

Session 2

Early Intervention Strategies:

Using Teams to Monitor & Identify Students in Need of Support



Professional Learning Series

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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





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



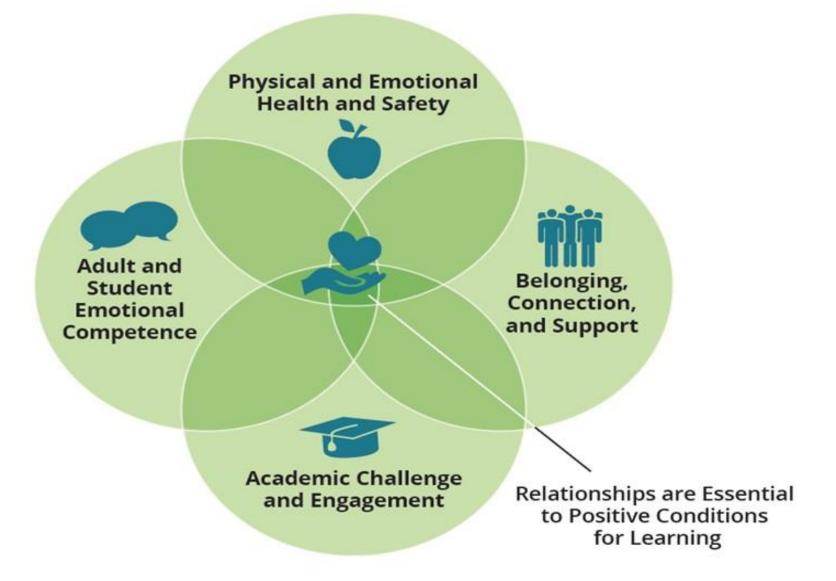


Use the Chat and share:

- ✓ Your name and role
- ✓ Your school and district
- ✓ If your life were a movie, what would it be called?



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







Small Group Discussion

Writing Exercise: Reflect on the following questions and write down 3 names.

- I. Who do you feel safe with when you need to vent about your experiences?
- 2. Who do you go to for advice?
- 3. Who do you go to when facing a serious challenge or emergency?

Share with the group:

Who are the members of your support network and how have they helped you sustain through these tough times?



Ground Rules





- Briefly introduce yourself
- Raise your hand to speak
- Ask clarifying questions
- Create space for everyone to speak (and use the chat to express ideas)





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 Whole School Supports









GRADES K-12 **IMPLEMENTED BY**

School Administrators

CAPACITIES PROMOTED

Relationship-building; Student confidence; Shifting school norms

TIME & RESOURCE INTENSITY

low high

Key Elements

See all students at-a-glance.

See who is well-supported and who needs support by adults.

Involve *all* adults in relationship mapping.

Key Benefits

Connect all students to at least one school adult.

A *Relationship Map* lists *all* students in a school (or grade, team, etc.).

A Relationship Map allows adults in a school to have a quick and visual snapshot of students who are well supported and who most need support. Knowing this, adults can then strategize about how to best reach out to students who most need positive and supportive relationships with adults.

A Relationship Map is most effective if all adult stakeholders with a connection to students participate in its creation. This includes administrators, teachers, counselors, sports coaches, mentors, community partners, and other school staff.

A *Relationship Map* helps identify students who do not already have adult connections and provides opportunities for adults in school to build positive relationships with those students.

Download in-person and virtual versions of this guide at https://mcc.gse.harvard.edu/resources-for-educators/relationship-mapping-strategy

Have you mapped relationships at your school?

If so, what insights did you gain?

If not, how could you use this tool?

Reducing Chronic Absence Requires a Team Approach





Type in Chat:

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





Attendance Functions of a School Team



- 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

Ensuring Attendance Requires A Team



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 MTSS 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, 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.



