Data + Relationships to Support Transitions to School
Welcome

S. Kwesi Rollins
Vice President for Leadership & Engagement

Institute for Educational Leadership

Chair, Advisory Board, Attendance Works
Agenda

I. Welcome
   Joline Collins, Program Manager of Leadership Development, IEL

II. Attendance Awareness Campaign
   Kwesi Rollins, Director of Leadership Programs, IEL

III. A new data framework for attendance in distance learning
   Hedy Chang, Executive Director, Attendance Works

IV. Practice Panel – Data and Relationships
   ❖ Jacqueline Dungey, Principal, New Paradigm Loving Academy, Detroit MI
   ❖ Dr. Beshon Smith, Executive Director, Center for Supportive Schools for Delaware, Maryland and Washington, D.C.
   ❖ Angela Duran, Campaign Director, Arkansas Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

V. AAC 2020-2021 Tools and Resources
   Cecelia Leong, Vice President, Attendance Works
About IEL

The Institute for Educational Leadership 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 our website: www.iel.org
Convening Partners
AAC 2020
Theme for 2020

Present, Engaged and Supported!
2020 Theme: Present, Engaged and Supported!

Key Messages

1. Supporting regular attendance and monitoring absenteeism reduces educational inequities.

2. Building strong, trusting relationships that promote belonging is fundamental to improving student attendance and participation.

3. Students are more likely to attend school if they feel safe (emotionally + physically), connected, supported, and are encouraged to believe they can learn and achieve.

https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkit-2020/what-are-the-key-messages/
2020 Theme: Present, Engaged and Supported!

Key Messages

4. Reducing health-related absences is key because illness is the top reason students and families give for missing school.

5. The key to success is a proactive, positive, data driven, problem-solving approach.

6. Poor participation is a problem we can solve when the whole community collaborates with families and schools to support the transitions into school, whether it be in person, virtual or a blend.

https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkit-2020/what-are-the-key-messages/
This week, leaders of 10 equity-centered, parent-led organizations representing approximately 1 million families in over 100 communities and 30 plus states released a letter to education leaders and policymakers:

• Our primary concerns are for the physical, social, and emotional health of our children and all staff within school communities.
• This pandemic has reminded us that we are all accountable to building and sustaining a strong, equitable educational system.
• The Bottom Line is Authentic Family Engagement is Imperative.
Welcome

Hedy Chang
Executive Director
Attendance Works

& Members of the Attendance Works Team
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

Website Resource Page:
Coronavirus: Resources for Educators which includes links to resources from CDC, AFT, Johns Hopkins, Education Week and other sources.
Covid-19 Reinforces the Critical Importance of These Approaches:

❖ A whole child/family approach to education that pays attention to social and emotional well-being and school climate along with academics and recognizes families as the first teachers of their children.

❖ Integrated virtual and in-person learning that supports different learning styles and making up for classwork when students face challenges (e.g. health or transportation) getting to school.

❖ Addressing inequitable access to resources and supports with significant attention to monitoring absenteeism (missing too much school) to promote prevention and early intervention vs. punitive action.

❖ Promote integrated strategies by working across departments and organizations, including supporting an investment in community schools and leveraging the assets of community partners and health providers.
Why Should We Care?

Absenteeism is a *leading* indicator of educational inequity.
Reducing Chronic Absence Can Help Close Equity Gaps

✓ Vulnerable children, especially those living in poverty, are 2-3 times more likely to experience chronic absence at earlier ages.

✓ Vulnerable children are much less likely to have the resources to make up for lost learning time in the classroom.

✓ Vulnerable children are more likely to experience multiple years of chronic absence.
Absenteeism is a Sign that Positive Conditions for Learning are Missing, Whether Classes are In Person, Distance or Blended
Flying Blind is Not Acceptable

Traditional student data tracking systems are not set up to track student attendance during distance learning. It is not clear whether or how most districts identified which students are missing or helped them to engage in distance learning.

Only 32 percent of districts and 61 percent of charter management organizations reviewed required schools to track attendance this spring. Districts that do not track attendance or require teachers to maintain contact with students may not know which students are learning and which are not — and are now flying blind as they prepare for fall.

