

September – Attendance Awareness Month



School success starts
with attendance

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 **Simple ideas that you can try in your school!**

Let's Celebrate!

September is Attendance Awareness Month! Let's celebrate by recognizing good attendance for the entire month of September. Good attendance habits are a great way to start the school year! Inform students and families about the importance of showing up everyday! 💡 Celebrate 100% attendance with recreation time in September!

District Priorities

Our district goal is to achieve a 95% of Average Daily Attendance. We can achieve this goal by reaching out to families early on and providing information and resources before it's even needed.

Recognize Good Attendance From: Attendance Works

1. Incorporate information about attendance into daily interactions with families

The responsibility for good attendance starts with families, and messaging efforts should start there, too.

1. Attendance Incentives and Contests

The opening of school is an excellent time to put in place a strong system of incentives to encourage better attendance among students and their families or to make sure an existing system recognizes improved attendance, not just perfect attendance. 💡 Send home information highlighting both the value of attendance and incentives vs. the consequences of poor attendance.

1. Host Special Events

The new school year means back-to-school night for parents and assemblies for students. These are ideal times to convey the link between absenteeism and student achievement and to build a culture of attendance. 💡 Provide families with an exciting back-to-school night. With music, food and games.

1. Develop media and public outreach to take place in September

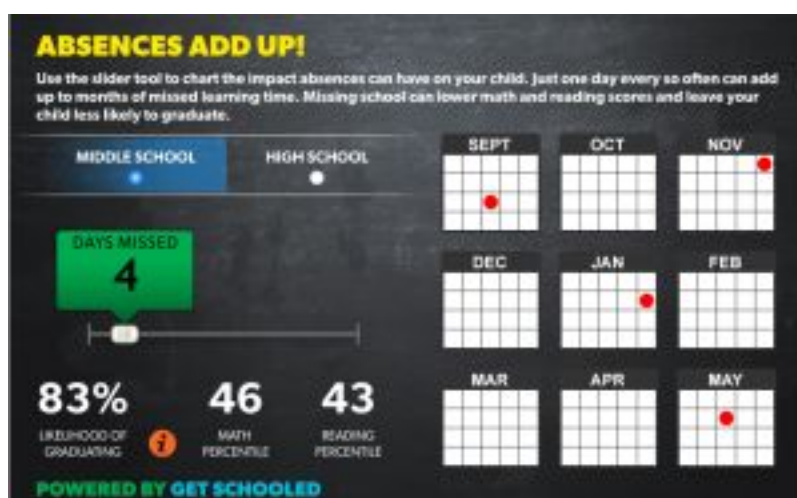
Every year, print and broadcast reporters turn up looking for back-to-school stories. Suggest that this year's pieces focus on school attendance and the efforts by your organization or community to reduce absenteeism. 💡 Announce every morning the progress of students attending everyday.

Incentives and contests take advantage of the fact that students often respond better to concrete rewards, positive peer pressure and friendly competition than they do to punishment.

- Attendance Works Tips for Incentives
- Template Attendance Certificate
- Attendance Certificate from Oakland

Contests encourage competition among students to see who can best increase attendance and student engagement for students at all grade levels who may not see the benefits of coming to school every day.

- Sponsor a poster contest: Let students of all ages convey the importance of attendance
- [Poster Contest in Sarasota, FL](#)
- [Sample Posters from Baltimore](#)
- [Tips for Video Contests](#)
- [💡 Sponsor a video contest: Let your middle and high school students create a poster that the community can use during attendance month and beyond.](#)



Get involved with Get Schooled, a nonprofit that directly engages and motivates students to graduate from high school and succeed in college. Get Schooled has developed a track record of success because it engages with young Americans using the media, technology and popular culture that is an integral part of their lives. It offers and twice-yearly Attendance Challenges for secondary schools. The 10-week Fall challenge starts in October, so use September to prepare students for the contest. The higher the attendance increase during the Challenge, the greater the chance schools have for winning a celebrity principal for the day. In the Challenge, students will also play educational games, develop their academic skills, and learn more about the college and financial aid application process to earn points and prizes.

- [Get Schooled Toolkit](#)

Create an attendance month competition between classes, grades or local schools to see who can best improve attendance. The rewards can be as simple as an extra recess or as fancy as a raffle ticket for a new car. Businesses can donate gift certificates or movie tickets. Local celebrities and sports stars can visit the winning schools.