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



What teams address attendance? (check all that apply)

- 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 (type in chat)





Avoid Common Pitfalls

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



17

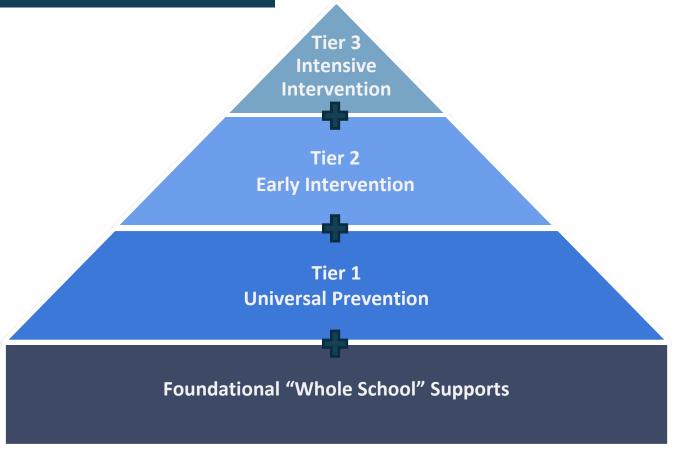
Team Function #1:

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





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





Family and Student Engagement	Social and Emotional Learning Relationships	Behavioral Mental he		Data N	Monitoring		nysical Iealth	Academic Support	Basic Needs
Connect family with community supports	Conduct empathy interview	Individual based o Identified N	n	to loca and f	ve outreach ite student amily and s situation	ba	idual Plan Ised on fied 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 gro counseling provide sup for stude dealing w anxiety	g to oport nts vith	absent to ta	Using teeism data activate irgeted ipports	with i med fam	st a family dentifying a ical home / nily health actitioner	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	Individua wellness ch and connect assessmei	neck tivity	outr common to fan	sonalized reach and nunication nilies when dents are absent		nunization Clinic	Clear, concise and consistent communication about schedules and expectations	School Community Food and Household Goods Pantry
Physically healthy learning environmen	Welcoming, sociation to the term of the te	auma-	A cultur continu mprovei	ous	Home ro and/or Ad		and studer	gement of parents its in planning and plem solving	A leadership team that monitors attendance data
Access to tech equipment and connectivity	Access to Learn Supports	_	Enrichm	nent nd clubs	Routines, and celebr			le of classes and ow they are held	Support for all families to facilitate learning at home



Where are the biggest gaps in your school?

(check all that apply)

- ☐ Foundational Whole School Supports
- ☐ Tier I Absenteeism Prevention
- ☐ Tier 2 Absenteeism Early Intervention
- ☐ Tier 3 Absenteeism Intensive Supports



21

Team Function #2:

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





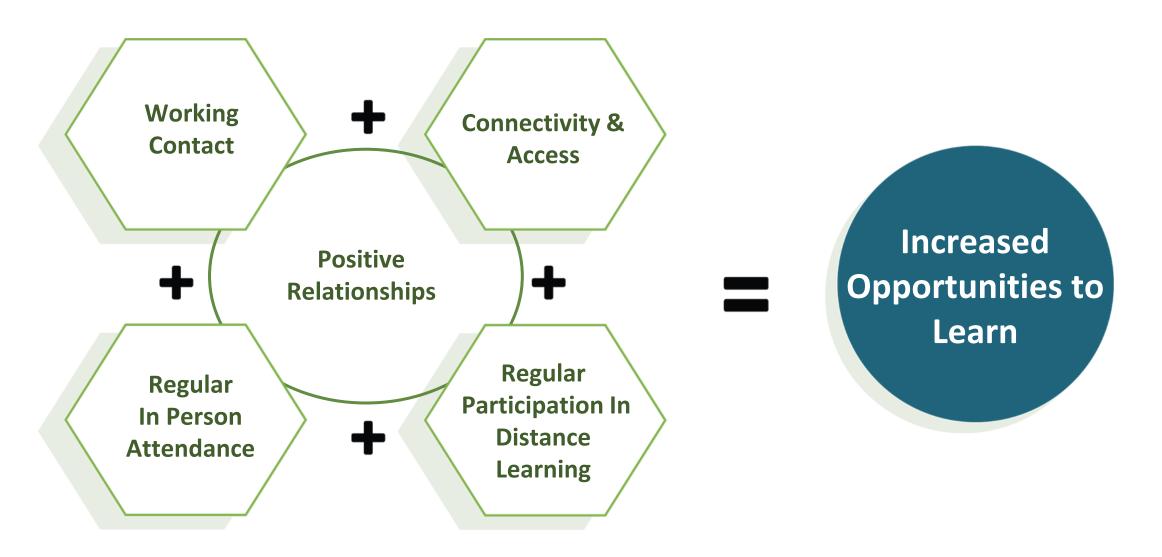
An expanded framework for attendance and absenteeism data is needed to:

- 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.



