

# Does Our School Have a Systemic Approach to Transitions to and from Distance/Blended Learning?

## *A Tool for Elementary School Team Analysis*

The goal of this analysis is to help elementary team leaders identify strengths and opportunities to develop a systemic approach to anticipated transitions into and out of distance or blended learning. The tool is built around five key ingredients: **capacity building, actionable data, positive engagement, strategic partnerships, and shared accountability**, all of which play an integral role in preparing students, families, and school staff for these transitions. While assessing your school across all five ingredients, think about the actions your school takes on its own, as well as whether you are making strategic use of community partnerships to advance your strategies.

A cross-functional school team should undertake the following steps:

- 1) **Complete the analysis:** Each person on the team should complete the analysis separately to reflect on strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consider adding school leaders from departments not represented on the team such as curriculum and instruction, special education, and operations who can offer valuable perspectives and suggestions.
- 2) **Debrief and set goals:** Convene the group to tally the individual results onto a single analysis and collectively review what the combined data reveal about strengths, gaps, and differences of opinion. Use the results to identify practices that should be continued as well as priority areas for improvement.
- 3) **Make a plan:** Once team members have agreed on priorities, assign responsibilities and establish timelines for completion.
- 4) **Communicate the results:** The cross-functional team should communicate the results of the analysis with school staff, and in some cases, district and community partners, and engage them in executing the improvement plan.

| CAPACITY BUILDING  | Solidly in place | Needs Improvement | Urgent Gap |
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| 1. Our school has a team, with responsibility for transition, that reflects the voices/perspective of the entire school community ( e.g. families, preschools, special education, English language learning, health providers and other community partners.) |                  |                   |            |
| 2. Our school ensures that attendance is taken daily for all students, in a caring manner and entered into the district data system.   |                  |                   |            |
| 3. Our school has put in place restorative practices that support the social-emotional and physical health and ensure a warm, welcoming school climate and culture for all students, families, and staff.  |                  |                   |            |
| 4. Our school has a professional development and social/emotional support plan that equips all instructional and non-instructional staff to support students and their families.   |                  |                   |            |
| 5. Our schools' professional development offerings help staff to know and respect the realities, strengths and needs of the diverse families and young children who comprise our school community.   |                  |                   |            |
| 6. Our school ensures that facilitators of professional development sessions reflect the demographics of our school community (gender, race, home languages, religion and disabilities).   |                  |                   |            |
| 7. Our school has the skills and knowledge to identify, discuss and address educational inequities based on race, gender, income and disabilities.   |                  |                   |            |
| 8. Our staff and the families of our students are equipped to use technology to support distance learning.   |                  |                   |            |

| ACTIONABLE DATA | Solidly in place | Needs Improvement | Urgent Gap |
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| 1. Our team uses data gathered prior to and during school building closure (e.g., prior chronic absence, availability of contact information, connectivity, and participation) to identify students and families in need of extra support. |  |  |  |
| 2. Our team that reviews and analyzes data reflects the demographics of the families from our community.   |  |  |  |
| 3. Our school reviews attendance data broken down by grades, race/ethnicity, income, zip code, disability, English language learners, system-involved, homeless to identify, understand and address inequities.                            |  |  |  |
| 4. Our team receives and reviews quantitative and qualitative data about families and students who are transitioning from preschool settings or from other elementary schools.   |  |  |  |
| 5. Our team knows which entering students lack prior formal school experience.   |  |  |  |
| 6. Our school has developed a data-informed multi-tiered system of attendance supports.  |  |  |  |
| 7. Our school makes sure that families receive easy to understand data for their children (including attendance, behavior and academic progress) in a timely manner.   |  |  |  |
| 8. Our staff incorporates attendance and participation data in all meetings with families (e.g., IEPs, parent teacher conferences and home visits).  |  |  |  |
| 9. Our district has developed guidance for the implementation of a multi-tiered system of support that prioritizes students and student groups with the most lost learning time.   |  |  |  |

