

State Education Agency Levers for Action

As states develop their attendance and engagement improvement roadmap, they should identify priority strategies and actions across the following eight state education agency (SEA) levers. These levers represent the primary ways states can influence systems, shape district practice and sustain progress toward reducing chronic absence. Consider how actions across these levers work together to advance the priority route(s) and reinforce the

[Key Ingredients of Systemic Change](#).

1. Policy, regulation and standards

Use policy, regulation and guidance to clarify expectations, remove barriers and reinforce prevention-first approaches to attendance. Examples of strategies in this area include:

- Issuing or updating guidance on tiered attendance strategies and early intervention
- Aligning attendance definitions, thresholds and reporting requirements
- Reviewing statutes, regulations or standards to remove counterproductive practices

2. Funding and resource allocation

Align funding, staffing and support to district needs, prioritizing communities with the highest levels of chronic absence. Examples of strategies in this area include:

- Braiding federal, state and local funds to support attendance strategies
- Prioritizing prevention and early intervention in grantmaking
- Targeting additional resources to districts with the greatest need

3. Data systems and reporting

Ensure attendance data is timely, accurate and actionable for decision-making at all levels. Examples of strategies in this area include:

- Strengthening data systems and developing real-time dashboards for student attendance
- Supporting disaggregation by student group, geography and grade level
- Pairing quantitative data with qualitative insights to understand root causes

4. Accountability and compliance

Use clear expectations, monitoring and follow-through to support implementation and continuous improvement. Examples of strategies in this area include:

- Establishing statewide attendance goals, benchmarks and milestones as part of the state accountability system
- Monitoring implementation and progress toward targets at state and local levels
- Using data to identify where additional support is needed

5. Capacity building

Strengthen district and school capacity to implement effective attendance strategies with fidelity. Examples of strategies in this area include:

- Professional learning focused on data use, engagement and MTSS alignment
- Coaching and technical assistance for priority districts
- Communities of practice that support peer learning and shared problem-solving

6. Workforce development and licensing

Align workforce expectations, preparation and professional requirements to support effective attendance practices. Examples of strategies in this area include:

- Integrating attendance, engagement and family partnership into licensure or certification renewal requirements
- Collaborate with educator preparation programs to introduce attendance concepts in curricula

7. Communication and convening

Use communication and convening power to build urgency, coherence and shared understanding. Examples of strategies in this area include:

- Convening districts, families and partners to share learning through conferences and other opportunities
- Highlighting bright spots and lessons learned
- Developing statewide messaging on the importance of attendance and engagement

8. Cross-agency coordination

Coordinate with other state agencies, organizations and partners to address the underlying drivers of chronic absence. Examples of strategies in this area include:

- Formal partnerships with health, transportation, housing or human services agencies
- Collaboration with community-based organizations and intermediaries

Visit The 50% Challenge: Crafting a State Road Map toolkit <https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/the-50-challenge-crafting-a-state-road-map/>

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