Session 2

Early Intervention Strategies:
Monitoring & Identifying Students in Need of Support during Distance Learning

Welcome!

Cecelia Leong
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Three E-Learning Sessions

During these sessions, participants will learn how to work as a team to take a multi-tiered approach to improve attendance in their schools:

- ❖ **Session 1** — Whole School Engagement Strategies for Reducing Student Absenteeism, Wednesday, January 13

- ❖ **Session 2** — Early Intervention Strategies: Monitoring and Identifying Students in Need of Support during Distance Learning, Wednesday, February 3

- ❖ **Session 3** — Partnerships that Make a Difference: Coordinated Systems Strategies, Wednesday, February 24

Learning Goals for Session 2

Participants will:

- ✓ Learn which attendance measures to monitor in order to identify students in need of engagement and support.

- ✓ Identify the key functions of a school team that addresses attendance and take stock of where they are in having a high-functioning team.

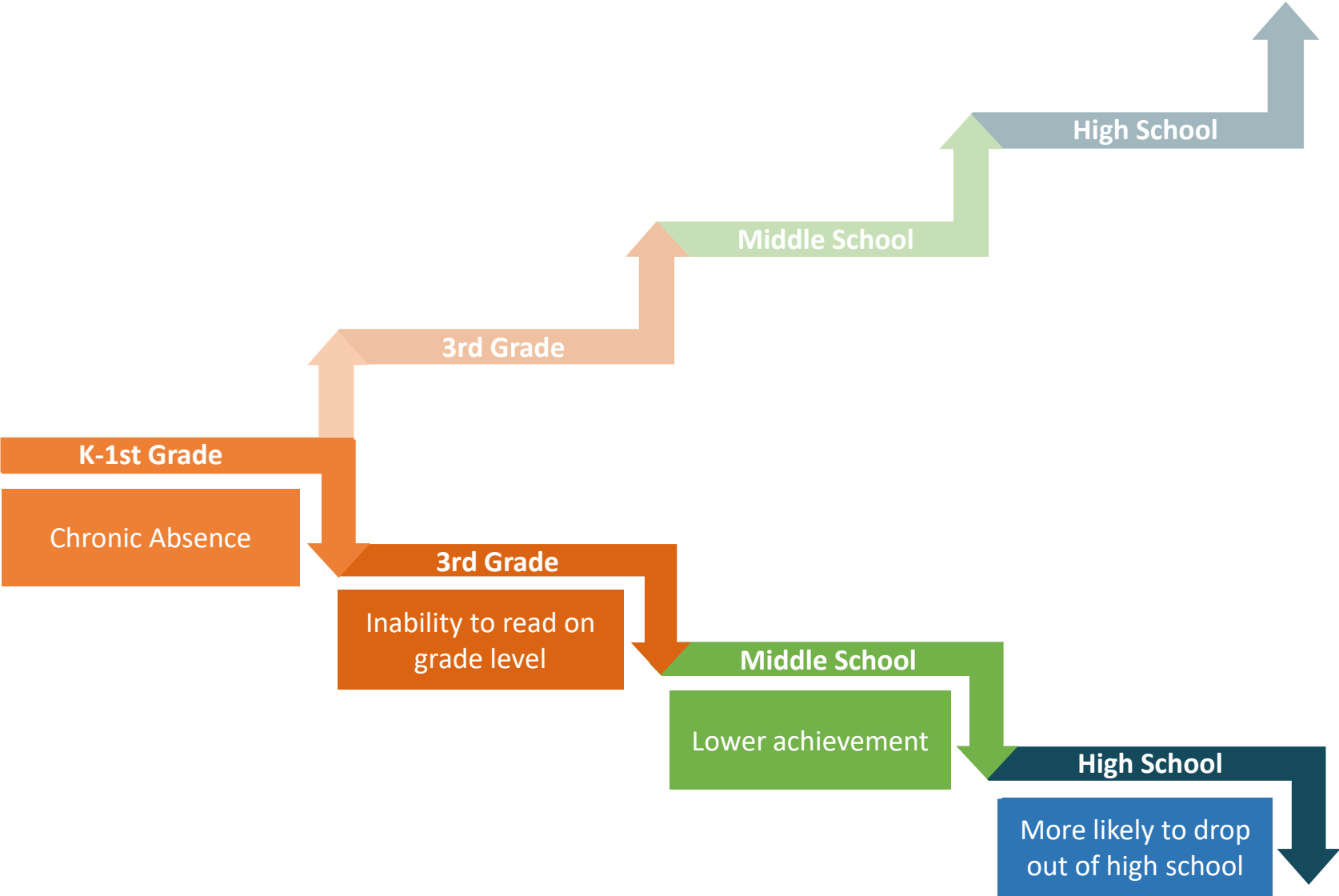- ✓ Be able to draw on high leverage strategies to address common reasons for student absenteeism.

Getting Started: Introductions

Use the Chat and share:

✓ Your name and role

✓ Your school and district

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Key Concepts from Session One

Improving Attendance Matters

High School

Middle School

3rd Grade

K-1st Grade

Chronic Absence

3rd Grade

Inability to read on grade level

Middle School

Lower achievement

High School

More likely to drop out of high school

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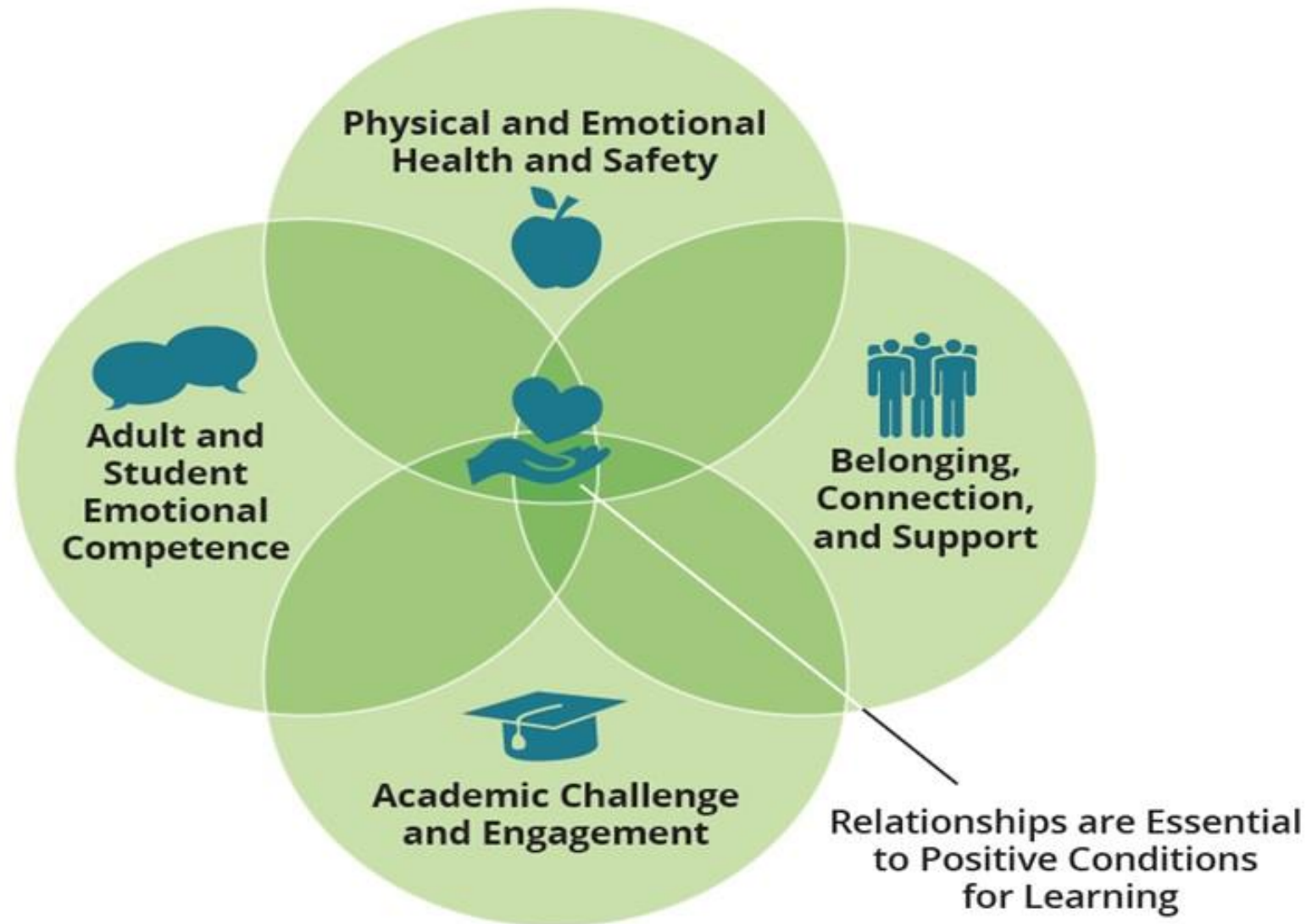# Absenteeism is a *leading* indicator and a *cause* of educational inequity