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| <b>POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT</b> | Solidly in Place | Needs Improvement | Urgent Gap |
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| 1. Our school has the resources and materials they need to ensure a restorative, positive and welcoming school climate that mitigates the stress and trauma.  |  |  |  |
| 2. Our school has a list of site-based, district-level and community resources that will be available to our school community as we transition back-to-school.  |  |  |  |
| 3. Our school is prepared to communicate with families during transitions (both planned and unexpected) about how classes will operate and how we will ensure health and safety.  |  |  |  |
| 4. Our school’s communication to families are on-going, clear, engaging, accessible and in home languages)  |  |  |  |
| 5. Our school offers playful, creative activities to welcome families and promote enthusiasm for the start of school (i.e. neighborhood ride-by, a visit from a mascot, decorate your own mask etc.)  |  |  |  |
| 6. Our teachers connect with each family during the first few weeks of school to hear about their child’s strengths, family goals and needs (including those related to disability, housing, food, income security and health and mental health care) as teachers develop student learning plans.                             |  |  |  |
| 7. Our school has a plan for providing personalized outreach to families of students in need of extra engagement (ie. they are new to our school, lost out on significant learning time during the prior school year and/or who do not show up for the first day of class).   |  |  |  |
| 8. Our school has inclusive enrichment opportunities, available virtually or outdoors that are responsive to family and student interests and are accessible to all students (English language learners, students with disabilities, students living in shelters or foster care, students who are economically disadvantaged) |  |  |  |
| 9. Our school has tailored strategies for engaging students and families disproportionately affected by COVID -19 and systemic inequities (i.e Black, Latinx, Native American and students and families living in poverty).   |  |  |  |
| 10. Our school engages families, who reflect the diversity of our community, in leading and designing family engagement and outreach activities.  |  |  |  |