23

Expanding How to Measure the Opportunity to Learn







How to Identify Students at Different Levels of Absenteeism

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 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
- Not checking in or completing work in distance learning
- Lost contact with student/family wellness check (immediate action required)

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





What data is your school using to activate outreach? (check all that apply)

- ☐ One absence
- ☐ Missing 10% of days enrolled
- Number of unexcused absences
- ☐ Student misses daily or weekly check-ins
- Student does not log in to class
- ☐ 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-2021.pdf

Number of Absences	Action(s)	People Responsible	Resources to Support Action(s)	Documentation What was the reason for the absence, and what intervention or support was offered?
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 	 Add contacts from Student Success Plan to family contact information form.
1-2	Call Home	Teacher	Call Script	 Log in Student Screen on SIS Track and monitor in case management system
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 Note reasons for absence and any supports or interventions needed. Track and monitor in case management system
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 meetingAttach

Attendance Blank form: https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/School-Summary-of-Actions-BLANK-FORM-rev-July-2021.pdf

Small Group Discussion

- I. What data is your school using to activate interventions and supports for individual students?
- 2. Who is responsible for responding?
- 3. Is there an opportunity to reach out to students and their families in a more personalized manner?



Ground Rules

Turn on your video camera



- 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)

Small group handout: https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/School-Summary-of-Actions-BLANK-FORM-rev-July-2021.pdf





Use Data to Identify and Address Inequities

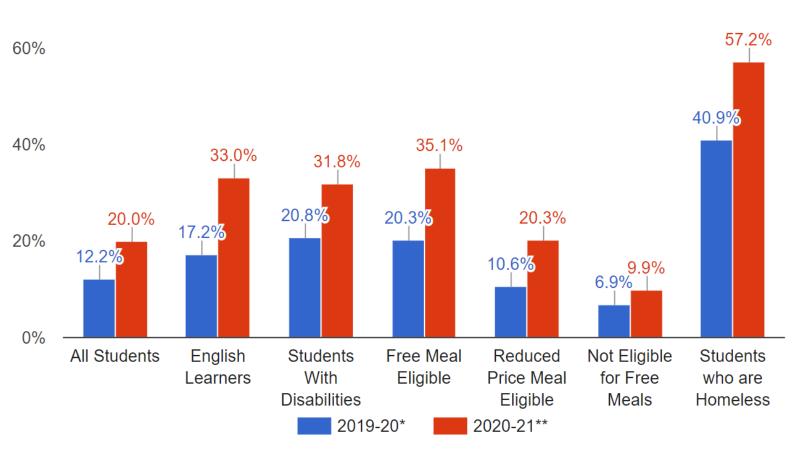
- Analyze contact, connectivity, relationships and participation data overall, broken down by school, grade, race/ethnicity, home language, disability and zip code.
- ➤ Use qualitative information, especially drawing upon the perspectives of students and families, to deepen an understanding of the contributing factors and how they might be addressed.
- > Determine how to address unequal access to resources.



30

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.

