Beyond The Roll Call:

Reducing Chronic Absence Through State Action

Sixth Annual Review of State Policy and Practice: Technical Report
June 2026

Attendance Works
Advancing Student Success By Reducing Chronic Absence

Introduction

Attending school on a regular basis is essential for student success on many levels. School offers opportunities to learn, forge relationships and develop the necessary social skills to engage with others inside and outside class and, eventually, at work.

Today, elevated levels of chronic absence (missing 10% of school for any reason) are undermining student achievement and the nation's ability to prepare a healthy, skilled next generation. Nearly one in four students nationwide is chronically absent, a figure that is still dramatically elevated from the one in six prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, 46% of schools report high (20-29%) or extreme (30%+) levels of chronic absence, conditions that affect the learning environment for all students. These high levels of chronic absence reflect systemic challenges affecting large numbers of students and families that require programmatic and policy solutions.

State leadership is crucial to reducing student chronic absence. States — particularly state education agencies (SEAs) as well as state policymakers — can ensure that attendance data is not just collected but also used to support ongoing early intervention and prevention-oriented responses. While districts are the cornerstone for sustainable change in schools and communities, states — especially state departments of education — are essential to ensuring that effective practices for improving attendance are implemented throughout a state.

This technical report, which accompanies the policy brief by the same title, offers an in-depth discussion of the findings from the Attendance Works review of websites for all 50 states and Washington, D.C., as well as a survey completed by 49 states and Washington, D.C. Both the policy brief and this technical report are written especially for state policymakers, administrators and advocates. This table shares the state-by-state results. All state-related numbers in this brief include Washington, D.C., except where indicated.

This year's brief indicates a growing consensus among states that reducing chronic absence requires driving with a data-informed, prevention-oriented plan. This includes publishing chronic absence data in a more timely manner. Our review shows that 25 states had published chronic absence data for the previous year, compared to only 18 in 2024. Twenty-two states are going a step further and investing in a strategy that provides data at consistent intervals throughout the year to all districts. In three states, Rhode Island, Ohio and Connecticut, the data reporting is publicly available to everyone, including districts.

We also found that promoting early and preventative action is underway in the majority of states: Thirty-one are publishing prevention-oriented guidance for districts and schools on their websites, up from 21 last year. In general, the guidance from states reveals an emphasis on using courts as a last resort. Attendance Works recommends prevention and early intervention strategies that are tailored to local realities as the key to improving attendance.

To accelerate progress, SEAs and policymakers should focus on four priority areas that strengthen data, enable districts and schools to intervene earlier and align policies with a prevention-oriented approach. States are uniquely positioned to scale attendance improvement by:

- Building a comparable attendance data foundation
- Publishing timely and disaggregated chronic absence data
- Promoting attendance data that drives prevention and action
- Aligning policy, guidance and accountability to advance prevention-oriented strategy and action.

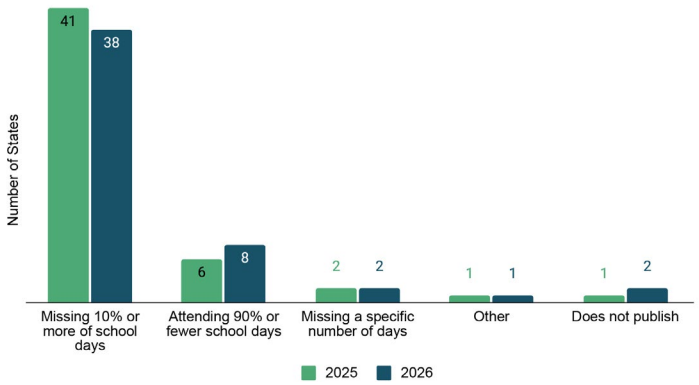
A. Building a comparable attendance data foundation

Consistency in data collection and comparability of data are extremely important for ensuring that the data is usable. When data is comparable, it can help identify which schools or districts need support and which are "bright spots" getting better results. It also can help assess the impact of different policies and practices across states, districts and schools. When states do not define chronic absence or a day of attendance in the same way, it is not advisable to draw conclusions about patterns within a state. A lack of consistent, complete data could result in undercounting chronic absence and overlooking the students most in need of support. This section examines consistencies in the definitions of chronic absence and each day of attendance as well as who is included in chronic absence calculations.

Finding 1: Most states define chronic absence as missing 10% or more of the school year.

Thirty-eight states have adopted a definition of chronic absence as "missing 10% or more of the school year," as published on the state's website (see figure 1). Seeking to present a more positive approach, a few states monitor students who attend at least 90% of the time, although the terms states use to refer to this measure (e.g., "regular" or "consistent" attendance) vary.