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| <b>STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS</b> | Solidly in place | Needs Improvement | Urgent Gap |
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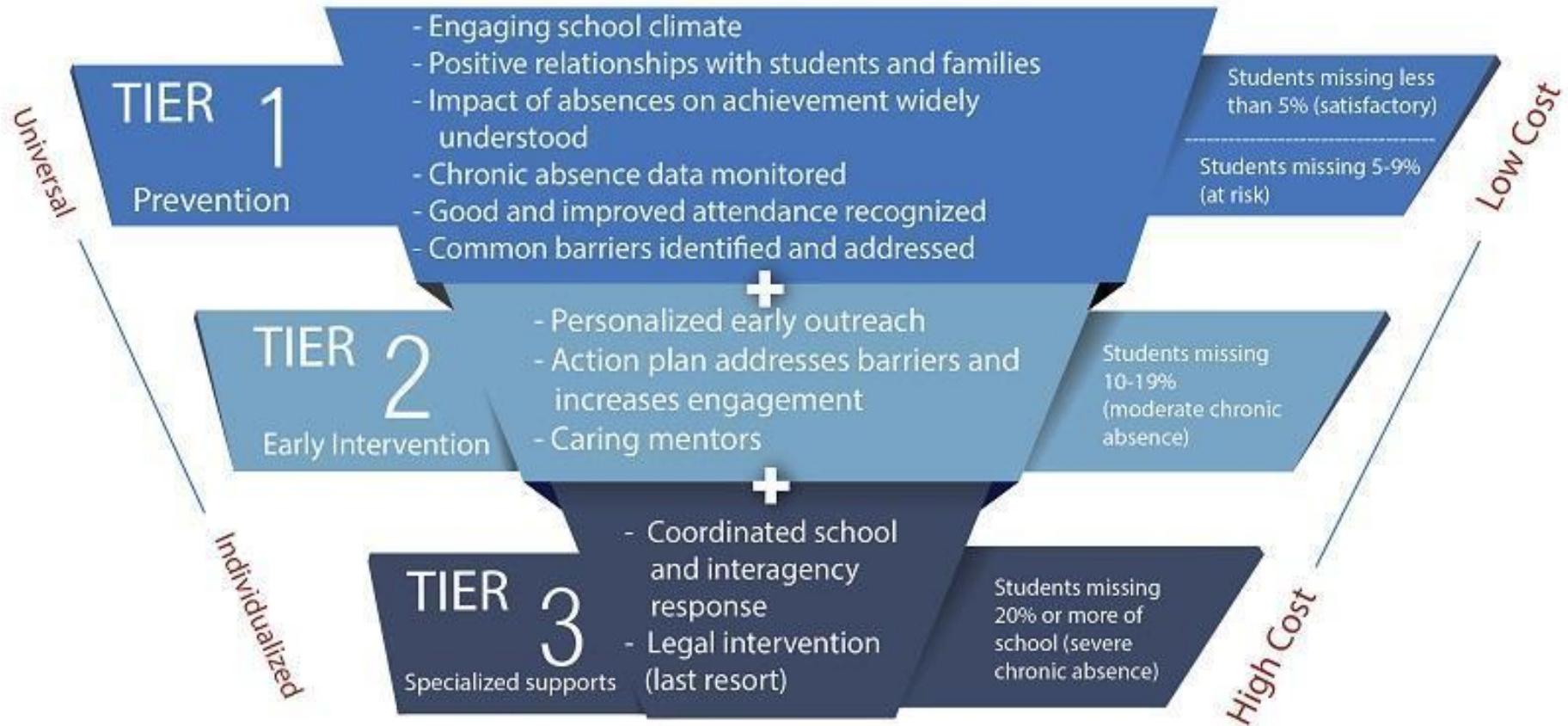
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| 1. Our school has established partnerships with community-based service providers (including those focused on disabilities) and grass-roots organizations in our immediate geography that have relationships with our school’s students and families.                |  |  |  |
| 2. Our school ensures that the staff of the partner agencies in our school community are representative of our students, families and staff (race, gender, disability, and religion)   |  |  |  |
| 3. Our school has expanded our partnerships to serve the mental, behavioral and physical health needs of our students and families.  |  |  |  |
| 4. Our school ensures community partners have access to the data they need to be problem solving partners  |  |  |  |
| 5. Our school ensures that all enrichment opportunities offered by partners are barrier-free and accessible to all students (English language learners, students with disabilities, students who are economically disadvantaged, students who are frequently absent) |  |  |  |
| 6. Our school reaches out to local media, businesses, sports teams and celebrities to celebrate consistent attendance /participation and student and family accomplishments.   |  |  |  |
| 7. Our school’s existing partnerships address the priority needs of students, families, and staff as identified by needs assessment, surveys and interviews with families  |  |  |  |
| 8. Our school and community partners work together to ensure students and families have virtual access to their services including related services identified in IEPs. who are most likely to miss school or be disengaged.   |  |  |  |

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| SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY | Solidly in place | Needs Improvement | Urgent Gap |
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| 1. Our school leader holds everyone in the school community accountable with appropriate support, for a successful transition to school and tracking attendance/participation in the 2020-21 school year.   |  |  |  |
| 2. Our school has worked with the district to negotiate the resources and responsibilities of staff needed to support improved attendance efforts.  |  |  |  |
| 3. Our school team ensures everyone in our school community (internal and external partners) are clear about their role in supporting students and families' ability to prioritize daily school attendance.   |  |  |  |
| 4. Our school promotes parent involvement in accountability and recruits parents who reflect the racial, ethnic, income, and disability diversity of the school.  |  |  |  |
| 5. Our school provides materials and resources to help families develop routines and attendance monitoring strategies that align with classroom practices.  |  |  |  |
| 6. Our school routinely uses data to document gaps in available resources and seek assistance from the district office and community partners.  |  |  |  |
| 7. Our school leader leverages our faculty/staff meetings to promote shared accountability (e.g. sharing attendance data and updates on progress and challenges, information on managing hybrid learning environments, and communicating information about new initiatives and partners). |  |  |  |
| 8. Our school requires all partners to submit goals outlining their plans for engagement, targeted goals and desired student outcomes.  |  |  |  |
| 9. Our school regularly updates our plans for teaching, learning and support during Covid 19 based upon data and lessons learned.   |  |  |  |

## Appendix A:

# Tiered System of Supports for Improving Attendance



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