(Results of 82 school districts by Center on Reinventing Public Education at the University of Washington, Bothell)
To Take a Systemic Approach – Need to Redefine Actionable Attendance & Absenteeism Data During Distance Learning
The Multiple Purposes for Attendance Data Should Guide Action

Allocate Funding

Ensure Compliance with Compulsory Education

Hold Harmless from Funding Cuts

Create Alternatives to Legal Action

Accountability

Avoid High Stakes Accountability Until We Know More

Early Warning For Additional Support

Use AW Data Framework to Put in Place Expanded Metrics

Inform Program and Policy Decisions

Use AW Data Framework to Put in Place Expanded Metrics
Chronic absence is missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at risk. To ensure it acts as an early warning sign, Attendance Works recommends defining it as **missing 10% 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).
A new framework for attendance and absenteeism data is needed to:

1. Encourage states, districts and communities to monitor lost learning time in school in order to promote student success regardless of ESSA accountability.

2. Adopt a holistic approach to data collection that informs current and future efforts to improve conditions of learning.

3. Promote a tiered approach to supporting students beginning with prevention.

4. Strategically target investments that address the digital divide, lack of supports (health, economic, nutrition, housing, etc.) and other inequities.
Additional Terms for “Attendance” During Distance Learning

- **Contact**: Working contact information exists for each enrolled student and their family.

- **Connectivity**: Students and families have access to technology (computer, software and internet access) and school staff are equipped to support digital literacy.

- **Relationships**: Students and families feel connected, supported and engaged in reciprocal, problem-solving relationships.

- **Participation**: The extent to which students show up and complete learning activities.
## Additional “Attendance Measures”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>What are we (districts, schools &amp; community partners) trying to find out?</th>
<th>What are school/district responsibilities, with support from community partners?</th>
<th>What data can we collect? (Possible data points)</th>
<th>What are the equity implications?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact</strong></td>
<td>Can we reach students and families?</td>
<td>Maintain regularly updated contact information.</td>
<td>% of families with working contact information.</td>
<td>Working contact information is essential to offering supports and learning opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connectivity</strong></td>
<td>Are we ensuring all students and families have digital access and competency?</td>
<td>Provide access to technology and equip school staff and families to use it effectively.</td>
<td>% of students/families with technology (have computer, software, and internet).</td>
<td>Lack of technology = less access to quality learning opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationships</strong></td>
<td>Are we establishing reciprocal relationships with students and families and creating a sense of connection and support?</td>
<td>Ensure students and families have meaningful two-way communications with staff and each other about how to improve conditions for learning.</td>
<td>% of students reporting positive relationships with at least one adult in the school.</td>
<td>When students and families are connected to and supported by the school community, students are more likely to do well academically and stay in school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation</strong></td>
<td>Are students participating in learning opportunities?</td>
<td>Offer options to participate in meaningful learning opportunities.</td>
<td>% of students participating in learning opportunities at least 95% of the time.</td>
<td>Students who participate regularly are less likely to fall behind academically and graduate.</td>
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</table>
## Proposal for Calculating Attendance/Participation Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps to Take</th>
<th>What is It?</th>
<th>Additional Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Define the learning opportunities for the quarter or semester.</td>
<td>A learning opportunity is an instructional or learning activity that takes place in person, or synchronous or asynchronous distance learning.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Track “attendance or participation” for each learning opportunity.</td>
<td>For in-person sessions and synchronous virtual sessions, school staff and leaders of enrichment activities would take attendance. For asynchronous distance learning, participation standards would be established, and missed participation documented.</td>
<td>What can be measured for asynchronous learning (e.g., the student showed evidence of completing the work or participating in the activity). How will attendance for each learning opportunity be recorded in a standardized system (SIS, Google doc, etc.)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Calculate attendance and/or participation rates.</td>
<td># of learning opportunities attended compared to the number of opportunities offered in-person, asynchronous and synchronous, for the period that the student is enrolled.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Calculate the absence rate for each student.</td>
<td>Total # of absences from learning opportunities compared to total # of learning opportunities offered.</td>
<td>Data can be aggregated across quarters/semesters and across classes to determine if a student would be considered chronically absent for the year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Analyze for patterns.</td>
<td>Calculate the number and percent of students with absenteeism rates of 10% or higher by school, grade, classroom, and sub-population.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Develop early warning indicators for preventive action.</td>
<td>Establish appropriate indicators for intervention for each tier of response e.g. Tier 2 – missing 10% or more of learning opportunities in a month or 40% in a week.</td>
<td></td>
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Identifying Students At Risk Due to Absenteeism