Figure 1: State definitions of chronic absence



Attendance Works recommends using 10% of days enrolled to define chronic absence. Applying this standard supports a view of chronic absence as an early warning indicator of school disengagement, academic risk and high school dropout. It encourages noticing when students are already on track for chronic absence in the first months of a school year (such as having missed two or three days in September), so early and prevention-oriented action can be taken. Research shows that attendance during the first month of school can predict patterns for the remainder of the year. For data collection under ED*Facts*, the U.S. Department of Education requires submitting data on the number of students who missed 10% or more of school and have been enrolled for at least 10 days. ED*Facts* defines a student as absent if they missed more than half a day (e.g., four hours of an eight-hour school day). States, however, have discretion about how they define absences when data is published on their websites. Differences in these definitions include, for example, how long students must be enrolled and whether all absences are included in calculations, which may explain why data on state websites typically show slightly lower rates of chronic absence.

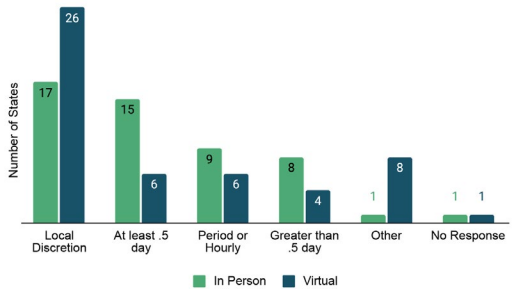
Finding 2: Most states include all absences in their chronic absence reporting.

The majority of states (40) include all absences in their reporting, while seven exclude some absences for a variety of reasons. Attendance Works advises against exclusions for any reason to ensure that the data fully reflects the lost opportunities to learn and develop in the classroom. Excluding absences could result in states and districts underestimating how many students are at risk due to chronic absence. When comparing data between two states, it is important to know if exclusions exist and for what purpose. The state-by-state table specifies what our survey collected about the nature of the exclusions.

Finding 3: The lack of a common definition of a day of attendance continues to be a major challenge.

As figure 2 reveals, there is significant variation among states in what constitutes a day of attendance. Definitions for a day of attendance are also more common for in-person learning than for virtual learning.

Figure 2: State definitions of day of attendance

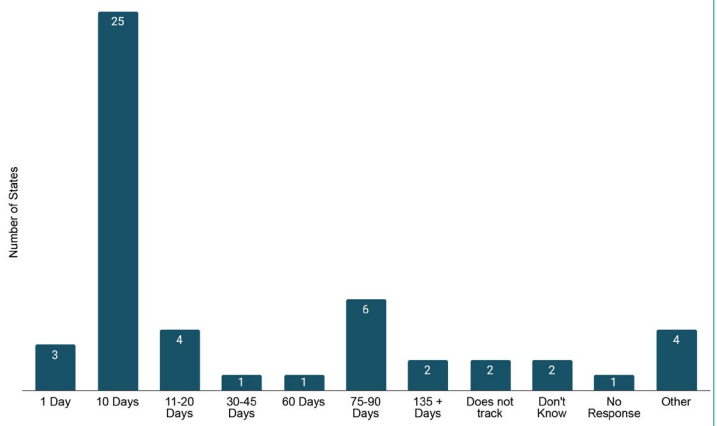


Leaving definitions to local discretion creates challenges in developing comparable data across the state and can obscure the true extent of chronic absence. Districts may appear to have lower rates of chronic absence simply because of how attendance is defined. For example, if a student is considered present after attending only one class period, that district will likely report lower levels of chronic absence than a district that requires attendance across multiple periods.

Finding 4: In some states, enrollment policies may lead to the exclusion of highly mobile students, including those experiencing homelessness.

The minimum number of days a student must be enrolled to be included in chronic absence calculations varies tremendously, ranging from one day to more than 135 days! Notably, the largest number of states (25) use the federal guidance suggesting a minimum of 10 days, while half have a different policy (see figure 3). The challenge is that longer enrollment thresholds can exclude highly mobile students, who may move to a new district before meeting the minimum requirement. When this occurs, it can lead to undercounting chronic absence rates among, for example, students experiencing homelessness, which then masks the true extent of disengagement and limits the ability of states and districts to respond with appropriate supports.

Figure 3: Minimum number of days enrolled to be included in chronic absence calculations



States can take steps to prevent districts from simply dropping students from their rolls if they have accumulated a large number of absences and have not appeared at school. At least three states — Connecticut, New Mexico and Kentucky — require conducting and documenting more extensive outreach and intervention before a student can be dropped from the rolls, if a family has not provided documentation of a move or transfer. For example, Kentucky law indicates that students cannot be dropped without the district knowing where the student has moved/re-enrolled. If there is no data, a district can withdraw the student as 'whereabouts unknown' but this will result in a dropout for the district, so districts make every effort to find where the student has gone. Any student with over 10 days of enrollment will be included in the district's chronic absence count regardless of the drop or disenrollment.

B. Publishing timely and disaggregated chronic absence data

Knowing whether chronic absence is improving or worsening — and for how many and which schools, districts, grades and student groups — is critical to informing timely local, regional and state action and resource allocation. If attendance is getting better, that could be a sign of success with strategies worth adopting more widely. If attendance is getting worse, the data could indicate where additional effort, tailoring or rethinking of strategies is needed.

Finding 5: Nearly all states publish chronic absence data on their websites.

