk	Moderate Chronic	Severe Chronic	ALL CHRONIC (moderate + severe)
Region 1	15.2%	21.4%	29.7%	33.6%	63.3%		23.6%	21.2%	25.8%	29.4%	55.2%		8.4%	-0.2%	-3.9%	-4.2%	-8.1%
Region 2	16.9%	23.4%	31.1%	28.6%	59.7%		25.7%	22.5%	26.5%	25.2%	51.7%		8.8%	-0.9%	-4.6%	-3.4%	-8.0%
Region 3	12.6%	19.9%	30.9%	36.6%	67.5%		19.7%	21.5%	27.9%	30.9%	58.8%		7.1%	1.6%	-3.0%	-5.7%	-8.7%
Region 4	22.7%	28.0%	29.3%	20.0%	49.3%		38.7%	24.7%	20.9%	15.7%	36.6%		16.0%	-3.3%	-8.4%	-4.3%	-12.7%
Region 5	20.3%	22.4%	29.5%	27.8%	57.3%		32.7%	22.6%	22.4%	22.3%	44.7%		12.4%	0.2%	-7.1%	-5.5%	-12.6%
Region 6	15.5%	22.4%	31.8%	30.3%	62.1%		23.0%	24.1%	26.8%	26.2%	53.0%		7.5%	1.7%	-5.0%	-4.1%	-9.1%
DISTRICT	17.5%	23.1%	30.3%	29.1%	59.4%		27.9%	22.9%	24.8%	24.5%	49.3%		10.4%	-0.2%	-5.5%	-4.6%	-10.1%

23-24 OSS by Month



PBIS – The Big Five

As a PBIS team, having access to behavior data for your school or district is helpful—but knowing how to use it to drive change for your students is critical. To unpack your data and better understand how to take action, try looking at it through the lens of the Big 5:

- **What** behaviors are being reported most frequently?
- **Where** are these behaviors being reported?
- **When** are these behavior referrals happening?
- **Who** are the students, or groups of students, demonstrating these behaviors?
- **How often** are these behavior referrals occurring?

Where We Are and Where We Are Going



- Great strides in reducing chronic absenteeism
- Consistent progress in supporting our schools in understanding the connection between PBIS and absenteeism through ongoing PD and alignment of staff
- SY 2024-2025, looking forward to increasing Tier 1 climate and culture building strategies to support warm, welcoming learning environments leading to increased engagement and ultimately achievement

Presenter



Shari Straffon, LMSW
Supervisor of Behavior Supports
Port Huron Schools, Michigan

Better Together

Integrating Behavior and Attendance



Shari Straffon, LMSW; Supervisor of Behavior Supports

Integrating Attendance and Behavior

Elementary Students K-5

- Start with Tier One Strategies
- Identify student attendance concerns early
- Move to Tier Two Intervention
- Data driven decisions
- Follow the two beliefs of classroom PBIS
- The power of relationships
- Identify barriers to school absences

Integrating Attendance and Behavior

- Check in upon entry to school; calendars
- Acknowledgement ticket for being on time and present in the “bucket” (group reward)
- Acknowledgement ticket from teacher when reach the classroom (individual reward)
- Weekly meetings with behavior interventionist in a community circle format to address barriers
- Regular contact with parents
- Data collection



Integrating Attendance and Behavior

Secondary: 6-12

- Start with Tier One Strategies
- Identify student attendance concerns early
- Move to Tier Two Strategies
- Follow two beliefs of classroom PBIS
- The power of relationships
- Identify the barriers to school attendance

Integrating Attendance and Behavior

- Growing number of virtual requests due to mental health concerns
- Power of Relationships with (any) school staff
- Check in System Check Out (hourly, daily, weekly)
- Identify and address barriers
- Behavior Intervention
- Teach circle of support/Self advocacy

Daily Connect: Progress Report

Student Name:

Week of:

Hour	Subject	Teacher	Learning Environments	Common Areas	Technology Devices	All Settings	Comments(items of concern and/or things to celebrate)
			2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	
			2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	

CICO

2 - Great 1 - Occasionally 0 - Try Again

Daily Goal: greater than 51 (70%) Points Received: _____/16 _____% Goal Met? Y N

Mentoring: Progress Report

Student Name:
Mentor Teacher:

Week of:

Learning Environments	Common Areas	Technology Devices	All Settings	Grades (Indicated number of classes passing and number or classes failing)	Comments(items of concern and/or things to celebrate)
2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0		