Chronic Absence + No Connectivity + Lost Contact + Lack of Relationships = Little or No Participation

= Lost Learning Time in School
Use Data to Identify and Address Inequities

a) Analyze contact, connectivity, relationships and participation data overall, broken down by school, grade, race/ethnicity, home language, disability and zip code.

b) Use qualitative information, especially drawing upon the perspectives of students and families, to deepen an understanding of the contributing factors and how they might be addressed.

c) Determine how to address unequal access to resources.
# 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 are entering 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>6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</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>9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Students on-track in the 9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 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>12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Senior year is a critical time for ensuring students complete all the requirements for graduation and enrolling in post-secondary education.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Use Data to Support an Integrated Multi-tiered System of Support

- Tier 3: Intensive Intervention
- Tier 2: Early Intervention
- Tier 1b: Personalized Outreach
- Tier 1a: Universal Prevention
## Define Indicators to Activate Additional Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Define Indicators</th>
<th>What Activates</th>
<th>Who Provides This?</th>
<th>Who is Involved in Outreach and Support?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1b</td>
<td>More Personalized Preventive Check In</td>
<td>What activates more personalized preventive check in? (e.g. 1 missed interaction, 1 missed assignment, 1 missed class)</td>
<td>Teachers?</td>
<td>Attendance staff? Counselors? Nurses? Others depending upon need for intervention?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2 Early Intervention</td>
<td>More Ongoing Sustained Early Intervention</td>
<td>What activates more ongoing sustained early intervention? (e.g. Missing 40% of learning opportunities in a week or 10% of learning opportunities in a month)</td>
<td>Attendance staff? Counselors? Nurses? Others depending upon need for intervention?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3 Intensive Intervention</td>
<td>Intensive Intervention</td>
<td>What activates intensive intervention? (e.g. Loss of contact?)</td>
<td>Social Workers? Staff of public agencies, etc.?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Practice Panel Discussion

The panel will give us an opportunity to explore:

• How did these panelists respond to Covid-19 during the spring?
• What did they learn about the challenges facing students, families, principals and districts?
• What are the implications for the coming school year?
Practice Panel

Jacqueline Dungey
Principal
New Paradigm Loving Academy

Dr. Beshon Smith
Executive Director
Center for Supportive Schools

Angela Duran
Director
Arkansas Grade-Level Reading Campaign
Our Success Story
OUR WORK DURING REMOTE LEARNING

• About our school:
  • Principal of New Paradigm Loving Academy, PreK-5 and Glazer K-8
  • Two of Six schools in the New Paradigm for Education Charter Network
  • Located in the North End/Focus Hope Area Neighborhood of Detroit
  • 138 students enrolled Loving/174 students enrolled Glazer
Our approach:
Connect and Re-engage with our students and families

Initial Response

- NPFE Leadership team training, planning and preparation prior to closure to support teachers and families
- Mobilize the team
- Implement and utilize wellness tracker among all staff (teachers, student support specialist, reading intervention, PE teacher, special education, etc.) to document student contact data, connection, notes on the impact of the virus
- Assessed family and student needs, issues, concerns, and technology needs
- Analyzed the data daily/weekly
- Employed personalized prevention and intervention strategies, based on student data trends
CHALLENGES

- Inability to connect with some families
- Food insecurity and instability
- Job loss
- Homelessness
- Illness and death (of parents, families, caregivers)
- Trauma and grief
- Inadequate and lack of technology access, devices, and computer literacy
- Loss of teacher and school staff stability and consistency for the families
- Families’ fear of their own inability to deliver instruction at home (as a teacher would support their children), and inability to manage it all
Our approach: Connect and Re-engage with our students and families