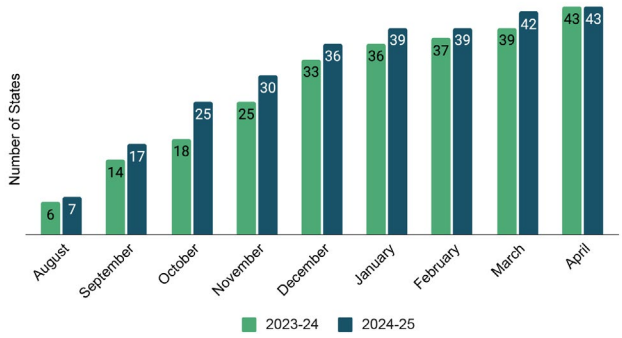
Forty-nine states currently publish chronic absence data on their websites. New Hampshire does not publish data. Although Wyoming published chronic absence data for the 2021-22 school year, when reporting was required for federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) funding, it has since removed that data from its website due to concerns about data accuracy.

Finding 6: States are publishing data earlier in the school year.

In 2025, Attendance Works began monitoring when states published data for the prior school year. To promote more timely targeting of resources and development of meaningful attendance improvement plans, states should find ways to share chronic absence data as quickly as possible, even if that requires releasing the data early, before a full set of metrics is ready to be shared.

Figure 4 shows, by month, how many states published chronic absence data for the prior school year. As of October 2025, 25 states had published chronic absence data for the previous year, compared to only 18 in October 2024. This is a marked improvement in making end-of-the-year data available in a timelier manner.

Figure 4: State publication of chronic absence data by month



Finding 7. While most states offer data disaggregated by school, district and student group, far fewer share information by grade, geography and trends over time.

Data on chronic absence disaggregated by grade level is much less available than data by school, district and student groups. (see figure 5). Nineteen states (three more than in 2022-23) now offer data by grade level, but many more states could easily publish this information. Surprisingly, not all states publish data that show the student populations typically experiencing the highest levels of absenteeism. For example, only 32 states publicly report chronic absence data for students experiencing homelessness.

Figure 5: Disaggregated data availability, 2024-26

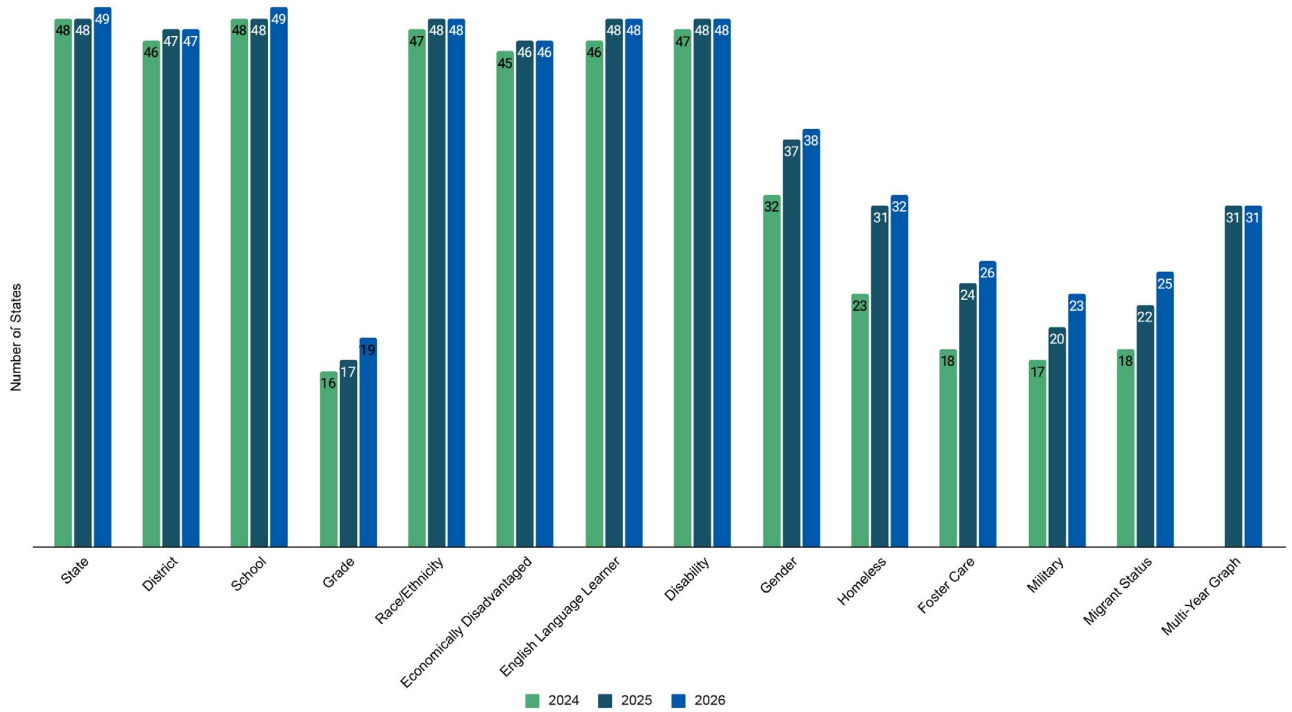
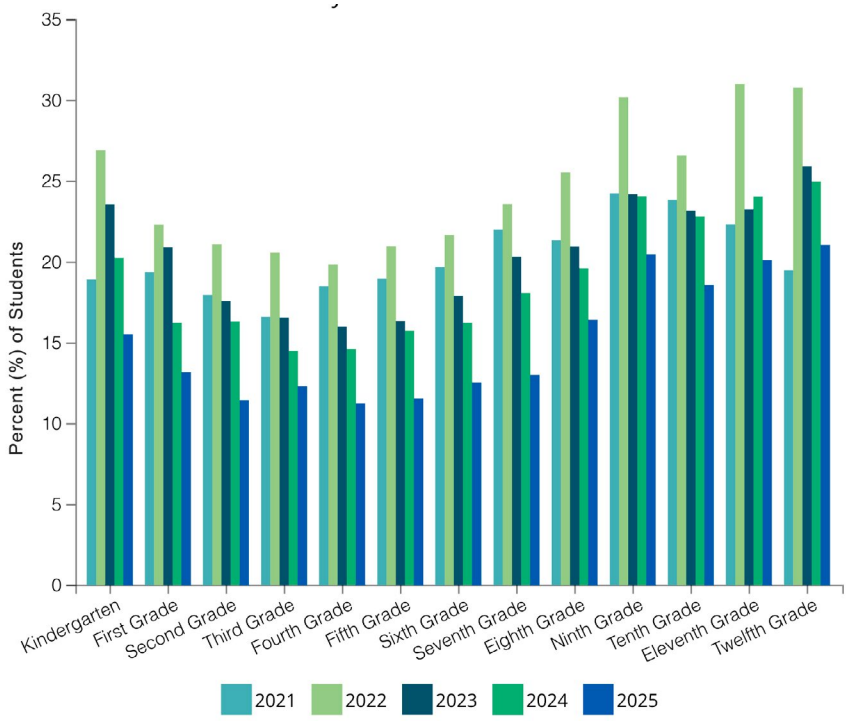