Chronic Absence Measures Lost Opportunity to Learn

Chronic absence is missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at risk. Chronic absence is defined as **missing 10 percent or more of school for any reason.**

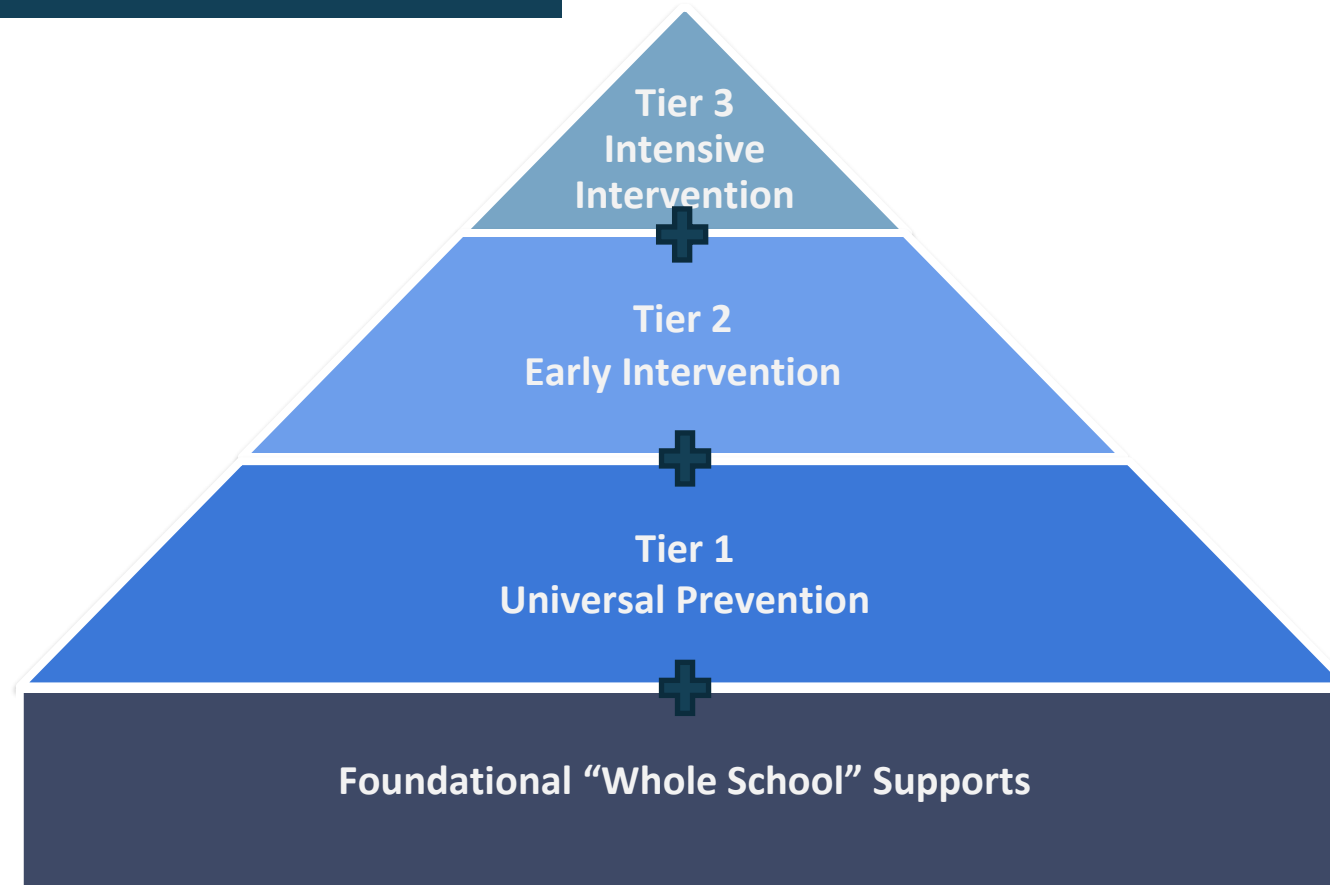**Excused absences** + **Unexcused absences** + **Suspensions** → **Chronic Absence**
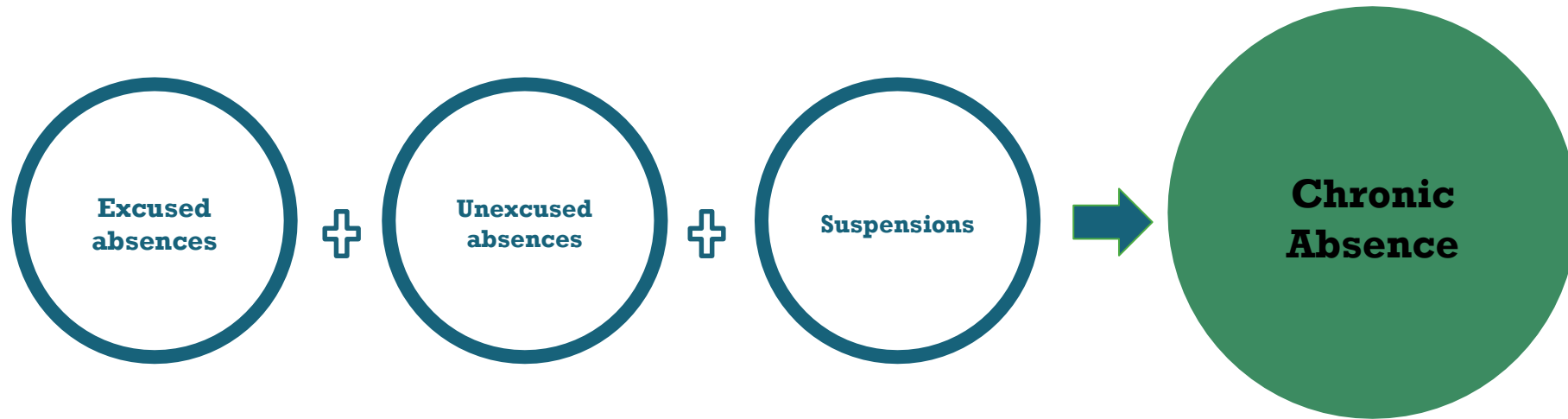
Chronic absence is different from **truancy** (unexcused absences only) or **average daily attendance** (how many students show up to school each day).

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Absenteeism is a Sign that Positive Conditions for Learning are Missing, Whether Classes are In Person, Distance or Blended

Physical and Emotional Health and Safety

Adult and Student Emotional Competence

Belonging, Connection, and Support

Academic Challenge and Engagement

Relationships are Essential to Positive Conditions for Learning

When Tackling Absenteeism, Begin with Whole School and Prevention Strategies

Tier 3
Intensive Intervention

Tier 2
Early Intervention

Tier 1
Universal Prevention

Foundational "Whole School" Supports

Foundational Supports are Building Blocks of Schools that Promote Attendance

Physically healthy learning environment	Enrichment activities and clubs	Positive relationships	Support for families to facilitate learning at home
Access to tech equipment and connectivity	Access to Learning Supports	Routines, rituals and celebrations	A culture of continuous improvement
Welcoming, safe, trauma-informed school climate	Home rooms and/or Advisory	A published schedule of classes	Active engagement of families in planning

Foundational Supports

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Three High Leverage Strategies

**Tier 1
Universal Prevention**

1. Warm and welcoming School Climate

2. Positive Relationships with Families and Students

3. Clear expectations and communication about attendance

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Learning Reflection Chat

Of the three high leverage strategies we reviewed during Session 1, which one are you most likely to implement or have begun exploring how to implement?

