



# PowerUPs

## Attendance Intervention: Improving Attendance at the School Level

**Caitie Moss**

Education Impact Consultant I

**Patrick Woodford**

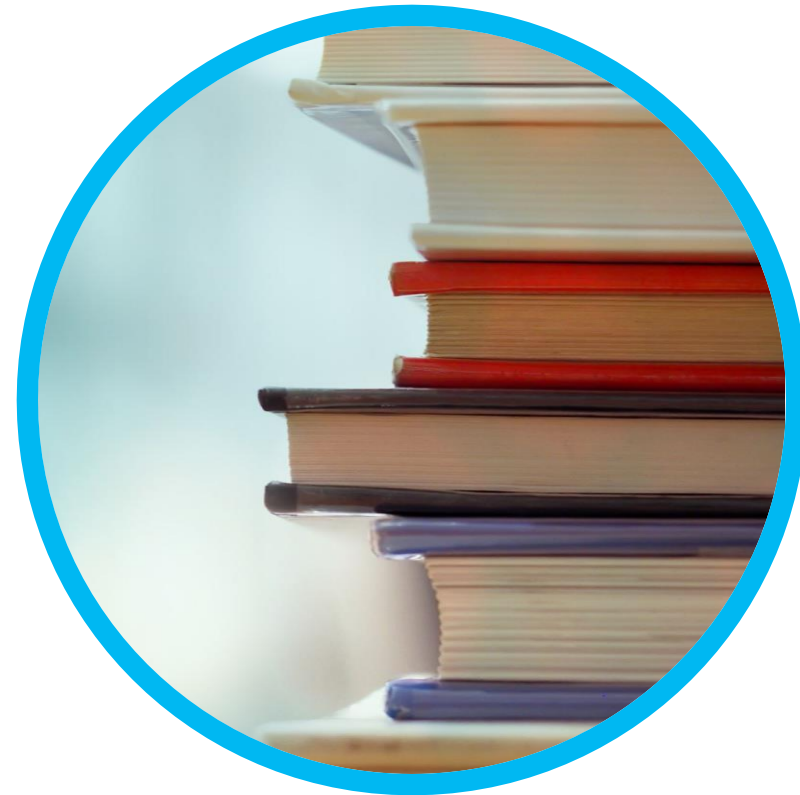
Education Impact Consultant I

2.15.2024



# Agenda

- 1** Effective School Attendance Teams  
\*Attendance Works Guide
- 2** Upcoming Events
- 3** Resources and Q&A



# Purpose of Attendance Team

- Organize and facilitate schoolwide attendance strategy
- Ensure attendance is an integral component of the school's plan to improve outcomes for all students



# 5 Functions of an Attendance Team

1. Organize a multi-tiered attendance strategy that begins with prevention and early intervention.
2. Examine attendance and absenteeism data to assess which groups of students have higher or lower levels of absence.
3. Identify assets, barriers, and strategies that affect attendance.
4. Mobilize everyone in the school community to address attendance.
5. Determine if you are making a difference.

\*Depending on school needs, the principal could incorporate these responsibilities into an existing school team.

# Who is on the team?

- The attendance strategy team should be led by the school principal and the leadership team.
- Could also include:
  - Nurse
  - Counselor
  - Social worker
  - Administrative support staff
  - Special education staff
  - Teachers
  - Early education staff
  - Expanded learning program staff

# What makes an effective team?

- Involve the right people
- Establish group norms
- Define roles and responsibilities
- Regular meeting schedule
- Principal should serve as team facilitator or identify another skilled member to facilitate and should set the parameters for the team members

# Core Roles

- Team Leader (principal or qualified designee)
- Meeting facilitator
- Data coordinator
- Note taker

# Self-Assessment

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL PRACTICE SELF-ASSESSMENT: rev. 5/25/2022