Figure 6 shows grade-level data over time from Delaware. It reveals that kindergarten and the high school grades typically have the highest rates of chronic absence. Delaware has made the most progress with reducing absenteeism in kindergarten, while chronic absence is proving much harder to reduce in high school.

Figure 6. Chronic absence by grade level in Delaware, 2021-25



C. Promoting attendance data that drives prevention and action

Data is actionable when it is available at timely, consistent intervals and in formats that are easy to understand and analyze. Actionable data is essential to improving attendance because it:

- Prompts educators and community partners to notice as early as possible that a student or group of students is missing too many days of school
- Identifies where attendance improvements are getting comparatively better and which practices are worth emulating
- Promotes realistic short- and long-term goal setting
- Supports understanding and addressing the underlying reasons why students miss school

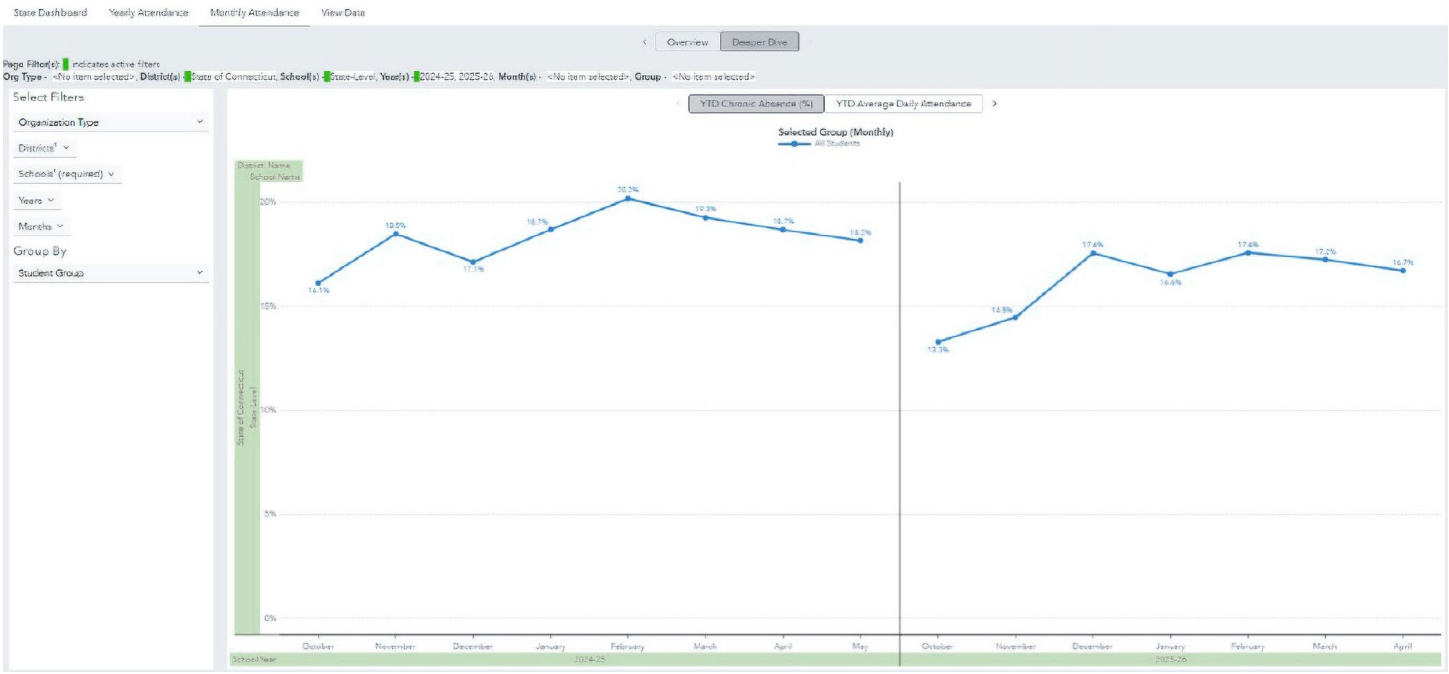
Finding 8: Twenty-two states now provide districts with regularly updated chronic absence reports throughout the school year.