Key: 2 - Great 1 - Occasionally 0 - Try Again

Daily Goal: greater than 51 (70%) Points Received: _____/8 _____% Goal Met? Y N



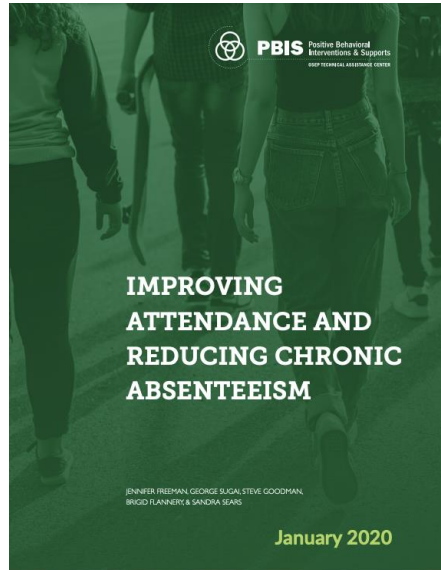


Questions from the Audience

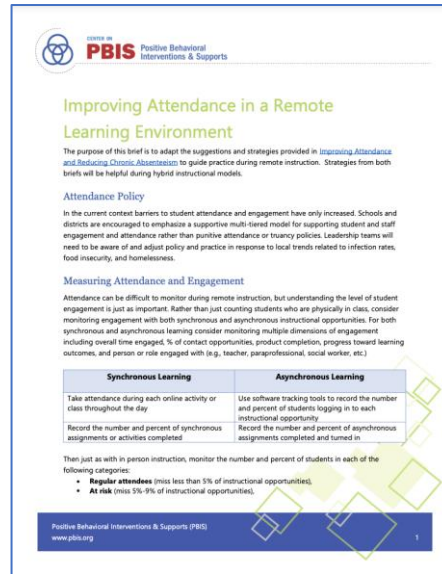


Resources

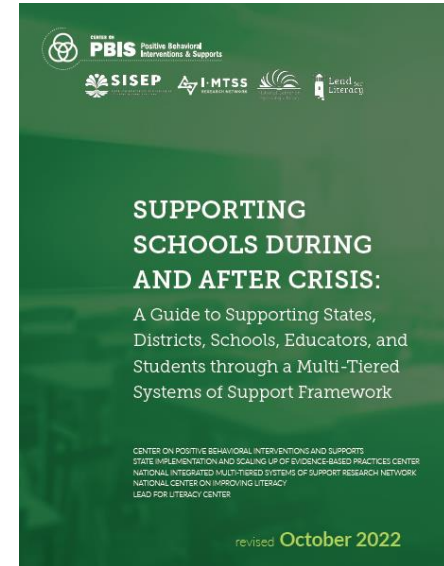
Key Resources



Improving Attendance and Reducing Chronic Absenteeism



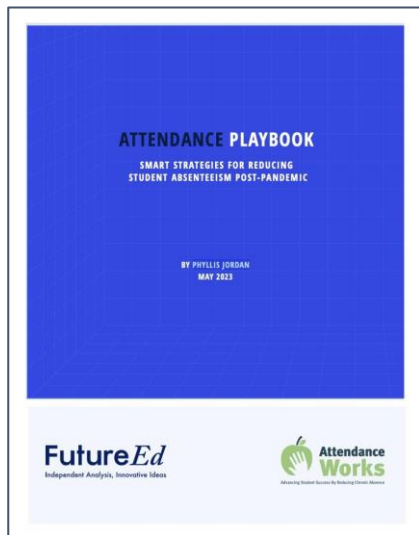
Improving Attendance in a Remote Learning Environment



Supporting Schools During and After Crisis



Interventions that can be found in the Attendance Playbook



TIER I: Foundational Support and Schoolwide Prevention

- Community Schools
- Engaging with Families
- Student-Teacher Relationships
- Relevant—and Culturally Relevant—Instruction
- Restorative Discipline Practices
- Summer Learning and Afterschool Strategies
- Positive Greetings at the Door
- Incentives
- Rethinking Recess
- Healthy School Buildings
- School-based Health Services
- Telehealth
- Free Meals for All
- School Buses and Public Transit
- A Safer Walk to School
- Laundry at School

TIER II: Targeted Support

- Early Warning Systems
- Targeted Home Visits
- Mentors and Tutors
- Targeted Youth Engagement
- Addressing Asthma
- Mental Health Support and School Refusal
- Students with Disabilities
- Immigrant Students

TIER III: Intensive Support

- Interagency Case Management
- Housing Insecurity
- Truancy

Attendance Playbook: <https://www.future-ed.org/attendance-playbook/>

Implementation Guide: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/attendance-playbook/>

Fill in your own 3 Tiers Worksheet

Blank form: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Pyramid-worksheet-BLANK-revised-June-2023-v2.docx>

Attendance Pyramid Worksheet

	Family Engagement	Positive Student Engagement	Behavioral and Mental Health	Physical Health	Academic Support	Extended Learning	Basic Needs
Tier 3: Intensive Intervention							
Tier 2: Early Intervention							
Tier 1: Universal Prevention							
Foundational Supports							

Students Missing 20% or More

Students Missing 10% - 19%

All Students and Families

All Students and Families

Tier 3
Intensive Intervention

+

Tier 2
Early Intervention

+

Tier 1
Universal Prevention

+

Foundational Supports
Which Promote Positive Conditions for Learning

Tier 3	# _____
Tier 2	# _____
Tier 1 and Foundational Supports	# _____

Sample form: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Pyramid-worksheet-with-EXAMPLES-revised-June-2023.pdf>

3 Tiers of Intervention: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/>

Adapted from format created by Nancy Erbstein, Associate Professor of Education in Residence, with the UC Davis Center for Regional Change and Sacramento City USD.



Attendance Awareness Campaign 2024

**Join the 2024 Attendance
Awareness Campaign!**

[https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/
contact/aam-updates/](https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/contact/aam-updates/)





Evaluation Survey

Please complete the webinar evaluation.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/better-together-march2024>

**Thank you for
joining us today!**