## Does Attendance Really Count in Our School?

### A Tool for Self-Assessment

Key Element	Strength	OK for Now	Could be Better	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	How do you know?
1. <b>Accurate Data:</b> Teachers and school staff take attendance accurately and it is entered daily into the district data system.						
2. <b>Team to Address Attendance:</b> Our team, led by an administrator, meets at least every two weeks to: (a) monitor attendance data and trends; (b) coordinate the school's multi-tiered attendance strategy; (c) examine the reasons for absences using quantitative and qualitative data; and (d) ensure chronically absent students receive needed supports.						
3. <b>Engaging Climate:</b> Our school has a welcoming and engaging climate that promotes safety, belonging, great teaching and learning, and interpersonal relationships with students, families, and staff.						
4. <b>Culture of Attendance:</b> Our school promotes a culture of attendance in year-round communication to families and students (back-to-school events, letters, flyers, personal phone calls, etc.) and regularly recognizes good and improved attendance.						
5. <b>Outreach:</b> We reach out to chronically absent students and families and engage them as partners in improving attendance.						
6. <b>Community Partners:</b> Our school partners with community agencies that offer resources (e.g. expanded learning, health services, mentors) that help engage students and remove attendance barriers.						
7. <b>Staff Capacity:</b> Our school ensures staff knows what is chronic absence, why it matters, and what are effective attendance practices.						
8. <b>Continuous Improvement:</b> We use data to assess the effectiveness of practices in order to expand what works and modify what does not.						
9. <b>Improvement Plan:</b> Our strategies for supporting student attendance are reflected in our school improvement plan.						
10. <b>District Policy:</b> Our district policy promotes a positive problem-solving approach to improving attendance with legal action only used as a last resort.						

(Note: Chronic Absence is missing => 10% of school over a year, including any type of absence; Satisfactory Attendance is missing =< 5% of school over a year)



# Planning Tool Example



SAMPLE ACTIVITIES for K-12: rev. 3-28-23

## Attendance Activities School Year Plan (K-12)

School Name		School Year	
-------------	--	-------------	--

Activities in the grid are examples. You can customize the plan for your school or program. For each activity, specify who is responsible for leading and how to measure the results. You can also recreate this chart in a larger format and use post-it notes to add activities as a group exercise. See the 3 Tiers of Intervention (<https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/>)

Timing	Summer (July/August)	Welcome Back (August/September)	Ongoing (Weekly)	Fall Semester (October – November)	Winter Semester (December – February)	Spring Semester (March-April)	End-of-Year (May/June)
<b>School Team</b>	Establish school team to address attendance. Develop a yearly attendance plan and goals. Agree on metrics to monitor for in-person and distance learning. Utilize start of school year PD days for teachers and school staff to discuss yearly plan and whole school strategies.	Conduct team meeting by the second week of school.	Hold team meetings.	Review <a href="#">early warning data</a> . Ensure staff are prepared to discuss attendance in a caring manner in parent-teacher conferences, attendance improvement meetings, outreach calls and home visits.	Revisit data to measure progress and revise school-wide strategies as needed. Expand team as needed to address reasons for absence.	Ensure staff are prepared to discuss attendance in parent-teacher conferences. Assess strategies and write school improvement plan.	Review data. Share data with student's next teacher for smooth transitions and trouble shooting.
<b>Foundational Whole School Supports</b>	Plan welcoming traditions for incoming early grades, transition grades and new students and their families. Ensure there is attention paid to students with disabilities and other student groups with historically high levels of absenteeism.	Disseminate in-person health and safety protocols. Promote immunization activities. Establish good and improved attendance recognition schedule/process. Conduct welcoming traditions for students and families.	Coordinate with other school leaders to promote and maintain a positive school climate.	Provide a warm welcome for students who start later in the school year. Offer afterschool programs with engaging and culturally responsive curricula.	Create opportunities for students, families and staff to recharge physically and emotionally. Increase the sense of belonging for specific student groups through clubs, history months and celebrations.	Boost excitement in learning – celebrate and event such as Earth Day.	Plan end-of-year traditions including opportunities for service, e.g. students in upper grades lead tours for students entering the school next fall.
<b>Tier I (Universal)</b>	Promote <a href="#">attendance messaging</a> during registration/enrollment. Have home visits/phone calls to build relationship and remind families about the first day of school.	Share back-to-school messaging about the importance of attendance for in-person and distance learning.	Ask staff to establish daily, weekly and monthly routines to build relationships in the classroom and welcome students back after absences. Hold weekly/monthly recognition. Ensure positive, regular communication with	During <a href="#">parent-teacher conference</a> , recognize good attendance and express concerns in a supportive manner if needed. Anticipate and plan activities/supports to minimize dips in attendance during holidays. Conduct a resource fair for students and their families.	Share messaging and engaging activities around <a href="#">winter holidays</a> . Use data to identify attendance dips and align events to mitigate low attendance days. Schedule mid-year activities to remind school community about attendance.	Hold parent-teacher conference student attendance check-in. Plan engaging activities and messaging to avoid the spring slump.	Communicate the importance of student attendance in last weeks of school. Acknowledge attendance successes.