- [Leveraging Sports Teams](#)
- [Pittsburgh Attendance Challenge Toolkit](#)

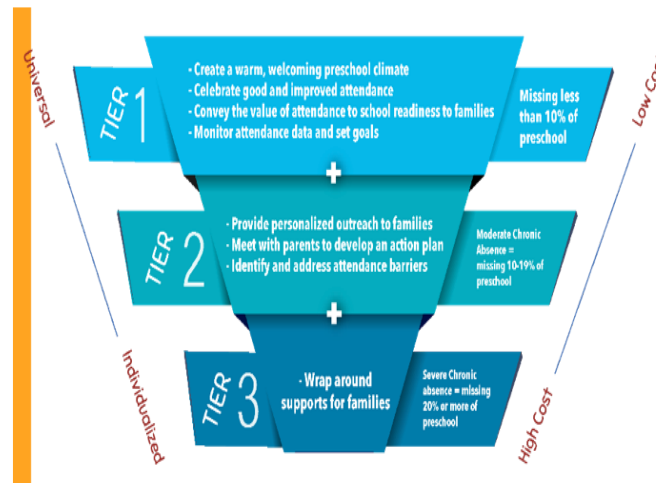
Use Tiered Interventions-

Tier 1 Interventions-

- Positive Relationships with students and families
- Impact of Absences on achievement is widely understood

- Monitor the Data
- Engaging School Climate
- Common Barriers identified and recognized
- Parental Engagement
- Recognize Good and Improving Attendance