❑ Warm and welcoming school climate

❑ Positive relationships with families and students

❑ Clear expectations and communication about attendance

Reducing Chronic Absence Requires a Team Approach

What makes a team effective?

Use the Chat:

Describe one principle or value that is essential to an effective team.

Primary Purpose of a Team Approach

Organize and facilitate a schoolwide attendance strategy and ensure it is an integral component of the school's plan to improve outcomes for all students.

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 and inequities that prevent students from attending school.

4. Mobilize everyone in the school community to address attendance.

5. Determine if you are making a difference.

Attendance Team in Action

https://vimeo.com/260324608
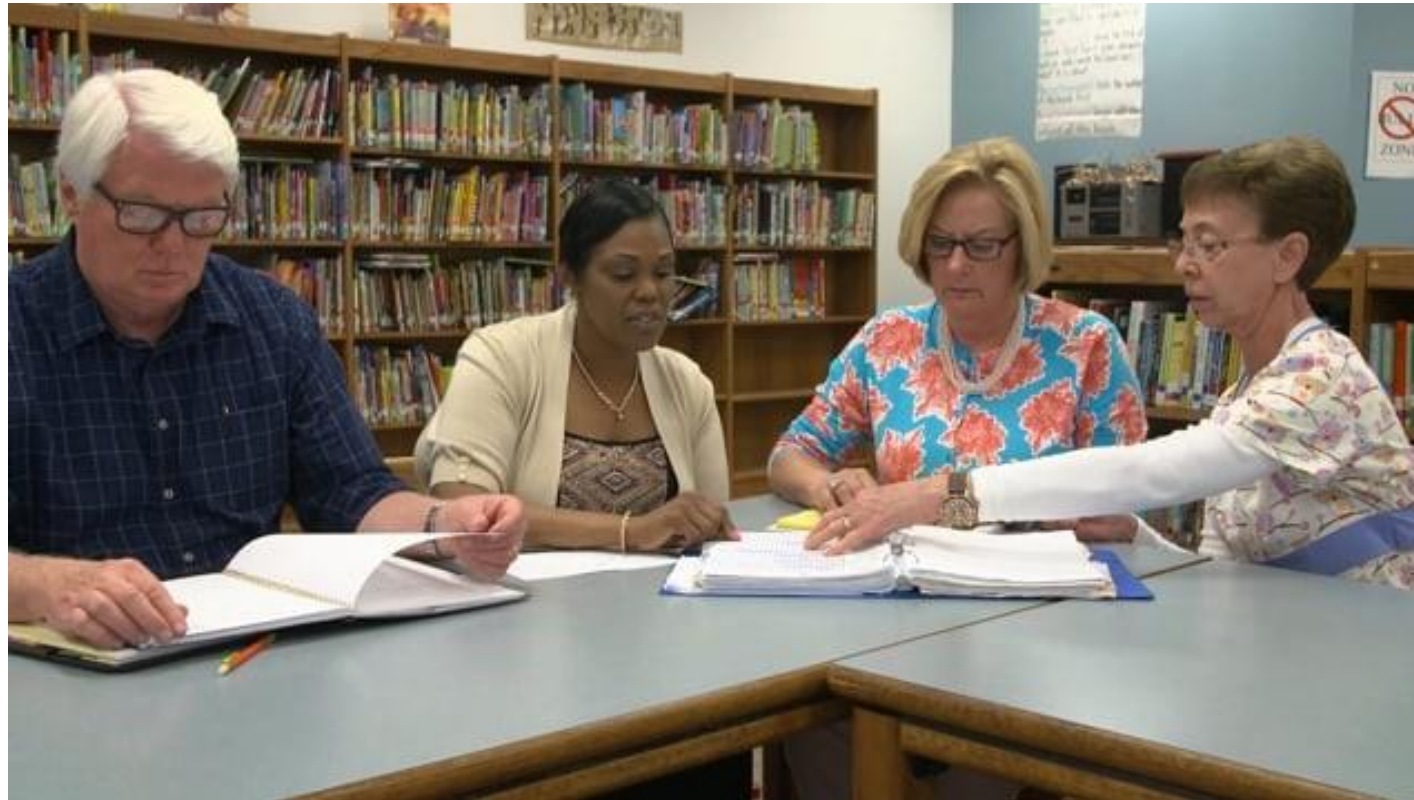
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Ensure Team Composition is Reflective of the School Community

The Attendance Strategy should be led by the school principal and the leadership team.

Teams working on improving student attendance could include the school's:

* Nurse
* Counselor
* Social Worker
* Administrative support staff
* Special education staff
* Teachers
* Early education staff
* Expanded Learning program staff

Members should be able to bring the perspectives of the student demographics.

Teams should incorporate input from families and students along with the community.

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Determine which team(s) will assume the attendance MTSS functions

❑ Map all the teams that currently operate in your school by purpose, membership and meeting schedule.
(see this worksheet: https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Map-of-School-Teams.pdf)

❑ Identify areas of overlap, redundancy and/or gaps.

❑ Consider if attendance responsibilities can be integrated into an existing team (e.g., PBIS, RTI, SRBI, grade-level, etc.).

❑ Consider if different teams can assume responsibility for each Tier and how efforts will be coordinated across teams.

❑ Determine if a new team needs to be established.

Poll

Which team addresses attendance?

❑ Stand-alone attendance team

❑ Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports or PBIS team *(attendance and behavior)*

❑ Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) team

❑ Response to Intervention (RTI) team

❑ Case Management Team

❑ Other

Avoid Common Pitfalls

✖ Establish a team that operates in isolation

✖ Fail to rally whole school to support prevention & early intervention

✖ Focus only on students with most absences

✖ Case management as the sole strategy

✖ Jumping to solutions without sufficient understanding of factors behind absences

✖ Team composition does not reflect the demographics, perspectives or cultural realities of the student population

Team Self-Assessment

How well does your team...

- Lead a Whole School Approach to Attendance

- Organize a Multi-Tiered Strategy

- Examine Attendance Data

- Identify Barriers & Inequities

- Mobilize the School Community

- Monitor Progress

School Team Self-Assessment

Lead A Whole School Approach to Attendance	Solidly in Place	Measurable Progress	Needs Improvement	Urgent Gap	Evidence
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 and address inequities.					

Organize A Multi-Tiered Strategy	Solidly in Place	Measurable Progress	Needs Improvement	Urgent Gap	Evidence
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.					

