## Session 2

## Early Intervention Strategies:

## Using Teams to Monitor \& Identify

Students in Need of Support

## Welcome!



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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 I - Whole School Engagement Strategies for Reducing Student Absenteeism
* Session 2 - Early Intervention Strategies: Using Teams to Monitor and Identify Students in Need of Support
* Session 3 - Partnering to Make a Difference


## Iearning 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 highfunctioning team.
- Be able to draw on high leverage strategies to address common reasons for student absenteeism


## Getting Started: Introductions

## Use the Chat and share:

$\checkmark$ Your name and role
$\checkmark$ Your school and district
$\checkmark$ When does/did school start in your district?

## Key Concepts from Session 1

## Improving Attendance Matters



What is the relationship between absences and equity?

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

Chronic Absence Measures Iost 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.


Chronic absence is different from truancy (unexcused absences only) or average daily attendance (how many students show up to school each day).

## Recognize that Going to School Reflects When Families Have...



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



## When Tackling Absenteeism, Begin with Whole School and Prevention Strategies



## Foundational Supports are Building Bloclzs of Schools that Promote Attendance

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

## Three High Ieverage Strategies

Tier I
Universal Prevention
I. Warm and welcoming School Climate
2. Positive Relationships with Families and Students
3. Clear expectations and communication about attendance

## Of the three high leverage strategies we reviewed during

 Session I, which one are you most likely to implement or have begun exploring how to implement?Warm and welcoming school climate
$\square$ Positive relationships with families and students
$\square$ Clear expectations and communication about attendance

## Reducing Chronic Absence Requires a Team Approach



## 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.
I. 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


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
* Community School Directors and Coordinators
* Expanded Learning program staff
* Family Resource Center Directors and Coordinators
* Pupil Personnel Workers
* Child Welfare and Attendance Officers

Members should be able to bring the perspectives of the student demographics. Teams should incorporate input from families and students along with the community.

## Determine which team(s) will assume the attendance MTISS functions

- Map all the teams that currently operate in your school by purpose, membership and meeting schedule.
- 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.


## What teams address attendance? (check all that apply)

$\square$ Stand-alone attendance team
$\square$ Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports or PBIS team (attendance and behavior)
$\square$ Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) team
$\square$ Response to Intervention (RTI) team
$\square$ Case Management Team
$\square$ Other

## Avoid <br> Common Pitfalls

$\times$ Establish a team that operates in isolation
$\times$ Fail to rally whole school to support prevention \& early intervention
$x$ Focus only on students with most absences
$\times$ Case management as the sole strategy
$x$ Jumping to solutions without sufficient understanding of factors behind absences
$\times$ Team composition does not reflect the demographics, perspectives or cultural realities of the student population

## Team Self-Assessment

| School Team Self-Assessment |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Lead A Whole School Approach to Attendance | Solitily in Place | $\begin{gathered} \hline \text { Measurable } \\ \text { Progress } \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \hline \text { Needs } \\ \text { Improvement } \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | 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 | Solitly in Prace | Measurable Progress | $\begin{gathered} \text { Needs } \\ \text { Improvement } \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | 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 earning 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. |  |  |  |  |  |

## 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
https://www.attendanceworks.org/ resources/self-assessment/


## 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




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

## Where are the biggest gaps in your school?

 (check all that apply)Foundational whole school supports
$\square$ Tier I
$\square$ Tier 2
$\square$ Tier 3

## Team Function \#2:

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


## An Expanded Data

 Framework Is Needed
## An expanded framework for attendance and absenteeism data is needed to:

I. 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.


## What will school look like this year? (check all that apply)

$\square$ Predominantly in-person

- Students have option for all in-person or all-virtual
$\square$ Hybrid
$\square$ Independent Study
$\square$ Other (type in chat)

Chronic Absence Measures Iost Opportunity To Learn

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Chronic absence is different from truancy (unexcused absences only) or average daily attendance (how many students show up to school each day).