Twenty-two states reported investing in a strategy that provides timely data to all districts. How this data is reported varies in the level of public accessibility and functionality, ranging from public-facing data visualization tools to internal spreadsheets.

In three states, Rhode Island, Ohio and Connecticut, the data reporting is publicly available to everyone, including districts. Rhode Island's student attendance leaderboard, which is updated daily, shows how many students in every school and district have missed 10% of school days and whether the rate of chronic absence is improving or worsening. Data can also be analyzed by day, week, geographic location, grade level and student group. This year, the Rhode Island Department of Education created a calendar heat map that highlights attendance rates for each day. Ohio has recently launched a public facing dashboard featuring data from the districts that elect to participate and upload information at least three times during the year.

Connecticut has developed the Connecticut Attendance Dashboard, located on the state's interactive EdSight portal. This dashboard is updated monthly with visualizations that show patterns over time. A visualization of data by month, for example, reveals that chronic absence rates for this year are lower than during the same months of the prior year (see figure 7 on page 6).

Figure 7. Data by month in the Connecticut Attendance Dashboard



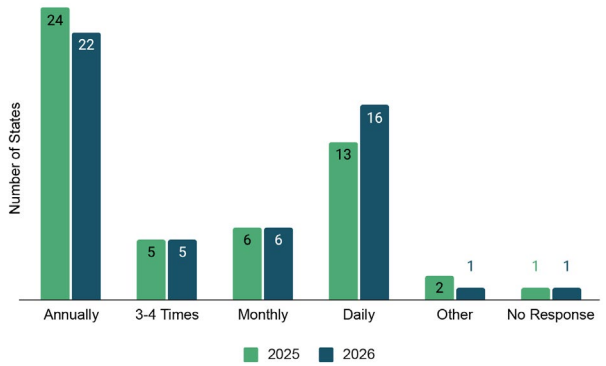
In the remaining 19 states, timely reporting exists as non-public-facing interfaces that local educational agencies (LEAs) can directly access. These interfaces vary in sophistication and functionality; however, an increasing number of states are creating innovative data systems that layer in interactivity and visualization tools.

For example, the Kentucky Department of Education has an extremely robust, interactive data dashboard. The highly customizable dashboard supports examining student attendance in six bands, reviewing trends over time and analyzing data by an extensive range of variables, including grade, period, day of the week, student group and more. It allows districts to explore key interactions, such as how many chronically absent students are experiencing homelessness, are identified for special education and are English learners. Understanding these complexities helps districts design better interventions and supports. Once users set up their report templates, they can save them for future reference. To learn more about the dashboard's features, watch the video "Navigating the Infinite Campus Insights Attendance Dashboard."

New York has created a report in a secure environment that supports robust data analysis and visualizations, which are updated weekly as long as districts upload their information. The Iowa Department of Education purchased the Panorama data platform for all districts as part of state investments in a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) and early literacy. Data is uploaded daily and can be analyzed at the student, building and district levels and cross-referenced for behavior, achievement and attendance. Maryland has just begun producing and sending out monthly chronic absence reports to all its districts.

Finding 9: A shift toward more frequent data collection from LEAs is enhancing the ability of states to provide actionable data.
This year, 16 states reported collecting data daily, up from 13 last year (see figure 8). More frequent data collection makes it possible for states to share data throughout the year.