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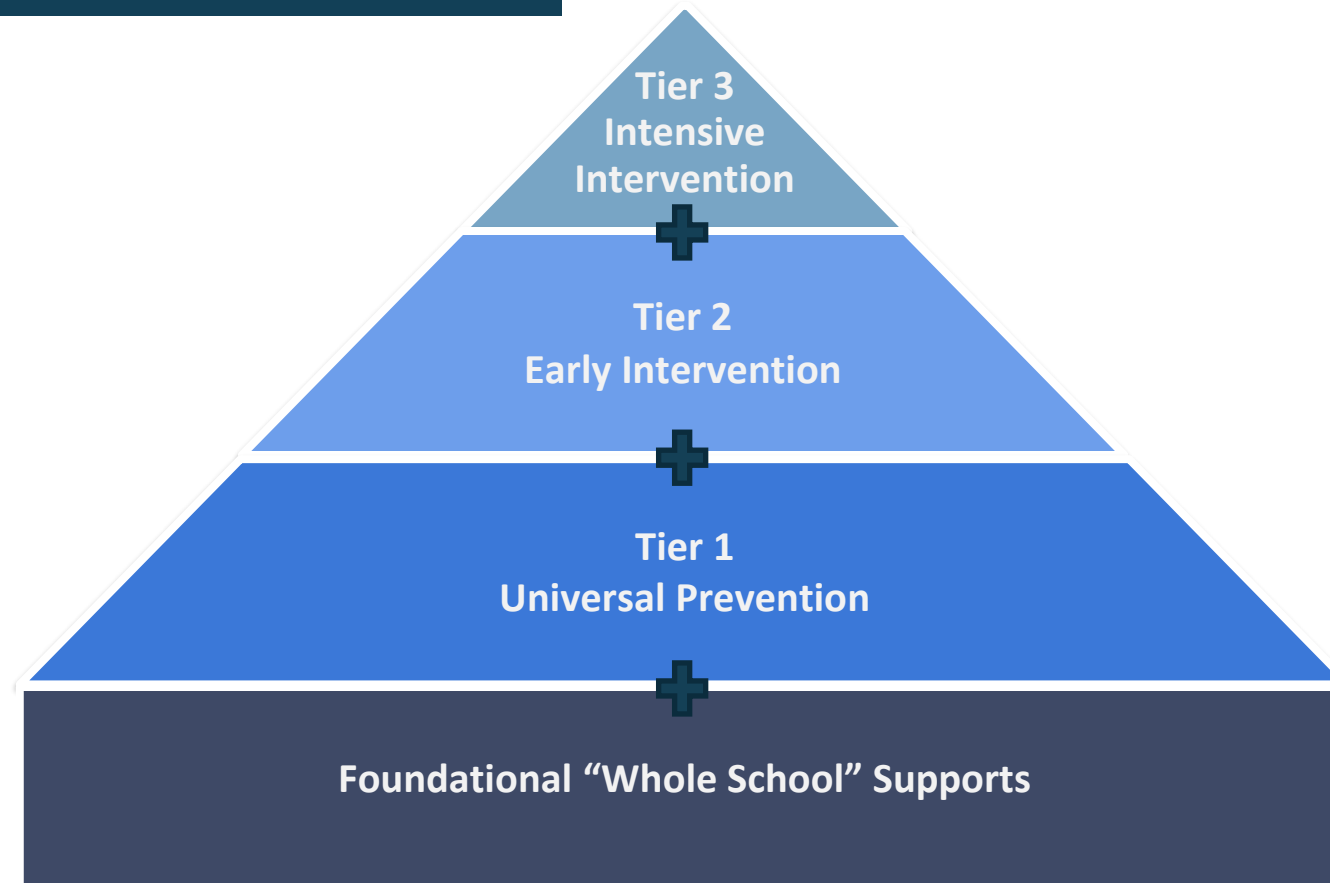
Team Function #1:

Organize a multi-tiered attendance strategy that begins with prevention and early intervention.

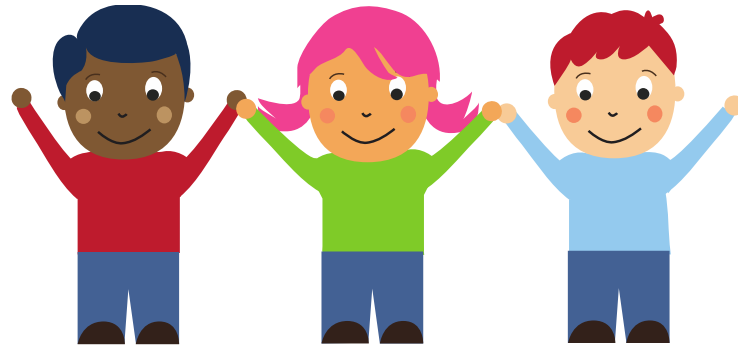# Use Data to Support an Integrated Multi-tiered System of Support

Tier 3
Intensive
Intervention

Tier 2
Early Intervention

Tier 1
Universal Prevention

Foundational "Whole School" Supports

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Team Function #2:

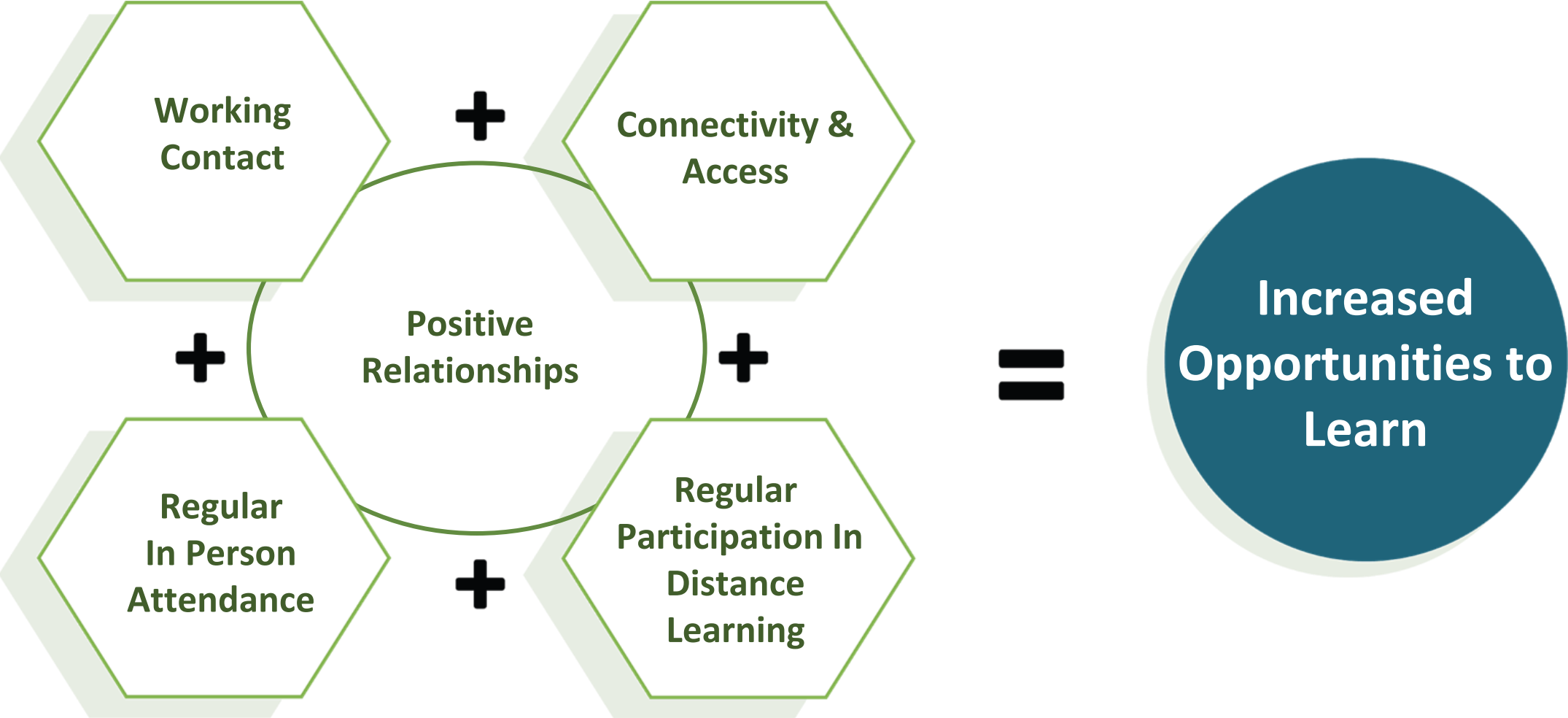*Examine attendance & absenteeism data to assess which groups of students have higher or lower levels of absence*

❖ When are students marked present in distance learning?

❖ When are students marked absent?

An expanded framework for attendance & absenteeism data is needed to…

1. Encourage monitoring lost learning time in school (in-person and distance) in order to promote student success.

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.