- Weekly meetings 2x a week with CAO
- 1 to 1 meetings with CAO
- Weekly meetings with SSS
- Weekly meetings with entire staff
- 1 to 1 meetings with teachers
- Google classroom observations
- Virtual parent meetings
- Weekly videos sent to students, parents and teachers
- Weekly newsletters
HOW WE MET THE NEEDS

- Food distribution two days after school buildings closed
- Supported families with resource coordination (e.g. district, city, state resources)
- NPFE funding to support family needs (funeral costs, rent support, and gift cards for basic needs)
- Conducted home visits to reach out to students and families, to drop off homework packets, and to support food distribution, technology and access to learning platforms
- Continued to use weekly announcements to families to keep parents informed, share update on resources, parent education and engagement (PBIS parties, online games, etc.)
- Provided access to social workers and grief counselors
HOW WE MET THE NEEDS

• Engagement activities for students
• Modified the classwork or the way the assignments were rolled out
• Office hours were modified for parents
• Provided deep engagement and follow-up with families (weekly calls, social media, emails, dojo, text messages, condolence cards, etc.)
• Provided hotspots and technology
• Made and delivered paper packets
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

• Data-informed approach to 20-21 SY, reflection, input (survey families and staff) and planning
• Creation of multiple plans for re-entry based on CDC, state, and district guidelines
• Social-emotional learning and support for teachers and school staff
• Professional development on SEL, curriculum, technology skills, online platforms, and parent education and engagement
• Relationship building remotely with students and families
• Communication with families, and consistent check-ins with them (wellness calls, Dojo, social media, virtual conferences and parent meetings) to increase the sense of belonging, engagement and participation
• Re-engagement of students to the new school year whether it be in-person, hybrid model or a virtual learning experience
• Summer/Covid gap intervention for students for 20-21 SY
• Principal Jacqueline Dungey
• jdungey@npfeschools.org
Dr. Beshon Smith
Executive Director
Delaware, Maryland, and Washington, DC
Who Are We?

CSS helps schools become places where students want to be.

We help leverage the resources in schools to create more caring and vibrant learning communities.

- Developing all students into leaders
- Empowering teachers to collaborate with each other and with students
- Engaging entire school communities to improve how learning happens
Our Scale

262 schools actively implementing one or more CSS solutions

186 schools actively implementing Peer Group Connection (PGC)

783 schools touched by CSS since 1979

494,300 students served in all schools touched by CSS (cumulative, estimate)

14 states plus the District of Columbia with one or more schools implementing one or more CSS core solutions
Peer Group Connection (PGC)

- Peer-to-peer mentoring model that trains and mobilizes older students (peer leaders) to make schools more engaging, inspiring, safe and supportive for younger students
- School-based, research-based, social-emotional learning curriculum
- PGC-HS: 11th and 12th graders support 9th graders*
- PGC-MS: 8th graders support 6th graders*
- Peer leader class is daily, students earn an elective credit and/or service-learning hours towards graduation requirements
Biggest Challenges Faced by Partner Principals

- Working with district offices to conduct needs assessments and responses for faculty/staff, students and their families (technology needs, housing needs and other basic needs)

- Addressing the fears, discomfort and social-emotional support needs of faculty/staff

- Addressing the fears, discomfort and social-emotional support needs of students and families

- Managing and leveraging existing school partnerships to support the school community’s most pressing needs
Our Strategy: A Focus on Relatability, Relationships, & Resources

- Relational Support Plan
- Programmatic Support Plan
Relational Support Plan

- **Weekly check-in emails, calls, and texts** focused on caring, sharing, and laughing

- **Three-Part Staff Support Series** for school-wide staff/faculty that provided a safe and supportive space for connecting

- **A Pause for Our Partners**, pop-in support sessions in response to the polarization of police brutality and anti-black racism

- **Candy, Cookies & Closure**, candy and cookies were mailed to partner homes, we facilitated a fun, end-of-year closure session via Zoom
Programmatic Support Plan

- We **reimagined the work** first: revised curriculum for a virtual platform; incorporated the use of social-media and other youth-centered tools; relaxed contractual requirements

- Theme-based, pop-in, 30-minute **brainstorming sessions**: How to Honor Your Seniors; Virtual Student Engagement and Outreach Strategies

