



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

April 8, 2024

Dear Chief State School Officer:

The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) and the [Student Engagement and Attendance Center](#) (SEAC) are pleased to invite you to join *Promoting Attendance Early: Absenteeism in Kindergarten and the Early Grades*, a virtual learning series for State education agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs) and partners involved in early grade and kindergarten attendance.

This learning series will provide participants with an opportunity to:

- Learn about the impacts of chronic absenteeism in kindergarten;
- Explore the current landscape, including the availability of data and root causes, of chronic absenteeism in kindergarten and early grades;
- Discuss how disparities in kindergarten attendance are impacting special populations such as students without Pre-K experience, English learners, and students with disabilities.

Each of the three virtual meetings is designed to help SEA teams to learn from their peers, hear from subject matter experts, develop next steps to apply what they learn, and provide ample opportunities for small group discussions. This learning series is part of a year-long focus on [Building Systemic Supports for Better Attendance](#), which will include future series on other topics related to addressing chronic absenteeism.

Content and Logistics

Content: The *Promoting Attendance Early: Absenteeism in Kindergarten and the Early Grades* learning series is comprised of three sixty-minute virtual meetings. The first session will feature presentations by the Department's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Early Learning, Swati Adarkar; and [Attendance Works](#) and explore national trends in kindergarten absenteeism and the impact of kindergarten absence on long-term student success. The second session will explore root causes and how to strengthen kindergarten attendance supports for special populations such as students without Pre-K experience, English learners, and students with disabilities. The third session will showcase a panel of federal, SEA, and LEA partners to identify priorities and effective strategies that promote Kindergarten attendance.

Who should attend? SEAs can select three to five staff to participate as a team. Additionally, each SEA can invite up to five additional participants from LEAs, technical assistance intermediaries, or other organizations involved in early grade/ kindergarten attendance who will benefit from the series. It is strongly encouraged that a lead from each state coordinate team

selection and that team members participate in all three meetings to support shared learning, collaboration, and follow-through on next steps.

Meeting Schedule: Each session is held via Zoom following the schedule below:

- Session One: Wednesday, April 24, 1:00-2:00 PM ET
- Session Two: Wednesday, May 1, 1:00-2:00 PM ET
- Session Three: Wednesday, May 8, 1:00-2:00 PM ET

Please register [here](#) by **Friday, April 19, 2024**. Please feel free to forward this link to your colleagues who will benefit from participating; however, the SEAC team strongly suggests that each SEA coordinates the registration process to participate as a team. If you have any questions about the event, please contact the SEAC team at SEACenter@westat.com.

We hope you will consider joining this peer learning opportunity.

Respectfully,



Ruth E. Ryder
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and
Programs, Formula Grants
Office of Elementary & Secondary Education |
United States Department of Education