Attendance Works



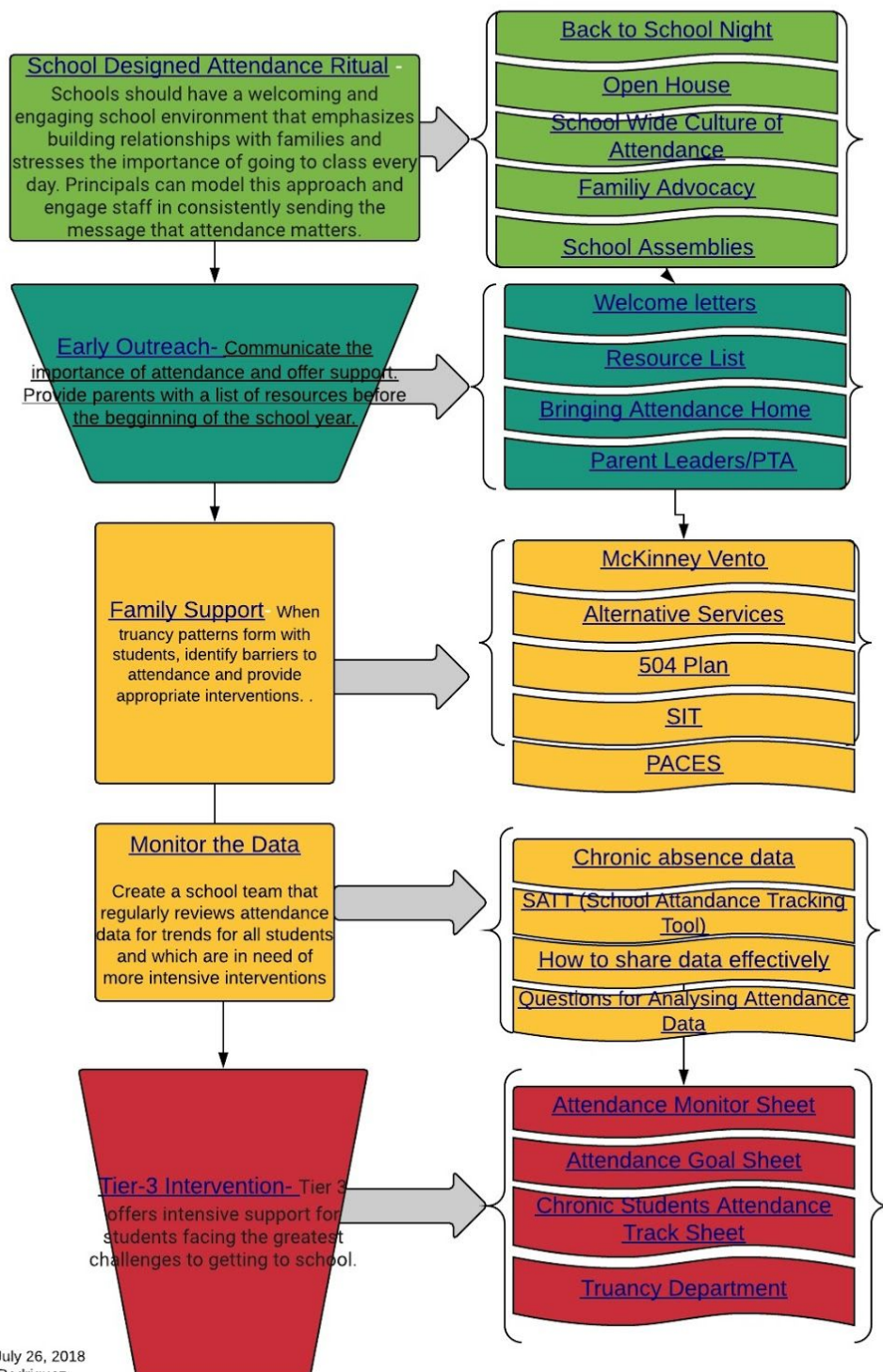
Tier 2 Interventions-

- Stabilize attendance- Make parents aware and provide resources when needed.
- Remove/decrease obstacles
- Rule out more serious problems
- Establish contact with guardians
- Identify times/triggers for potential future absences
- Address academic deficiencies from abs

Tier 3 Interventions- Individual, Intense

- 1:1 Mentoring
- Regular Home Visits
- Outside Agencies such as [PACES](#), [KVC](#), [St Francis Community Center](#).
- Alternative Education Setting

Attendance Outreach and Interventions



Revised July 26, 2018
Rosie Rodriguez

 Click on this image for the hyperlink to your resources

Early Education - Attendance Works

Teachers and early education providers play a key role in reducing chronic absence by teaching children – and reinforcing to parents – the value of attendance. Teachers witness how absences can disrupt learning, not just for the absent student but also for the entire classroom. They can emphasize attendance from Day One, use parent teacher conferences to talk about attendance and promote a culture of attendance

- [Teaching Attendance 2.0 toolkit](#)
- [Positive Parent Messaging Toolkit](#)

Principals set the tone for the entire school, ensuring that students, parents and teachers know that attendance matters. That message can be conveyed by greeting families every morning, sending letters homes and having teachers call or record personalized robocalls. Principals can call for the district to provide the data needed to identify at-risk students in need of support. They can also help identify and address systemic barriers and provide professional development to teachers.

- [Leading Attendance toolkit](#)

School Boards can make reducing chronic absence a key policy objective and hold superintendents accountable for taking action to improve attendance. They can commission chronic absence reports and use the results to determine allocation of resources to address problem areas. They can also use chronic absence as a metric for school or superintendent success.

- [Fact Sheet for School Boards](#)

Success Mentors initiative In New York City, the lessons from then-Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s successful Success Mentor attendance pilot have been widely shared with an emphasis on data tracking, attendance committees and Success Mentors. A community schools initiative championed by Mayor Bill de Blasio now uses these strategies in 45 schools. In 2016, the US Department of Education and the White House launched an initiative to expand Success Mentors to 30 school districts and reach over a quarter million students. As a continuation of the federal initiative, the Department of Education established the National Student Attendance, Engagement, and Success Center (NSAESC).

- [White House fact sheet on Success Mentors](#)
- [Read more](#) about the National Student Attendance, Engagement, and Success Center (NSAESC).

Elementary Interventions - From Attendance Works

III. Helping Families Improve Attendance

Schools and community organizations working with parents can take several approaches to help families improve attendance and, with it, reading skills.

1. Inform parents early and often about the value of good attendance

Connect with parents during the summer and throughout the school year about the value of good attendance and let them know that you are there to partner with them every day. We know from experience that attendance improves when a school community offers a warm and welcoming environment that engages students and families and offers enriching learning opportunities.

A key component of the engagement is helping families learn about the positive effects of good attendance and

they were not as worried about excused absences. In fact some saw giving their child a day off from school as a show of affection.

Attendance improves when parents believe schools are safe, trust the teachers and feel connected to the elementary school, studies show. In addition to the Chicago research, an analysis of the Los Angeles Unified School District's Attendance Improvement Program for kindergartners identified these common characteristics among the most successful programs:

- greater levels of parent engagement;
- a strength-based approach with more positive perceptions of parents and higher expectations of their students and parents;
- a shared belief that everyone had a role in improving attendance and should work together;
- and deeper levels of commitment to program implementation and delving into the causes of absence.

learn about the positive effects of good attendance and the consequences of chronic absenteeism on realizing their hopes and dreams for their children. Parents may not know that even excused absences, if allowed to accumulate, can cause their children to fall behind. Nor do they realize that building the habit of attendance in the early grades can influence their children's chances of graduating from high school. Send home information highlighting both the value of attendance and the consequences of poor attendance.