Figure 8: Frequency of state attendance data collection from LEAs



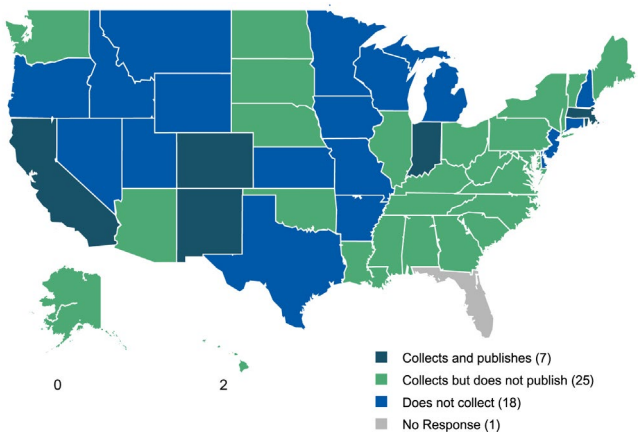
Finding 10: Many states would benefit from clearer guidance and policies ensuring that attendance records are shared, along with other records, when students move to a new district.
Data on students' prior attendance should be shared when students move so that the new district is prepared to provide additional support to students with a history of chronic absence. Research released in early 2026, "An Overlooked Early Warning Signal," found that in California, chronically absent students in kindergarten through 3rd grade were more likely to change districts, and if they did, to remain chronically absent in their new districts. This was especially true for students experiencing homelessness. This approach aligns with early warning systems that emphasize the importance of reviewing data across the multiple dimensions of attendance, behavior and academic courses.

We have identified four states — Georgia, Kentucky, South Carolina and Washington — where policies clearly specify sharing attendance data when students move. Such legislation (RCW 28A.225.330) has been in place in Washington since 1994. In Georgia, sharing attendance records as well as academic records across schools is now mandated under House Bill 268, enacted on July 1, 2025. In Kentucky, the requirement to share attendance data appears in its pupil attendance manual (see page 11).

In South Carolina, sharing of attendance data is clearly outlined in the State Board of Education regulations (43-273). We had difficulty, though, ascertaining how much this was true in other states, where policies or legislation often dictate sharing academic or behavioral records but do not clarify the need to share attendance data. It is also worth noting that such a policy is less needed in the six states that maintain their data on a single student information system serving all their school districts.

Finding 11: Most states are not leveraging data on excused versus unexcused absences to ensure that responses begin with a prevention-oriented approach.
Currently, 32 states collect data on whether absences are excused or unexcused, but only 7 states publish that information (see figure 9).

Figure 9: SEAs collecting and publishing data by absence type (excused or unexcused)



Reviewing how many absences are excused versus unexcused and how that varies across schools, districts and student groups is a useful way to examine truancy-related practices. It provides a deeper look at how absences are coded and if practices or policies need to be adjusted to align with a prevention-oriented approach. Two recent studies, "Disparities in Unexcused Absences Across California Schools" and "Unpacking Unexcused Absences in Maryland," show the value of analyzing patterns in unexcused versus excused absences.

The legal and policy basis for determining whether an absence is excused or unexcused varies by state and locality. While a few states entirely defer to local school districts to make that determination, many

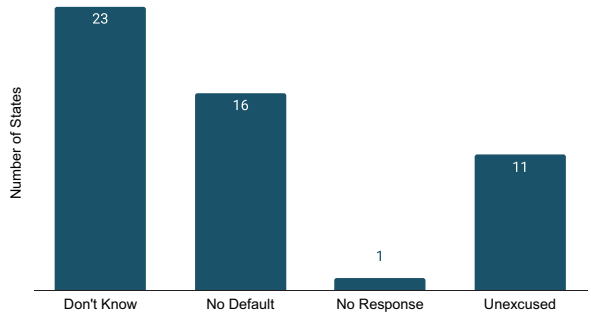
states have legislation establishing what constitutes a valid reason for excusing an absence (such as illness, bereavement, religious holidays and, increasingly, mental health challenges). Any absence that falls outside these preestablished categories or that lacks required documentation, such as a doctor's note, is typically considered unexcused. Even when states have defined excused absences, localities have significant discretion to decide whether to categorize an absence as excused or unexcused.

When absences are unexcused, students usually face consequences. They can be denied credit for missed work, excluded from extracurricular activities and even taken to court eventually; families can also be fined. As unexcused absences accumulate, responses generally become more punitive. Yet punitive responses can be ineffective and counterproductive when the root causes of absences are not addressed. In addition, overuse of the unexcused absence label could undermine efforts to partner with students and families to improve attendance.

Finding 12: Too many absences are being automatically coded as unexcused.

As discussed above, overuse of unexcused absences can be highly problematic. Yet, in eleven states, absences are coded as unexcused by default in student information systems. Twenty-three states did not know the default status used by their LEAs (see figure 10). Only one state, Iowa, issues guidance to ensure that LEAs do not automatically code absences as unexcused.

Figure 10. Default coding of absences in student information systems



Finding 13: States are just beginning to capture more detailed and standardized data about reasons for absence.

Electronically collected data on reasons for absence can become a more actionable source of information about why students miss school and what interventions or policy responses are needed. Our survey found that 16 states currently have a common set of specific absence codes — beyond excused and unexcused — that all LEAs are required or encouraged to use. Of these 16 states, 9 require districts to submit this information to the state.

To make this information more usable, states must grapple with creating greater consensus on how to define and group reasons for absences across localities. This also requires balancing detail with practicality since too many categories make absences difficult to analyze. On the positive side, researchers at the University of Pennsylvania are now collaborating with states and practitioners to assess how to use this data to inform understanding of root causes. This is also an area of work that can benefit from innovations in education technology and artificial intelligence.