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Expanding How to Measure the Opportunity to Learn

Working Contact

+

Connectivity & Access

+

Positive Relationships

+

Regular In Person Attendance

+

Regular Participation In Distance Learning

=

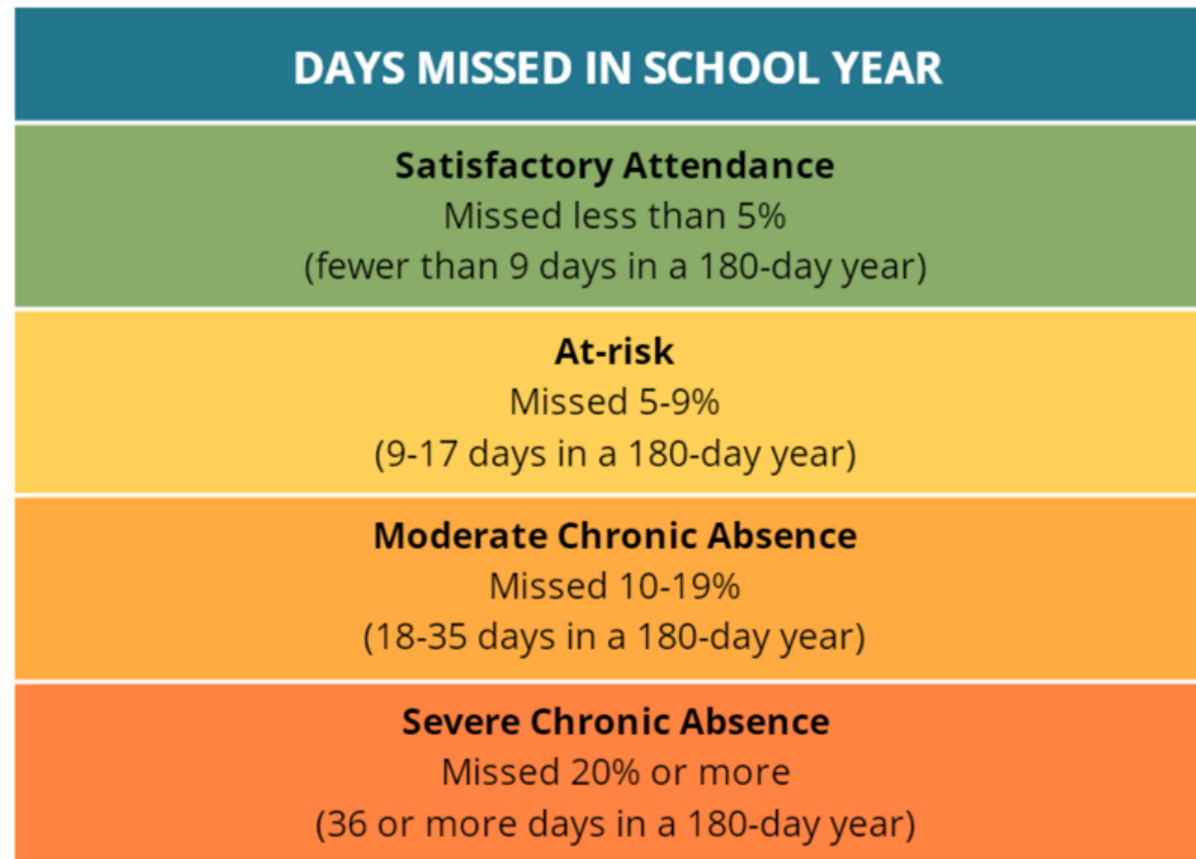**Increased Opportunities to Learn**

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How to Identify Students on the Cusp of Chronic Absence

Calculating Student Attendance Rate:

Total days of Attendance
Total days of membership

DAYS MISSED IN SCHOOL YEAR

Satisfactory Attendance
Missed less than 5%
(fewer than 9 days in a 180-day year)

At-risk
Missed 5-9%
(9-17 days in a 180-day year)

9-13 days as of today 2/3/21

Moderate Chronic Absence
Missed 10-19%
(18-35 days in a 180-day year)

Severe Chronic Absence
Missed 20% or more
(36 or more days in a 180-day year)

Early Intervention Warning Indicators

**Tier 2
Early Intervention**

Suggested Criteria for what activates early intervention:

- Missing 10-19% of school in prior school year before closure

- Missing 10-19% of distance learning opportunities during closure in spring 2020 (this is assuming the school district took attendance)

- Missing 10% of learning opportunities during current year

- Lost contact with student/family – wellness check (Immediate action required)

Consider who should respond: Attendance staff? Counselors? Nurses? Community partners? Advisory Teachers? Social work interns?

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What should happen at our school for each level of absence?

sample form: *https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/School-summary-of-actions-SAMPLE-FORM.pdf*

Number of Absences	Action(s)	People Responsible	Resources	Documentation
0	Welcome Letter Welcome Video on website	School secretary Principal and person who updates the school website	• Link to resources, e.g. District letter that can be personalized by principal / school team • AW Flyers • AW Student Success Plan	
1-2	Call Home	Teacher	• Call Script	Log in Student Screen on SIS
3-4	Call Home	School Counselor or Social Worker	• Call Script • Documentation of Reasons *https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/teacher-attendance-strategy-worksheet-rev-10-16-19.pdf*	Log in Student Screen on SIS
5	Family Meeting	Principal or other School Administrator	• Standard agenda for family meeting • Student Success Plan • List of resources • Form for taking notes and follow up	Use district form for family meeting Attach

Blank form: *https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/School-summary-of-actions-BLANK-FORM.pdf*

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Small Group Discussion

1. What data is your school using to activate interventions and supports for individual students?

2. Who is responsible for responding?

Blank form: *https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/School-summary-of-actions-BLANK-FORM.pdf*
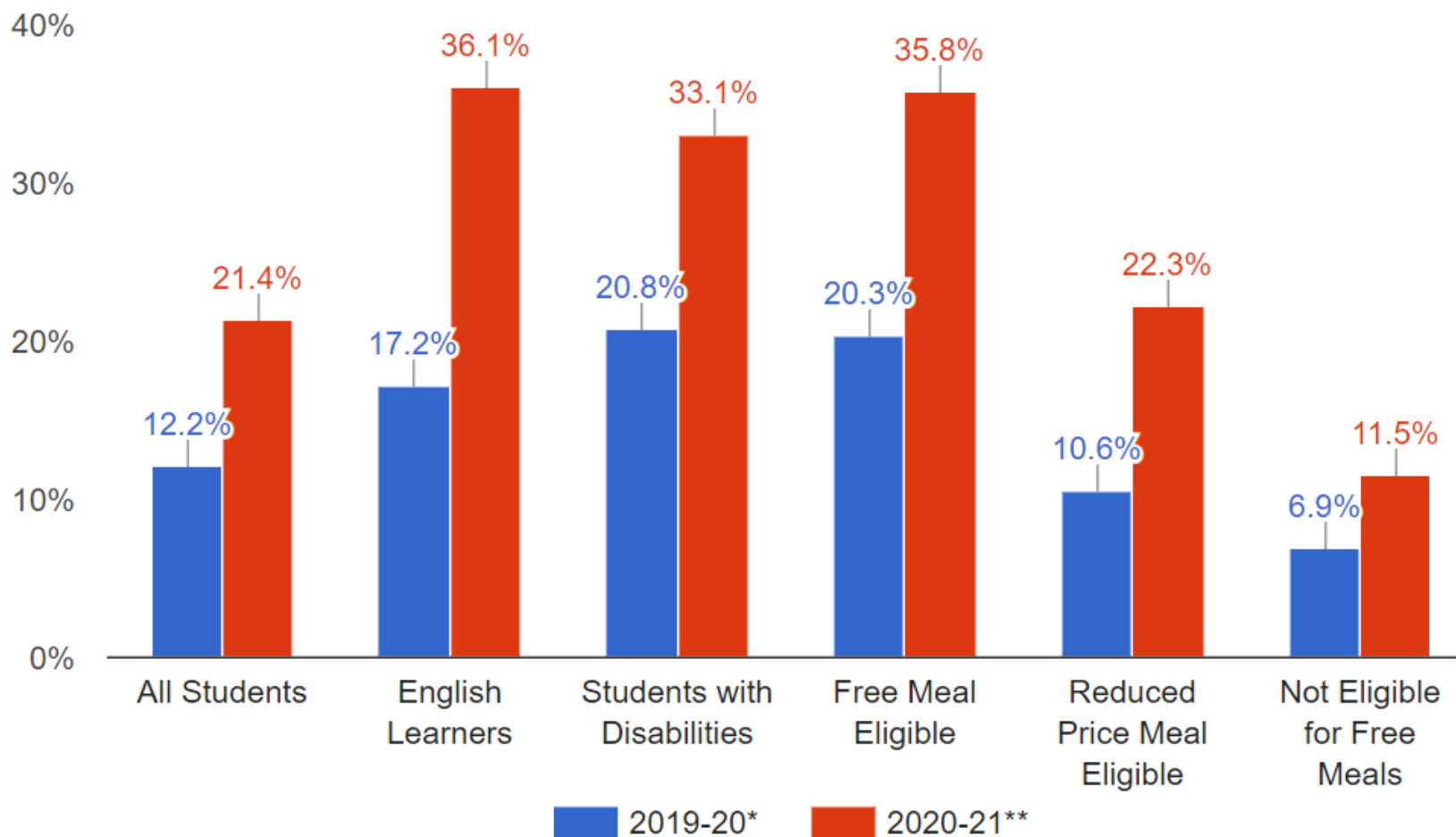
Attendance Works ©