Talk to parents about when absences become a problem. Starting in early education programs along with kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school. Missing 10 percent of school days (or about 18 days) can make it harder for children to learn to read. Emphasize that students can fall behind if they

miss just a day or two every few weeks, and that being late to school can also cause a child to miss out on critical learning opportunities and may lead to poor attendance.

Additionally, absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up on missed material. So that even children who attend regularly can be adversely affected by other children's chronic absence.

Encourage parents to work with the teacher when their child is absent to ensure he or she has an opportunity to make up missed class assignments.

2. Offer incentives to recognize parents' efforts to build a culture of attendance

One strategy for improving attendance is engaging students, parents, educators and community members in a campaign that offers positive rewards for getting to school on-time.

Incentives should be part of creating a school-wide culture of attendance accompanied by a deep commitment to ensuring students are engaged in the classroom once they show up. Attendance incentives are most effective when they are part of a comprehensive approach that includes outreach to families with more significant challenges to attendance.

Incentives don't need to be costly. Simple rewards — recognition from peers and the school through certificates or assemblies, extra recess time, homework passes or even dancing in the hallways — go a long way toward motivating students. Teachers can solicit ideas from students about what they consider a meaningful incentive.

Key considerations for an incentive program include:

- Let children know they were missed. A powerful strategy for encouraging better attendance is letting children know that their absence was noticed and their classmates and teachers hope they will be back in class soon.
- Interclass competition can be a strong motivator. The sense of competition between classes (with rewards like a party for the class with the best monthly attendance) can encourage students to feel accountable to each other for attending class.
- Avoid recognizing only perfect attendance. Perfect attendance is not always the goal because it is not wise to encourage children to come to school when they're sick. Students should be rewarded for improved and good attendance, not just perfect records. Offering weekly perfect attendance awards can allow students to still have a

chance to succeed the next week if they are absent. Remember incentives can be as simple and inexpensive as the opportunity to sit with a friend of your choice at lunchtime or to have your picture posted on a wall of fame.

- Reward timeliness, not just showing up to school. Since tardiness also has an adverse impact on learning, many schools count only on-time attendance toward rewards.
- Ensure families know about the incentive program and the importance of attendance for academic success, as well as the school policies and consequences for poor attendance. Sanctions should never be used without incentives.
- Offer incentives for families, not just students. Often, families appreciate access to resources such as food baskets and transportation passes.
- Implement incentives school-wide. To foster a culture of attendance, every classroom needs to participate.

3. Identify barriers to attendance and partner with parents to alleviate them

Schools, after-school programs and community organizations should establish and maintain ongoing two-way communication with parents to help identify barriers— such as transportation issues, job loss, unstable housing arrangements or health concerns.

Staying plugged in with parents and the barriers they and their children may be facing requires consistent tracking in school so that we know which students are missing and why. Schools should:

- Invest in accurate collection and entry of attendance data into student data systems.
- Calculate and analyze chronic absence and good attendance to discern patterns for students and classrooms.
- Invest in professional development to help teachers and administrators understand chronic absence.
- Reach out to frequently absent students to find out in a supportive manner why they are missing school and what would help them attend more regularly.
- These efforts give school administrators and teachers the data they need to identify which students and families might benefit from deeper engagement and support

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- to help alleviate barriers to attendance. To the extent possible, they should share this data with other agencies and community organizations.
 - They can also encourage parents to help each other. Parents need to know they can reach out for help when they are experiencing tough times that may make it difficult to get their children to school. They may not realize that other parents, teachers, principals, social workers, school nurses, after-school providers, faith-based organizations or community agencies may be able to
 - help with problem-solving or connecting them to needed resources. For example, parents can be encouraged to coordinate carpools, walking school buses and child care arrangements to help ensure more children are getting to school.

4. Help parents recognize what they can do to foster good school attendance for their children

- Emphasize to parents that establishing consistent good habits at home can put children on the right track to good school attendance. Parents can:
 - Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.
 - Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
 - Introduce their child to his or her teachers and classmates before school starts to help with the transition.
 - Avoid letting their child stay home unless he or she is truly sick. Advise parents that sometimes complaints of a stomach-ache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.
 - Talk to teachers, school counselors or other parents for advice on how to alleviate a child's anxiety about going to school or other issues.
 - Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor or another parent.
 - Avoid scheduling medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.

By establishing clear channels of communication with parents, engaging families and communities in problem-solving and rewarding steps to improve attendance, schools

and early education programs can be instrumental in creating and maintaining learning environments that reduce absenteeism and promote school success.