D. Aligning policy, guidance and accountability to advance prevention

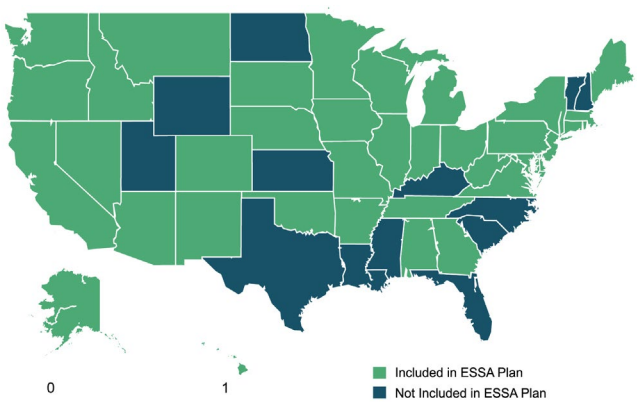
Lasting improvement requires alignment between policy, accountability and practice. When states align accountability systems, guidance and attendance policies around prevention and early intervention, districts and schools are better positioned to respond proactively to attendance challenges rather than relying on reactive or punitive approaches. States play a critical role in signaling priorities, setting expectations and supporting implementation across a state. States can, for example, adopt chronic absence as a measure of school accountability, establish goals for reducing chronic absence, issue attendance guidance, organize attendance awareness campaigns, emphasize only using courts as a last resort and offer professional development to promote a prevention-oriented approach.

Finding 14: In 2026, 37 states plus Washington, D.C., used chronic absence as a metric for school accountability under ESSA.

Including chronic absence as a metric for school accountability helps ensure that schools and districts examine this proven measure in their needs assessments

and school-improvement processes. When states first submitted their ESSA plans, 36 states and Washington, D.C., adopted chronic absence as an accountability metric. Iowa added it as a metric in 2025. Figure 11 shows which states included it and which did not.

Figure 11: States with chronic absence as a metric for school accountability under ESSA



It is worth noting, however, that two states, Tennessee and Arkansas, have taken out chronic absence from their state only accountability plans.

A handful of states are beginning to experiment with using chronic absence as an accountability metric. For the 2025-26 school year, the New York State Education Department replaced chronic absence with a new attendance indicator aimed at shifting the focus toward improving attendance for all students and, using bands of attendance to measure progress.

Finding 15: Nineteen states report that they have publicly committed to reducing chronic absence by at least 50% from their pandemic high.

Publicly adopting a goal to reduce chronic absence is another important form of accountability. Eighteen states (Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Washington, D.C., Georgia, Iowa, Indiana, Maryland, Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada, Ohio, Rhode Island, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia) are participating in The 50% Challenge jointly issued in July 2024 by Hedy Chang, executive director of Attendance Works; Denise Forte, CEO of EdTrust; and Nat Malkus, senior fellow with the American Enterprise Institute. By joining this call to cut chronic absence in half within five years, these states recognize that our country's unacceptably high postpandemic chronic absence rates will not simply go away on their own; persistent, strategic action that involves everyone communicating the importance of attendance while identifying and addressing underlying causes is required to reduce these rates. These states participate in an ongoing peer learning community that benefits from resources created by Attendance Works (which have been made widely available), including "The 50% Challenge: Crafting a State Road Map."

Finding 16: A growing number of SEAs are publishing comprehensive guidance on how to reduce chronic absence using a multi-tiered approach.

Thirty-one states (versus 21 last year) report advancing a prevention-oriented approach by publishing comprehensive, easy-to-use guidance on their websites. This guidance typically explains what chronic absence is, why it matters and how it can be addressed through an MTSS backed by district and school teams. Attendance Works recommends adopting a multi-tiered approach to improving attendance based on our research and experience demonstrating that starting with prevention and early intervention, tailored to local realities, is key to improving attendance.

Guidance can provide information on current state attendance laws and regulations in addition to reflecting the specific conditions of the state. By broadly sharing draft guidance across departments within a state's department of education and with other key agencies, local intermediaries and districts, states can gain buy-in and support as well as find out where additional technical assistance might be needed to support implementation. Examples of state guidance include Alaska, California, Colorado, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, South Carolina, Utah, Virginia and Washington. To help SEAs — as well as external partners and advocates — examine the strengths and gaps of their state's attendance guidance for districts and schools, Attendance Works developed this rubric in consultation with the members of its Network to Advance State Attendance Policy and Practice, a forum for state-level colleagues.

Finding 17: Multiple states use attendance awareness campaigns to bolster an early intervention, prevention-oriented approach.

Communication campaigns raise awareness about the critical importance of regular school attendance for well-being, engagement and learning. They are an invaluable

strategy for engaging parents, educators and a range of community partners in sending messages at key moments throughout the year. Especially after the pandemic, such campaigns are important for conveying the benefits of showing up to school as well as helping families avoid keeping their children home unnecessarily for minor symptoms of illness or anxiety. A poll by Mott Children's Hospital found, for example, that more than half (53%) of parents said they would keep their children home just to be safe, and only 4% indicated they would consult with a health provider when making this decision.