Use Data to Identify and Address Inequities

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

➢ 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.

➢ Determine how to address unequal access to resources.

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This data from Connecticut is the first statewide data available in the country.

Percentage of Students Chronically Absent (YTD as of Dec. 2020 compared to 2019-20)

	2019-20*	2020-21**
All Students	12.2%	21.4%
English Learners	17.2%	36.1%
Students with Disabilities	20.8%	33.1%
Free Meal Eligible	20.3%	35.8%
Reduced Price Meal Eligible	10.6%	22.3%
Not Eligible for Free Meals	6.9%	11.5%

*Calculations are based only on in-person school days until mid-March 2020. **Calculations include both in-person and remote days.

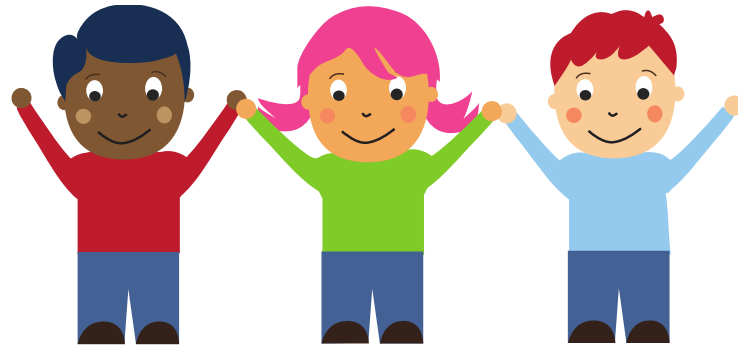http://edsight.ct.gov/relatedreports/Supporting%20Student%20Participation%20in%202020-21.html

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Let's Chat

❖ Which groups of students in your school have higher rates of absenteeism?

❖ Which groups struggle most with connectivity?

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Team Function #3:
Identify barriers & inequities that prevent students from attending school

Check Your Perceptions

Perception vs. Reality

Common Misperceptions

Dillon's Story

Dillon missed 36 days of school last year. That's a lot of instruction time missed. *Why is he absent so often, especially in these early years?*

THE REALITY

Dillon was diagnosed with asthma as a baby. He struggles with outdoor activities and relies on a rescue inhaler many days at school. He lives with his widowed grandmother. When the air quality is bad, his grandmother keeps him home.

SEE ANOTHER EXAMPLE

Solutions Require Understanding What Factors Contribute to Chronic Absence

Barriers

- Chronic and acute illness
- Family responsibilities or home situation
- Trauma
- Poor transportation
- Housing and food insecurity
- Inequitable access to needed services
- System involvement
- Etc. and many more!

Aversion

- Struggling academically and/or behaviorally
- Unwelcoming school climate
- Social and peer challenges
- Biased disciplinary and suspension practices
- Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations
- Negative parental attitudes about education

Disengagement

- Lack of challenging, culturally responsive instruction
- Bored
- No meaningful relationships to adults in the school
- Lack of enrichment opportunities
- Lack of academic and behavioral support
- Failure to earn credits

Misconceptions

- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Missing 2 days per month doesn't affect learning
- Sporadic absences aren't a problem
- Attendance only matters in the older grades
- Suspensions don't count as absence

Asking Powerful Questions

5 Whys Worksheet

Define the Problem:

Students have higher rates of absences in distance learning.

Why is this happening?

1. Students feel disconnected and disengaged.

   Why is that?

2. Attending virtually reduces the accountability of being in person.

   Why is that?

3. In person attendance allows a teacher to connect more personally with the learner.

   Why is that?

4. Interactions aren't only limited to didactic instruction teachers can meet with a student one on one.

   Why is that?

5. Being in school allows for multiple possibilities for personalized interaction.

Blank worksheet:

https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Five-Whys-Worksheet.pdf

Use the 5 Whys to understand a problem and the system that produces it.

Caution: do not use it to lay blame on students or families

Identified Root Cause:
Students feel less connected to their teachers, and have a reduced sense of responsibility and have less personalized encouragement.

Let's Chat

	Examples of Challenges Students & Families Experience during Covid-19
Barriers	• Family circumstances contribute to frequent absences (e.g., homelessness, joblessness, child-care, health or mental issues of the parent/caregiver) • ?
Aversion	• The student is struggling academically • ?
Disengagement	• The remote instruction/curriculum is not engaging • ?
Misconceptions	• Parents may not understand what it means "to be in attendance" in remote learning • ?