Attendance Works is a national organization dedicated to improving the policy, practice and research around attendance. It's website offers materials, research and success stories about reducing chronic absence. Attendance Works also offers technical assistance to school districts and communities. For more information and resources, go to www.attendanceworks.org/tools/for-parents/

Launched in May 2010, the **Campaign for Grade-Level Reading** is a collaborative effort of funders, nonprofit partners, states and communities across the nation to ensure that many more children from low-income families succeed in school and graduate prepared for college, a career and active citizenship. It focuses on reading proficiency by the end of third grade, a key predictor of high school graduation and a milestone missed by fully 80 percent of low-income children.

Middle/High School Interventions

DEVELOPING INDICATORS OF STUDENT DISENGAGEMENT AND EXAMINING THEIR IMPACT ON FALLING OFF THE GRADUATION PATH EARLY IN THE MIDDLE GRADES

Guiding Questions

Four questions guided our analysis:

1. Are significant numbers of students in high-poverty urban schools showing unmistakable signs of disengagement by sixth grade?
2. Do sixth graders who exhibit unmistakable signs of disengagement by struggling academically, not coming to school on a regular basis, and/or behaving inappropriately fall off the path to graduation in significant numbers?
3. Can we identify a set of indicators that flag sixth graders who have high odds of falling off the graduation track, and do these indicators individually and collectively identify a substantial percentage of the students who do not graduate with a high school diploma?
4. Can we end up with a parsimonious set of “early warning flags” from among the data already routinely collected and reported at the individual level by school systems and readily available to and interpretable by school personnel? Schools will find an early warning system easier to implement if it does not require them to mount special data collection, entry, manipulation, and analysis efforts.

Comprehensive Plan for Keeping Middle-Grade Students on the Graduation Plan

<i>Type of Intervention</i>	<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Attendance</i>	<i>Course Failure</i>
<i>School Wide</i>	<i>-Every absence brings a response Create culture that says attending every day matters -Positive social incentives for good attendance</i>	<i>-Teach, model, expect good behavior Positive social incentives and recognition for good behavior Advisory</i>	<i>-Research-based instructional programs In-classroom implementation support to enable active and engaging pedagogies</i>
<i>Targeted (15 - 20% of students)</i>	<i>-Data tracking at teacher team level 2 or more unexcused absences in a</i>	<i>-2 or more office referrals brings involvement of Behavior Team</i>	<i>-Elective replacement extra-help courses tightly linked to core curriculum,</i>

	<p>month brings brief daily check by an adult</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Attendance Team investigates and problem solves, why isn't student attending (teacher, counselor, administrator, parent) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Simple behavior checklist brought from class to class checked each day by an adult -Mentor assigned 	<p>preview upcoming lessons, fill in knowledge gaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Targeted reduced class size for students whose failure is rooted in social-emotional issues
<p>Intensive (5-10% of students)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sustained one-on-one attention and problem solving -Bring in appropriate social service or community supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In-depth behavioral assessment: why is student misbehaving -Behavior contracts with family involvement -Bring in appropriate social service or community supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -One-on-one tutoring

Action Step 1: Generate and act on absenteeism data.

Identify both the students who are, or are at risk of becoming, chronically absent from school as well as the underlying causes of absenteeism.

Increase every student's access to support services to address absenteeism *before* any student misses so much school that it is nearly impossible to catch up.

Explore and enter into partnerships—consistent with applicable Federal and State laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)—between school districts and other important public and private organizations, such as public housing authorities and public health agencies, to increase and improve coordinated supports and interventions to address and eliminate chronic absenteeism.

Implement positive and supportive engagement strategies—like mentoring, counseling, and positive behavioral interventions and supports—to improve students' attendance at, connection to, and success in, school.

Action Step 2: Create and deploy positive messages and measures.

Refrain from punitive messages and measures—for example, blaming or threatening students and families with punishment—which are often ineffective and can lead to disproportionate suspensions and expulsions

Raise awareness about the causes and effects of and potential solutions to chronic absenteeism, especially among youth and families.

Action Step 3: Focus communities on addressing chronic absenteeism.

Prioritize trainings for school staff and affiliated community partners to conduct root cause analyses of absenteeism trends among students.

Support the development of effective strategies to eliminate chronic absenteeism and use research and evidence-based tools and programs that work to engage and support student success.

Communicate that chronic absenteeism is a problem that affects the entire community.

Action Step 4: Ensure responsibility across sectors.

Drive and **evaluate** cross-sector system performance, at least in part, on progress toward eliminating chronic absenteeism.

Work together as a community so that everyone feels responsible for successfully addressing chronic absenteeism.