## The First Month of School Predicts Chronic Absence

- Baltimore students who missed 2-4 days of school in September were 5 times as likely to be chronically absent.
- Students who missed 5 or more days of school in September were 16 times as likely to be chronically absent.



## How to Identify Students on the Cusp of Chronic Albsence

## 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) |
| 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 <br> Early Intervention

## Suggested Criteria for what activates early outreach:

- Missing 10-19\% of school—regardless of the mode of instruction--in the prior school year
- 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?

## What data is your school using to activate

 outreach? (check all that apply)$\square$ One Absence
$\square$ Missing $10 \%$ of days enrolled

- Number of unexcused absences
$\square$ Student does not log in to class
$\square$ Other (type in chat)


## 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-rev-July-202I.pdf

| Number of Absences | Action(s) | People Responsible | Resources to Support Action(s) | Documentation <br> What was the reason for the absence, and what intervention or support was offered? |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 0 | Welcome Letter Welcome Video on website | School secretary <br> Principal and person who updates the school website | - Link to resources, e.g. District letter that can be personalized by principal / school team <br> - AW Flyers <br> - AW Student Success Plan | - Add contacts from Student Success Plan to family contact information form. |
| I-2 | Call Home | Teacher | - Call Script | - Log in Student Screen on SIS <br> - Track and monitor in case management system |
| 3-4 | Call Home | School Counselor or Social Worker | - Call Script <br> - 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 <br> - Note reasons for absence and any supports or interventions needed. <br> - Track and monitor in case management system |
| 5 | Family Meeting | Principal or other School Administrator | - Standard agenda for family meeting <br> - Student Success Plan <br> - List of resources <br> - Form for taking notes and follow up | - Use district form for family meeting <br> - Attach | Blank form: https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/School-Summary-of-Actions-BLANK-FORM-rev-July-2021.pdf

I. What data is your school using to activate interventions and supports for individual students?
2. Who is responsible for responding?

## Ground Rules

- Turn on your video camera
- Briefly introduce yourself
- Raise your hand to speak
- Ask clarifying questions
- Explore differences of opinion
- Create space for everyone to speak (and use the chat to express ideas)


## 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.

## Early SY 2020-21 Data Shows Dramatic Increases in Chronic Absence, Especially for Students Hard Hit by Pandemic

Percentage of Students Chronically Absent (YTD as of May 2021 compared to 2019-20)

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

- This data from Connecticut is the first statewide data available in the country.
- Connecticut has a long history of investing in accurate data.
- Connecticut defined chronic absence as attending at least .5 day in distance as well as inperson learning.
- Calculations include in person and remote days
- Calculations for 2019-20 are based upon in person school days to Mid-March 2020.

Finding 5. The patterns and grades most affected by absenteeism differed by learning model.


Finding 6. Patterns of chronic absence by learning mode and grade were not the same across racial and ethnic groups.


## Let's Chat

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

## Team Function \#3:

Identify barriers \& inequities that prevent students from attending school


## Perception vs. Reality



## Perception vs. Reality



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.

## Solutions Require Understanding What Factors Contribute to Chronic Albsence

| 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 <br> 5 Whys Worksheet

## Define the Problem:

Kindergartners have higher rates of chronic absenteeism.
Why is this happening?

3. Families do not feel confident about the school's Covid-

19 mitigation measures (e.g. sanitation, physical distancing, cohorting, masking, vaccination, quarantine, etc.)

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

## Scenario \#1:

## Blank worksheet:

https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Five-WhysWorksheet.pdf
4. School leaders have not effectively communicated procedures to keep students safe and shared how they have kept Covid-I9 transmission rates low.
5. Lack of a plan to personally keep families abreast of the latest information and respond to their concerns.

## Asking Powerful Questions <br> 5 Whys Worksheet

## Define the Problem:

A large number of middle schoolers are tardy or absent the first month of school.
Why is this happening?