Take Time to Gather Information about Why Students Miss School

- Student and Family Focus Groups
- Student and Family Survey Data
- Student and Family Centered Problem-Solving Conversations
- School Staff Insights
- School Staff Observations
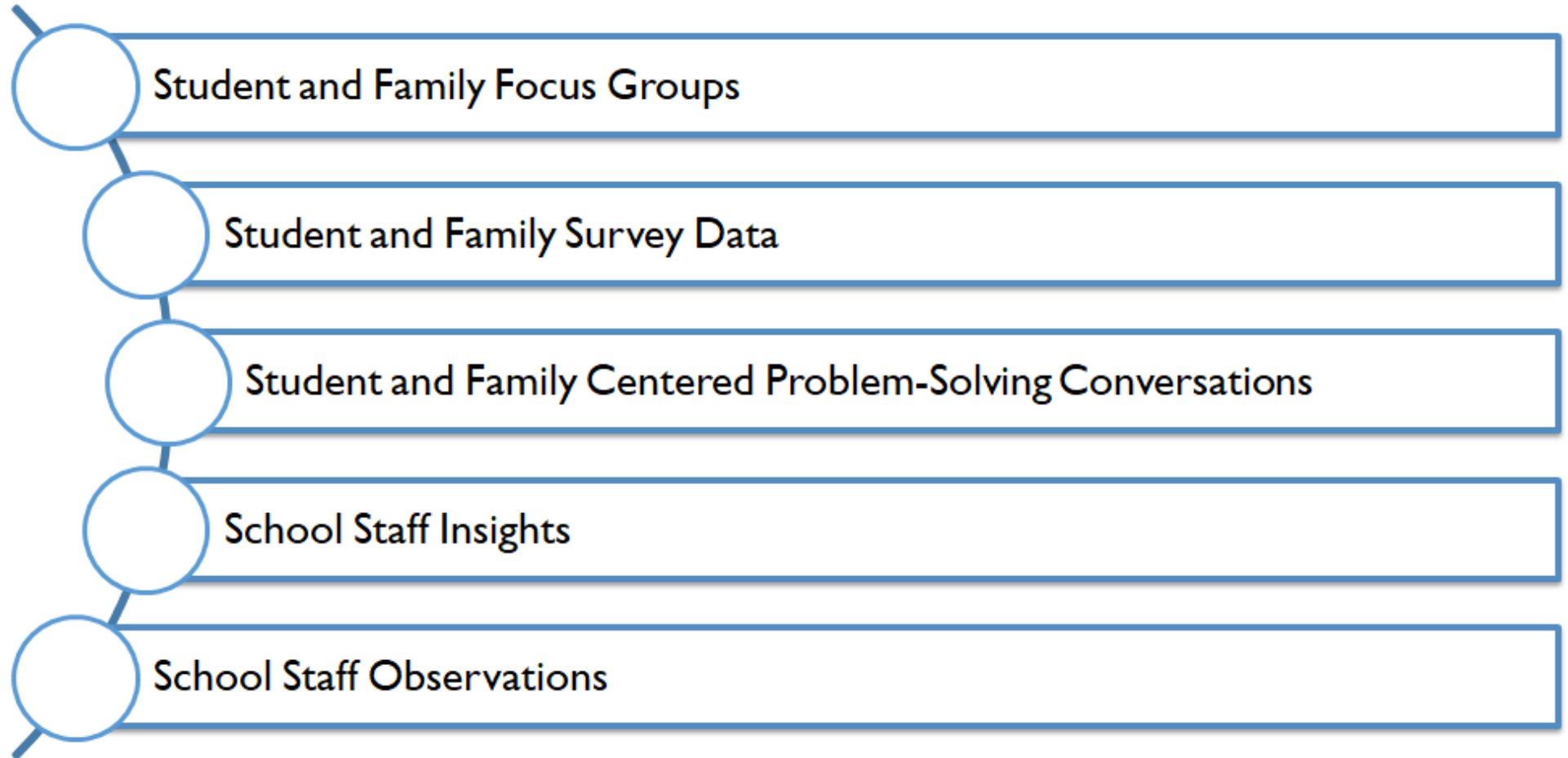
Addressing Reasons for Absences

https://vimeo.com/260324362

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Tier 2:
Early Intervention Strategies

Expanded learning opportunities

Student Attendance Success Plan

Attendance goals and supports added to IEP

Assign caring mentors

Personalized Early Outreach

Small group supports

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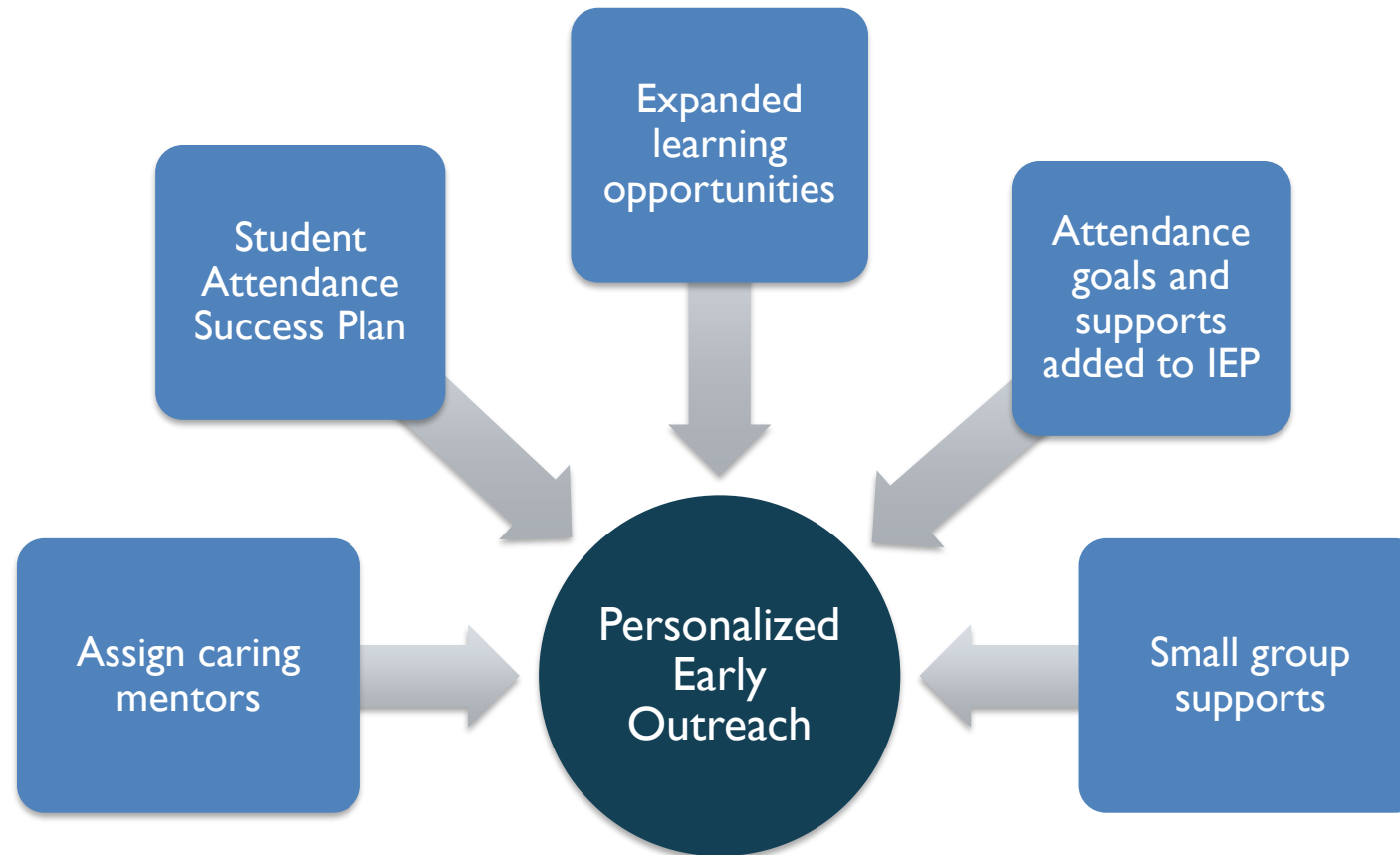
Align Interventions to Reasons for Absences

Reason for Absence	Possible Interventions
Lack of Connectivity	• Provide one device per student in each household • Install hot spots in areas with low or no internet • Provide a helpline for students and families having difficulty connecting
Parents do not understand impact of absences	• Create an education campaign that connects academic outcomes by grade level with attendance • When working with individual families explore their hopes for their child and help connect them to school and attendance
Parent Work Schedules Out-of-Sync	• Offer before or after school programming • Provide a modified schedule that aligns teaching and parent availability • *Type your ideas into Chat...*

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Breakout Groups

Select one reason students in your school are absent.

What possible interventions can be aligned to address the reasons you have identified for students missing school?