Inspiring examples of current campaigns are available from Connecticut, Ohio and Rhode Island. With input from states and the Ad Council, Attendance Works has developed this attendance messaging rubric aimed at helping states think about how to develop and implement a high-quality campaign. It builds off insights from research conducted in 2024 by the Ad Council on effective attendance messaging after the pandemic.

Finding 18: Courts are seen as a last resort.
In general, the guidance from SEAs reveals an emphasis on using courts as a last resort. This is important for several reasons. Courts are a much more costly intervention than engaging in school- or community-based prevention. Moreover, in our experience, when courts are seen as the solution, that can lead to school staff feeling they do not have a role in supporting school attendance aside from documenting when students are truant. If early intervention and prevention activities are not in place, it is easy for courts to become overwhelmed with cases.

Research has not shown that relying on court action is effective. Using data from South Carolina, a report from the Council of State Governments Justice Center found it could even make matters worse. The study also pointed out that punitive measures, such as barring students from attending in-person classes, enforcing automatic suspensions or expulsions, or requiring attendance in alternative schools, make it even harder for students to engage in school and improve their attendance. Two states have passed legislation to deter the use of courts. Connecticut has effectively banned the use of courts entirely in response to chronic absence. Oregon has removed the option for superintendents to refer families to court for irregular attendance.

Finding 19: Most SEAs provide professional development to support adopting a multi-tiered approach to improving attendance.
Thirty-seven states reported providing some type of professional development to help districts and schools adopt a comprehensive approach to improving attendance. States use a variety of strategies, including virtual and in-person learning opportunities as well as participation in ongoing communities of practice. In addition to introducing participants to available resources and tools, this professional development commonly features presentations from peers who have successfully reduced chronic absence rates. In some cases, professional development is integrated into existing initiatives aimed at school improvement or expansion of positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) or MTSS.

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), for example, offers a variety of options for schools and districts, including a Chronic Absence 101 course and a hybrid community of practice. Building on its strong base of work on PBIS and MTSS, GaDOE is intentionally weaving chronic absence into its existing professional learning spaces, such as the Classroom Conversations podcasts that are produced in partnership with Georgia Public Broadcasting. GaDOE is also opening its professional learning opportunities to partner agencies and organizations that participated in its annual Attendance Summits.

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW) supports schools and districts in a variety of ways. It hosts monthly attendance webinars on a wide variety of topics, including attendance in MTSS and using career technical education to improve attendance. Through its partnership with the Stay in the Game! Attendance Network, ODEW provides professional learning and networking. Finally, ODEW leverages its regional system of education service centers and state support teams to provide support and training on attendance data.

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) holds an annual in-person attendance summit. Throughout the year, ALSDE offers monthly virtual "chat and chews" which create opportunities for attendance officers and site administrators to share effective strategies as well as ask questions. In

addition, ALSDE invests in an annual conference creating opportunities for peer exchange about effective attendance strategies among its Mental Health Service Coordinators. Present in nearly all districts, these Mental Health Service Coordinators are charged with increasing student attendance along with reducing out-of-school suspensions, facilitating promotion to the next grade and strengthening community partnerships.

Conclusion

Over the last six years, states have made tremendous progress in advancing a more data-driven approach to reducing chronic absence, particularly with publishing more timely and transparent attendance data. Urgent action and additional investment are still needed to increase the comparability of data between districts, ensure that meaningful, real-time data reports are made available to everyone, and build district capacity to adopt an early intervention, prevention-oriented approach.

Appendix

Methods

This brief seeks to gain an understanding of attendance policies and practices in the 50 states and Washington, D.C. during the 2025-26 school year. The Attendance Works state policy brief team identified key questions for state leaders to provide information regarding their attendance policies and practices. Building on previous policy scans, the team removed some questions that were no longer aligned with the scope of this year's scan and added a few questions. The questions were moved into a survey (administered as a Google spreadsheet) for each state, with multiple-choice options and opportunities for open-ended responses. If a question had been asked and answered in the previous year, we provided that response for reference. When states did not provide responses to specific questions, Attendance Works relied on publicly available information whenever possible and identified gaps where information could not be verified. In addition, the team conducted an extensive review of data published on state websites.

In December 2025, the survey (in the form of spreadsheets) was sent to colleagues in a pilot group of states to ensure that the process was clear and took less than 15-20 minutes to complete. Starting at the end of January 2026, spreadsheets were sent to contacts in all 50 states and Washington, D.C. State responses were reviewed by the team, and if additional information or clarity was needed, the team followed up with the state contacts. Most states had responded by the end of March with further follow up occurring in April and early May. By mid-May, Attendance Works had received responses from 49 states and Washington, D.C. (Florida was the lone nonparticipant.)

This state table was created based on survey responses and website reviews. Prior to the release of the brief and the table, state contacts were asked to review and verify their state profiles. Policies and practices may have changed after data collection concluded, and implementation may vary across districts within states.

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Attendance Works (www.attendanceworks.org) is a national nonprofit initiative that advances success in school and beyond for all students by reducing chronic absence. Its website offers a wide array of free materials, tools, research and success stories to help schools, districts and communities work together to reduce chronic absence.

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