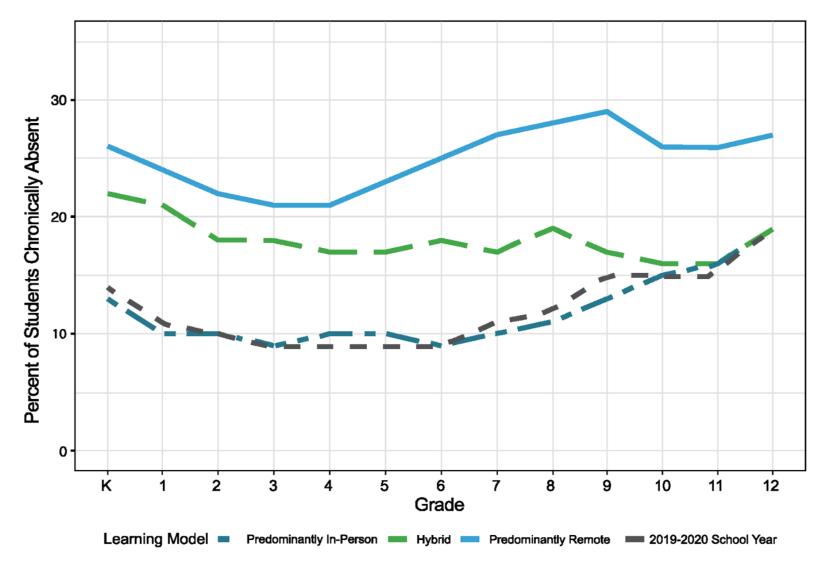
- This data from Connecticut is the first statewide data available in the country.
- Connecticut has a long history of investing in accurate data.
- Connecticut defined chronic absence as attending at least .5 day in distance as well as inperson learning.
- Calculations include in person and remote days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

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



Prior to the pandemic, chronic absence affected 8 million – or one out of 6 – students nationwide.

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



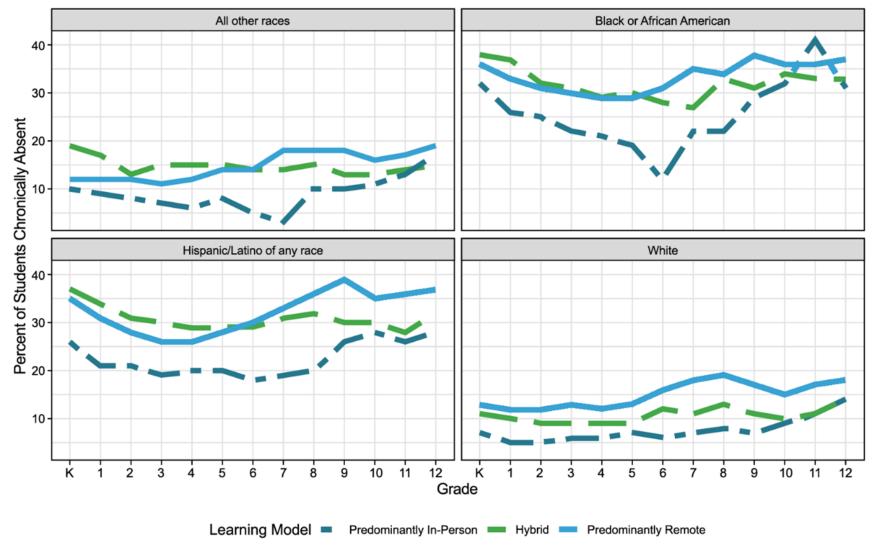


https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Chronic Absence in CT 062421.pdf

www.attendanceworks.org

32

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





https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Chronic Absence in CT 062421.pdf

www.attendanceworks.org

33



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



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?



Oillon Wilson 3rd grade

THE PERCEPTION

Dillon's parents don't care enough to get him to school. Maybe they aren't at home during the day, or have other kids to deal with, but whatever the excuse, they obviously just don't care enough about his education.





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.



37



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
- Parents had negative educational experiences

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





Covid-19 Added Additional Barriers to Attendance

- Students who are quarantining
- Students who lost loved ones
- Covid anxiety (about getting sick or spreading covid to family members)
- Students who disengaged academically during remote learning who now feel behind or unprepared and avoid school or classes
- Students who suffered mental health impacts from remote schooling/pandemic
- Students who increased their amount of time they were working or care-taking during the pandemic (secondary school)



Asking Powerful Questions

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 #1

I. Middle school students are not waking up early enough to get to school.

2. Middle school students have not been in the routine of showing up in person every day for the past year and a half.

3. They haven't had the opportunity to practice daily routines or allow extra time for unexpected issues such as the bus being late.

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

Why is that?

Why is that?

4. Many students do not have adults or peers to help them develop and stick to positive routines.

Why is that?

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

Why is that?