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Attendance Playbook: Covid Edition

- Evidence-based interventions to improve attendance
- Links to effective programs and resources
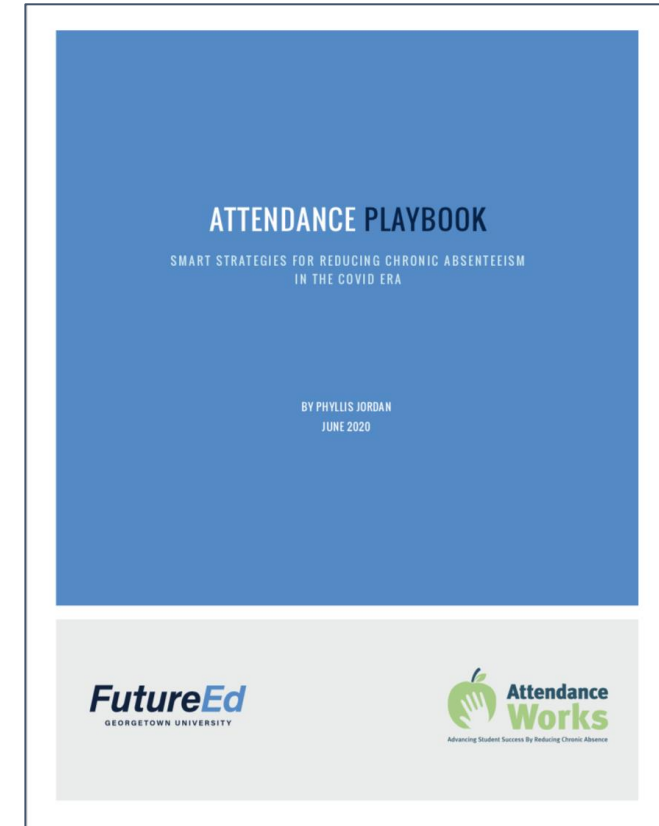- Listed by tiers for use
- A section on monitoring attendance in distance learning
- Covid-19 modifications for interventions
- Added guidance on clean environment

ATTENDANCE PLAYBOOK

SMART STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM IN THE COVID ERA

BY PHYLLIS JORDAN
JUNE 2020

FutureEd
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Attendance Works
Advancing Student Success By Reducing Chronic Absence

https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/attendance-playbook/

FutureEd
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

How to Use the Attendance Playbook

The Guide to the Attendance Playbook offers practical tips for:

➢ Forming a team

➢ Using attendance data to determine the number of strategies

➢ Analyzing why students are absent and selecting strategies that address those reasons

➢ Realistically assessing your team's capacity to implement each strategy

➢ Selecting strategies that are likely to have the greatest impact for the lowest effort

➢ Making an implementation plan

➢ Assessing how well the strategies worked

https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/attendance-playbook/

How do we know we're making a difference?

Answer these four key questions:

1. How much did we do? *(quantity)*

2. How well did we do it? *(quality)*

3. What difference did we make? *(population-level indicators)*

4. Who was better off? *(impact on the population)*

Questions from the Audience

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Evaluation Survey

Please let us know how we can improve:

https://app.upmetrics.com/data_collector/ckf2oltbqlt8k0759tfdbfybj

Thank you!

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www.attendanceworks.org

Map of School Teams

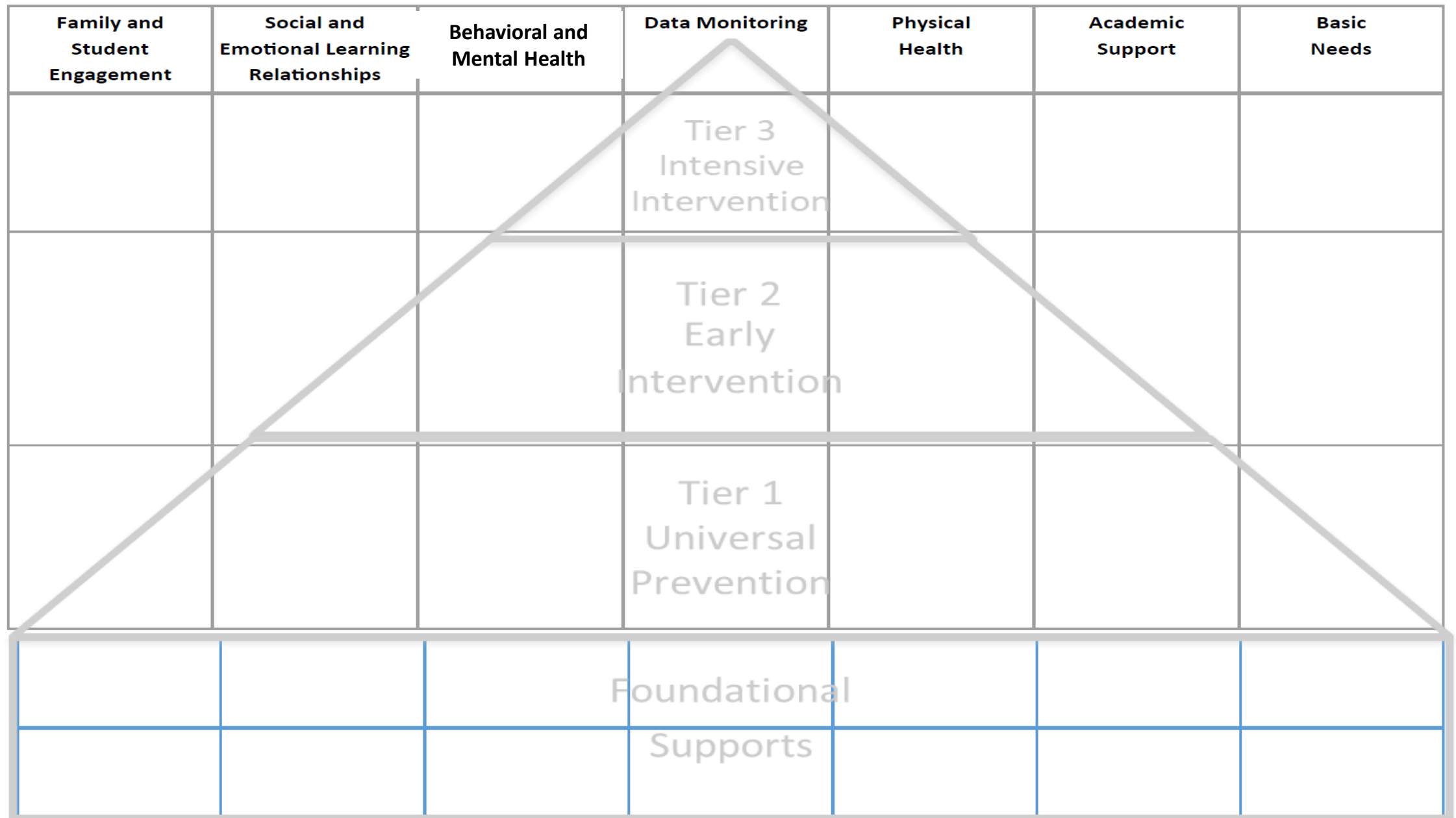| Name of Team	Team Purpose	Team Members	Meeting Frequency

https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Map-of-School-Teams.pdf

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Family and Student Engagement	Social and Emotional Learning Relationships	Behavioral and Mental health	Data Monitoring	Physical Health	Academic Support	Basic Needs
Connect family with community supports	Conduct empathy interview	Individual Plan based on Identified Needs	Intensive outreach to locate student and family and assess situation	Individual Plan based on Identified Needs	Connect with a tutor or other individualized academic support	Provision of targeted resources
Virtual/physically distanced family meeting or home visit when absences add-up	Institute Success Mentor or Family Ambassador Program	Small group counseling to provide support for students dealing with anxiety	Using absenteeism data to activate targeted supports	Assist a family with identifying a medical home / family health practitioner	Additional tech support and training for families and students	Assisting a family with signing up for public programs e.g. Medicaid, SNAP etc.
Community building to create belonging and connection	Invite families to design the school's drop-off and pick-up protocols	Individual wellness check and connectivity assessments	Personalized outreach and communication to families when students are absent	Immunization Clinic	Clear, concise and consistent communication about schedules and expectations	School Community Food and Household Goods Pantry

Tier 3 Intensive Intervention

Tier 2 Early Intervention

Tier 1 Universal Prevention

Physically healthy learning environment	Welcoming, socially-emotionally safe, trauma-informed school climate	A culture of continuous improvement	Home rooms and/or Advisory	Active engagement of parents and students in planning and problem solving	A leadership team that monitors attendance data
Access to tech equipment and connectivity	Access to Learning Supports	Enrichment activities and clubs	Routines, rituals and celebrations	A schedule of classes and where/how they are held	Support for all families to facilitate learning at home

Family and Student Engagement	Social and Emotional Learning Relationships	Behavioral and Mental Health	Data Monitoring	Physical Health	Academic Support	Basic Needs
			Tier 3 Intensive Intervention			
			Tier 2 Early Intervention			
			Tier 1 Universal Prevention			
			Foundational Supports			

About Us

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

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