

School Team Self-Assessment

The goal of this self-assessment is to help school leaders and their teams identify strengths and opportunities to implement a schoolwide attendance strategy. In addition to questions about the team's leadership capacity, the self-assessment is built around the **five key functions of a school team** that effectively address attendance, which are to:

1. **Organize** a multi-tiered attendance strategy that begins with prevention and early intervention
2. **Examine** attendance and absenteeism data to assess which groups of students have higher or lower levels of absence
3. **Identify** barriers that prevent students from attending school
4. **Mobilize** everyone in the school community to address attendance
5. **Determine** if you are making a difference

Instructions for the School Team Self-Assessment:

1. **Take a few minutes to fill out the self-assessment individually.** For each row, check the appropriate box: **Solidly in Place, Needs Improvement, Urgent Gap, Don't Know** and make notes about the **Rationale for Rating**.
2. **Compile the results** so you can see responses across all of the team members who took the surveys.
3. **Discuss the results** of the assessment as a team. If there are differences of opinion about the rating of a self-assessment question, take time to explore the differences in perspective that led to the different responses.
4. **Reach consensus** on what your priorities are for improvement.
5. **Discuss how your team can work together** to support implementation.

When schools are effectively implementing a multi-tiered schoolwide attendance strategy, they need to ensure that they are addressing the needs of all student groups, particularly those which data show are disproportionately chronically absent as compared to the overall student population. These student groups in your school may include students with disabilities, living in poverty, from communities of color, facing high mobility or homelessness, involved in foster care or juvenile justice systems, and experiencing the stress of immigration.

School Team Self-Assessment

Lead A Whole School Approach to Attendance	Solidly in place	Needs Improvement	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	Rationale for Rating
1. The principal makes attendance a top priority for the entire school.					
2. The group responsible for organizing the school's attendance strategy is aligned with other school teams to ensure attendance is an integral component of the school's plan to improve outcomes for all children.					
3. Our team members reflect the demographics of our school community and/or are able to bring the perspectives of the student demographics.					
4. Collectively, team members have the authority, will and skill to remove barriers to attendance for all students.					

Organize A Multi-Tiered Strategy	Solidly in place	Needs Improvement	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	Rationale for Rating
1. Our regular team agenda is aligned to a multi-tiered system of support.					
2. We proactively promote an engaging school climate.					
3. We have defined when Tier 2 or Tier 3 supports should be offered.					
4. We have a protocol for early personalized outreach to families.					
5. We connect students who are missing too much learning time to one adult in the school (e.g., Mentor or Family Ambassador).					
6. We have a coordinated interagency response to ensure students receive the additional support they need.					

Examine Attendance Data	Solidly in place	Needs Improvement	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	Rationale for Rating
1. Attendance is taken daily and consistently in a caring way.					
2. We only mark students present for a day if they have received a meaningful amount of instruction.					
3. Our attendance metrics have been expanded to include chronic absence, contact, connectivity, participation, and relationships.*					
4. Our data are broken down by grade, race/ethnicity, home language, disability, and zip code.					
5. Attendance and chronic absence data, trends, and patterns are monitored every week.					
6. Chronic absence data are used to identify students in need of early or intensive supports.					
7. We have a plan for monitoring attendance in the current school year.					

Identify Barriers & Gaps	Solidly in place	Needs Improvement	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	Rationale for Rating
1. We understand the factors that contribute to absences for individuals and groups of students.					
2. We understand the reasons for disproportionate absenteeism among students.					
3. We use qualitative information, drawing upon the perspectives of students and families, to deepen an understanding of the contributing factors and how they might be addressed.					
4. We examine if school policies, procedures or practices contribute to poor attendance.					
5. We align interventions to the reasons for absence.					

Mobilize the School Community	Solidly in place	Needs Improvement	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	Rationale for Rating
1. Our entire school staff has bought into an “all hands on deck” approach to attendance.					
2. We have professional development opportunities that equip the members of our school staff and partners to address attendance.					
3. We routinely communicate with staff and families in a timely manner about attendance expectations and changes to school operations and schedules.					
4. We have a yearly school attendance plan in place that guides the work of the attendance team and galvanizes the school community and partners.					
5. We use existing meetings and processes to promote attendance (e.g., parent-teacher conferences).					
6. Community partners and public agencies are partners in providing support to students and families.					

Monitor Progress	Solidly in place	Needs Improvement	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	Rationale for Rating
1. We have set schoolwide goals for attendance and chronic absence.					
2. We track interventions and identify any implementation issues.					
3. We monitor the efficacy of interventions and expand, modify or abandon based on evidence.					
4. Team members consistently engage in a continuous improvement cycle (e.g., small tests of change using Plan-Do-Study-Act).					
5. We assess whether our work is benefitting a significant number of students.					

*Attendance Works has expanded our metrics beyond chronic absence to include working contact information, connectivity, positive relationships between school staff, families and students, and participation in distance learning. For a definition of these metrics, go to <https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/monitoring-attendance-in-distance-learning/>