Identified Root Cause:

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

Asking Powerful Questions

5 Whys Worksheet

Define the Problem:

Kindergartners have higher rates of chronic absenteeism.

Why is this happening?

I. Families are keeping their children home out of concern for their children's health and safety.

problem and the system that produces it.

Why is that?

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

Why is that?

Use the 5 Whys to

understand a

Scenario #2:

2. Families are worried that their children are more vulnerable to Covid-19 given high transmission rates.

3. Families do not feel confident about the school's Covid-19 mitigation measures (e.g. sanitation, physical distancing, cohorting, masking, vaccination, quarantine, etc.)

4. School leaders have not effectively communicated procedures to keep students safe and shared how they have kept Covid-19 transmission rates low.

Why is that?

5. Lack of a plan to personally keep families abreast of the latest information and respond to their concerns.

Blank worksheet:

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

Identified Root Cause: Lack of an effectively implemented and communicated plan for reducing the spread of Covid-19.

Validate Your Insights — Gather Information About Why Students Miss School



Student and Family Focus Groups

Student and Family Survey Data

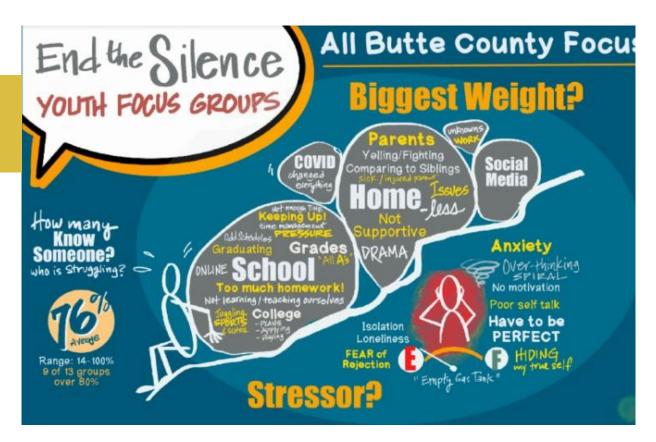
Student and Family Centered Problem-Solving Conversations

School Staff Insights

School Staff Observations

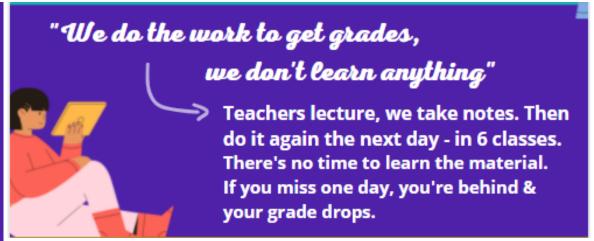


M ental Health



Attendance







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 (6th-12th grade)
- Developed by Harvard Proving Ground: Center for Education Policy Research

Reasons for Chronic Absenteeism- Blended or Virtual (RCA-BV)

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 academic performance, on-time graduation rates, and post-secondary enrollment as well as increased dropout rates. ^{1,2} 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 and valid data that provide sufficient information to understand the various challenges students experience. The Reasons for Chronic Absenteeism (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 (6th-12th grade) who have missed 10% or more instructional 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 school more often. Students respond to each of the items that ask why they missed school using a 0-3 scale with response options of Never, Rarely, Sometimes, or Usually. Students may take the survey via an online survey platform (e.g. SurveyMonkey©, Qualtrics©, etc.) or hardcopy. Survey administration takes approximately 10 minutes and multiple students may take the survey at one time. Students may 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.

Demographic Items

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)

Do you get free or reduced price lunch? (yes/no)

What is your Race? (*if more than one race select multi-racial)?