Copyright © 2023 Attendance Work. All rights reserved.  
[www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org)

# Planning Tool Example



SAMPLE ACTIVITIES for K-12: rev. 3-28-23

			families about student attendance. Create <a href="#">Student Attendance Success Plans</a> .				
<b>Tier 2</b> <i>(Target – moderate chronic absence)</i>	<p>Provide high quality summer learning especially for schools and student populations experiencing chronic absence.</p> <p>Review previous year's data for returning and incoming students. Update tiered strategies based on data and any new information about reasons for absences.</p> <p>Carry out personal outreach to families and students in transition grades and those who were chronically absent in the prior school year or experienced attendance challenges during summer learning programs.</p>	<p>Develop personalized relationships with students and families who are at risk for attendance issues.</p> <p>Ensure outreach is conducted in families' home languages and draws upon family cultures.</p>	<p>Put in place strategies to connect to groups of students showing signs of attendance issues, (e.g., Success Mentors).</p> <p>Ensure IEPs address attendance.</p>	<p>Develop school-wide Tier 2 strategies. During parent-teacher conferences, raise concerns about attendance.</p> <p>Check in with students/families with known medical conditions. Create personalized student plans. Identify common barriers for student groups and organize strategies to address barriers. Provide academic support as needed.</p>	<p>Identify moderately chronically absent students (missing 10-19%). Identify causes of absenteeism and assign appropriate interventions.</p>	<p>Hold parent-teacher conferences and discuss strategies to prevent attendance rate from getting worse or to continue with improvements.</p> <p>Determine how to expand access to engaging summer learning for chronically absent students</p>	<p>Meet with transition grade (K, 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>) personnel to conduct a warm hand-off for students who are chronically absent.</p> <p>Develop a plan for summer and first day of school interventions. Ensure a warm welcome from summer learning programs to absent student</p>
<b>Tier 3</b> <i>(Target – severe chronic absence)</i>	<p>Review previous year's data for returning and incoming students. Flag students who were severely chronically absent, and learn about their challenges and strengths. Engage community partners.</p>	<p>Consider demographics of new student body to identify student groups at risk for chronic absence. Monitor disparities.</p>	<p>Make referrals to case workers as needed. Implement early interventions before taking more intensive measures.</p>	<p>Identify common barriers for students who need Tier 3 supports and engage external resources. Provide academic support as needed.</p>	<p>Convene case management conferences with all relevant stakeholders (e.g. mental health, child welfare).</p>	<p>Hold conferences with parents, legal guardians and community partners.</p>	<p>Meet with transition grade (K, 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>) personnel and assign mentor for the first day of school.</p>

# Avoid Common Pitfalls

- AVOID

- Establish team that operates in isolation
- Failing to rally the whole school to support prevention and early intervention
- Focusing only on students with the most absences
- Case management as the sole strategy
- Jumping to solutions without sufficient understanding of factors behind absences
- Teams where composition does not reflect the demographics, perspectives or cultural realities of the student population

# Sample Agenda

- Aggregate data trends
  - High-level picture of all students by tier and by attendance categories (satisfactory, at-risk, moderately chronically absent, severely chronically absent, extremely chronically absent). Is it getting better or worse?
- Unpacking Patterns
  - Identify any patterns or trends across groups of students. What insights does the team have about common barriers or what might be contributing to positive outliers?
- Tiered System of Support
  - Strategies for strengthening your tiered system of support. Take a year-long approach.
  - Discuss possible solutions to the barriers students are experiencing and identify systemic interventions (e.g., walking to the school bus)
- Students Needing Tier 2 or 3 Supports
  - Review individual students as a team; determine who follows-up with individual or groups of student(s) and/or families
  - Outreach to students and families to determine barriers/causes for absence; assign interventions and offer appropriate resources
- Meeting Decisions and Next Steps
  - Summarize Decisions and assign responsibility for next steps

# Resources

- [Attendance Works Self-Assessments and Guides](#)
  - [Guidance for School Attendance Teams](#)
  - [School Practice Self-Assessment Tool](#)
  - [Instructions for Using the Self-Assessment Tool](#)
  - [Attendance Planning Calendar BLANK](#)
  - [Attendance Planning Calendar SAMPLE](#)
- **PowerSchool Community**
  - [Video: Attendance Tiers](#)
  - [How to Message Students or Student Contacts by Attendance Tier](#)

# Upcoming Events

- Next AIS PowerUp-
  - Thursday, February 29 at 3pm EST



Thank you!