- We offered to **assist them in their virtual classrooms** with a variety of tasks

- We **listened and prioritized** their realities
The 2020-21 School Year

- We are moving into the new school year with a continued focus on relatability, relationships and resources

- All our programs and supports in Delaware, Maryland & Washington DC will be exclusively virtual

- Modified the focus of PGC by offering two additional models that will allow every student in the school building to receive social-emotional support

- Offering a Four-Part Faculty/Staff Support Series to focus on the emerging emotional and mental support needs of faculty/staff
ARKANSAS CAMPAIGN FOR GRADE-LEVEL READING
Education Renewal Zones
How to:

• think about attendance in a time of virtual and blended learning

• think differently about the drivers of attendance during a pandemic

• deploy strategies that address families’ needs and challenges

• deliver tools to schools/districts in time for them to be proactive
Response

Webinar Series in Late May/Early June

• Webinar 1 – Assess and Expand Mental, Behavioral, and Emotional Health Supports AND Examine Student and Family Data

• Webinar 2 – Back to School Engagement: Taking a Trauma Informed Approach

Ongoing Coaching by ERZs throughout the school year and additional PD in the fall as Attendance Works’ new materials are released
Implications For This School Year

Districts are still determining their plans for the ‘20-’21 school year, and COVID cases are on a steep rise in Arkansas, creating uncertainty for parents and teachers.
Implications For This School Year

Create authentic partnerships with teachers, students, and parents, and communicate early and often

- Engagement
- Explanation
- Expectation clarity

All hands on deck - think differently about how to engage staff – counselors, non-core teachers, therapists, etc.
Creativity in low-income, rural districts, with limited broadband access

- Home visits to deliver lessons and check in with families
- Run bus route to deliver food and pick up and drop off lessons
- Provide laptops/tablets to students
- Set up Internet hotspots
- Develop partnerships with Internet providers for affordable access
Practice Panel Discussion and Q&A

Jacqueline Dungey
Principal
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Executive Director
Center for Supportive Schools

Angela Duran
Director
Arkansas Grade-Level Reading Campaign
Attendance Awareness Campaign
2020-2021
The Transition Guide Provides Districts and Schools the Opportunity to Create Transition Plans Connected to Conditions for Learning
To plan for the transition back to school, Attendance Works recommends the following actions. For support with developing a data informed plan, go here: https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/transition-guide/

**Capacity Building**
Work as a team to ensure staff have the skills to manage hybrid learning and respond to the social-emotional and physical needs of the entire school community.

**Actionable Data**
Use chronic absence (prior to closure) and other participation data gathered during the Spring to coordinate outreach and provide additional support as needed.

**Positive Engagement**
Build upon assets to organize a warm trauma-informed welcome to school for students, families and staff.

**Strategic Partnerships**
Partner with school staff, families, and community partners to develop plans for the coming school year.

**Shared Accountability**
Ensure data and systems help key stakeholders work together, across silos, to support a coordinated approach to the return to school.
Present, Engaged and Supported Transition Guide

Three separate audiences:

- District
- Elementary (PreK-5)
- Secondary (6-12)

Familiar Frameworks Adapted for Covid Era

- Conditions for Learning
- 5 Ingredients of Systemic Change
- Expanded Attendance Metrics for Distance Learning

https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/transition-guide/
Step-by-step Guide

1. Convene a team
2. Review key ingredients
3. Complete worksheets and self-assessments
4. Develop or strengthen your transition plan
5. Communicate the plan

https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/transition-guide/
Highlights for Each of the Five Ingredients

✓ Attention to equity descriptors
✓ Bright spots
✓ Resources
✓ Worksheets for Districts and Schools
✓ Invitation to pilot an Attendance self-analysis tool

https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/transition-guide/
Save the Dates: Present, Engaged and Supported! 2020 Webinar Series

★ July 22:  Data + Relationships to Support the Transition to School
★ August 19:  Trauma-Informed Welcome to School

http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/webinars/
And special appreciation to our philanthropic partners!

The California Endowment
The Heising-Simons Foundation
Skillman Foundation
Stuart Foundation
United Way Southeast Michigan
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/data-plus-relationships

Thank you!