Multi-racial

Asian

Black/African American

Hispanic/Latino

White

American Indian or Alaskan Native

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

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



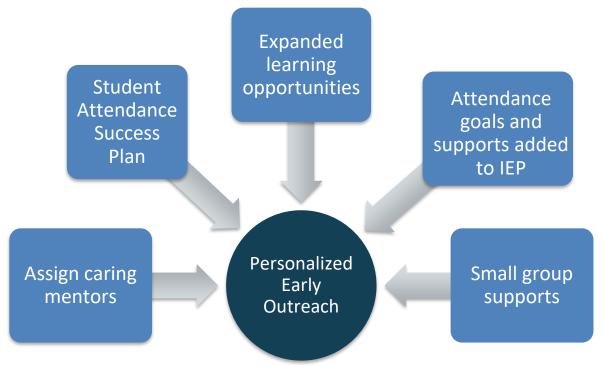
Addressing Reasons for Absences

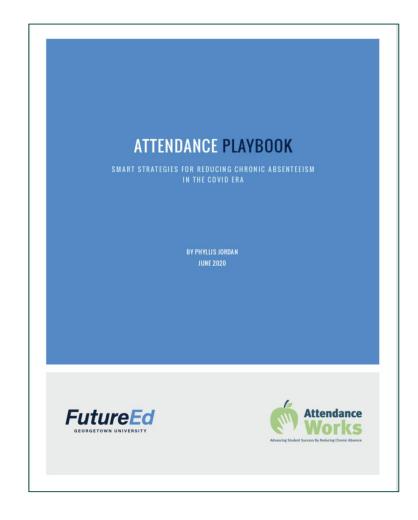






Tier 2: Early Intervention Strategies



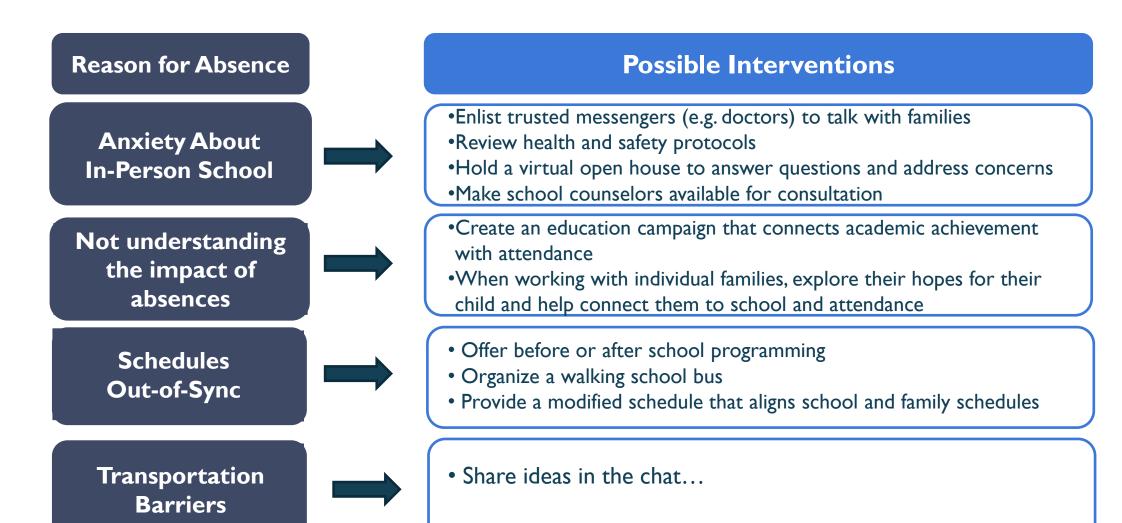


Attendance Playbook: https://www.future-ed.org/attendance-playbook/

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



Align Interventions to Reasons for Absences







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/



Questions from the Audience





Review: 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





Please let us know how we can improve:

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

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:

- ✓ 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



Appendix: Additional Resources



Team Self-Assessment

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.		5			
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.	S	0			
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.					

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

<u>https://www.attendanceworks.org/</u> <u>resources/self-assessment/</u>





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

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-2021.pdf

Number of Absences	Action(s)	People Responsible	Resources to Support Action(s)	Documentation What was the reason for the absence, and what intervention or support was offered?
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 	Add contacts from Student Success Plan to family contact information form.
1-2	Call Home	Teacher	Call Script	 Log in Student Screen on SIS Track and monitor in case management system
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 Note reasons for absence and any supports or interventions needed. Track and monitor in case management system
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 meetingAttach

Attendance Blank form: https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/School-Summary-of-Actions-BLANK-FORM-rev-July-2021.pdf

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			
		F	oundation) l		
			Supports			

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