## Scenario \#2

## Blank worksheet:

https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Five-WhysWorksheet.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
3. They haven't had the opportunity to practice daily routines or allow extra time for unexpected issues such as the bus being late.


5. Adults overestimate a student's ability to organize himself/herself or plan for issues.

## Identified Root Cause:

Students have not been taught, coached and supported in developing successful routines for getting to school on time.

## Validate Your Insights - Gather Information About Why Students Miss School




Common barriers students shared: Stress
family issues

TIRED
unstable housing
"We do the wate to get grades, we don't leatn anything"


Teachers lecture, we take notes. Then do it again the next day - in 6 classes. There's no time to learn the material. If you miss one day, you're behind \& your grade drops.

## Chronic Absence Surveys

## A variety of surveys to help track reasons for chronic absence

* For in-person, blended or virtual school
* Designed for parents and secondary students ( $6^{\text {th }}-12^{\text {th }}$ grade)
* Developed by Harvard Proving Ground: Center for Education Policy Research

Chronic absenteeism, commonly defined as missing $10 \%$ or more of instructional days per school year has significant impact on student outcomes. It is associated with decreased reading levels, overall dropout rates. ${ }^{12}$ Fortunately, chronic absenteeism rates are alterable at the student and system level when interventions are appropriately targeted and matched to student needs.
In order to efficiently and effectively match interventions to student needs, there is a need for reliable nd valid data that provide sufficient information to understand the various challenges students experience. The Reasons for Chronic chbsenteeism (RCA) Survey was developed and underwent extensive validation processes including an expert panel review, student reviewers, and a national validation study to ensure the technical adequacy of the items and instrument.
The RCA is designed for secondary students ( $6^{\text {th}}-12^{\text {th }}$ grade) who have missed $10 \%$ or more instructiona days. The survey is comprised of 14 demographics and perception of absences questions; 28 items measuring multifaceted reasons for absences; and three open-ended questions asking about other reasons for missing school, the reasons they do come to school, and what would help them come to chool more often. Students respond to each of the items that ask why they missed school using a 0 scale with response options of Never, Rarely, Sometimes, or Usually. Students may take the survey via an onine survey plattorm (e.g. SurveyMonkey ©, Quaitrics©, etc.) or hardcopy. Survey administration be provided the explanation that they are taking the survey so school staff better understand why students miss school. Please allow students privacy to independently answer questions.
What is the name of your school?
What ways have you attended school this year? (check all apply: in-person, virtual,
blended (in-person some days, virtual other days of the week)
How old are you? (10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21
What is your gender? (male, female, non-binary, prefer not to say)
What grade are you in? $(6,7,8,9,10,11,12)$
What is your Race? (*if pore than one race sele tiver
Multi-racia
Alack/African American
Hispanic/Latino
White
White
Native Hawaian or Alaskan Native
https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Reasons-for-Chronic-Absenteeism-Survey-Blended-or-Virtual-Version.pdf For the parent version and additional resources, visit: http://www.floridarti.usf.edu/resources/topic/chronic absenteeism/index.html

## Addressing Reasons for Absences


https://vimeo.com/260324362

## Align Interventions to Reasons for Absences



Works ©

## Tier 2: <br> Early Intervention Strategies



Attendance Playbook: https://www.future-ed.org/attendance-playbook/
Implementation Guide: https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/attendance-playbook/

## 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

## Questions from the Audience



## Review: <br> 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 highfunctioning team.
- Be able to draw on high leverage strategies to address common reasons for student absenteeism

Please let us know how we can improve: https://app.upmetrics.com/data_collector/ckf2oltbqlt8k0759tfdbfybi

## Thank you!

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## 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:
$\checkmark$ Advances better policy
$\checkmark$ Nurtures proven and promising practice
$\checkmark$ Promotes meaningful and effective communication
$\checkmark$ 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

## Appendix: Additional Resources

| (III) Wttendance Works |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Name of Team Team Purpose Team Members <br>    <br>    <br>    <br>    |  |  |

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

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Works ©


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

