Reducing Chronic Absences and Improving Dropout Prevention Rates...

Through School, Family and Community Collaborations

November 15, 2017

www.FLDOE.org
Take a Data Driven Systemic Approach

Positive Engagement: Uses caring relationships, effective messaging and a positive school climate to motivate daily attendance.

Actionable Data: Is accurate, accessible, and regularly reported in an understandable format.

Shared Accountability: Ensures chronic absence is monitoring & reinforced by policy.

Capacity Building: Expands ability to work together to interpret data, engage in problem solving, and adopt best practices to improve attendance.

Strategic partnerships between district and community partners address specific attendance barriers and mobilize support for all ingredients.
Actionable Data: Chronic Absence (CA)

\[
\text{Excused Absences} + \text{Unexcused Absences} + \text{Suspension} \rightarrow \text{Chronic Absence}
\]

Important Differences -

- **Truancy** = unexcused absences (s. 1003.26(b), F.S.)
- **Average Daily Attendance** = how many students show up each day
- **Chronic Absence** = missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at-risk - *missing 10% or more of school*

www.attendanceworks.org
2015-16 Chronic Absenteeism* Rates by District

* % Absent 21 or More Days (Final Survey 5)

Source: Education Information and Accountability Services, Florida Department of Education

State: 10.10%
Patterns in Chronic Absence Across the Grade Levels

- Rates typically drop after Kindergarten through 5th grade.
- Rise significantly in middle and high school.

Chart 3 - Chronically Absent Students By Grade

- ECLS-K
- Oregon
- Nebraska
- Florida
- West Virginia

Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012
Easy to Overlook Patterns of Chronic Absence in Individual Students

2 Absences Per Month x 9 Months of School = Less Likely to Graduate from High School

Get Schooled interactive webpage:

Average Daily Attendance Can Mask High Percentages of CA

Attendance Rate and Chronic Absenteeism, 2013-14
(Eight Alliance Districts with Network Schools)
Impact of Chronic Absence During Early Years

The more years students are chronically absent in the early years, the more at-risk they are for needing reading interventions by the end of second grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Second Grade DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency Score</th>
<th>Not Chronically Absent (n=4,073)</th>
<th>Chronically Absent in Pre-K (n=1,381)</th>
<th>Chronically Absent in Pre-K and K (n=423)</th>
<th>Chronically Absent in Pre-K, K, and 1st Grade (n=255)</th>
<th>Chronically Absent in Pre-K, K, 1st, and 2nd Grade (n=306)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td>94.6***</td>
<td>88.9***</td>
<td>81.3***</td>
<td>72.9***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some Risk* At Risk*
Students who experience chronic absence in Kindergarten have:

• Lower academic performance in 1st Grade

• Lower reading and math proficiency in 3rd grade

• Weak social and academic skills to help the student engage in learning
Chronic Early Absence Connected to Poor Long-term Academic Outcomes

A Rhode Island Data Hub analysis found that compared to kindergartners who attended regularly, those chronically absent:

- Scored 20% lower in reading and math in later grades and gap grows
- 2X as likely to be retained in grade 3
- 2X likely to be suspended by the end of 7th grade
- Likely to continue being chronically absent
Attendance Matters in the Middle Grades

Figure 3. Graduation Rate by Number of Absences

What Factors Predict High School Graduation in the Los Angeles Unified School District?
Silver, D., Saunders, M. (University of California, Los Angeles), Zarate, E. (University of California, Irvine)
Attendance Matters in High School

Four-Year Graduation Rates by Freshman Absence Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days Absent per Semester</th>
<th>Percentage that Graduated in Four Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40+</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Being in school on a regular basis ...
... drives student success

✓ **Exposure to Language:** Starting in pre-K, attendance equals exposure to language-rich environments

✓ **Time on Task in Class:** Students only benefit from classroom instruction if they are in class

✓ **On track for Success:** Chronic absence is a proven early warning signal that a student is behind in reading by 3\(^{rd}\) grade, failing courses in middle and high school, and likely to drop out

✓ **College and Career Ready:** Cultivating the habit of regular attendance helps students develop the persistence needed to show up every day for college and work

✓ **Engagement:** Attendance reflects engagement in learning

✓ **Effective Practice:** Schools, communities, and families can improve attendance when they work together
Florida’s Cohort-Based Dropout Rates, 2011-12 to 2015-16

- 2011-12: 4.9%
- 2012-13: 4.6%
- 2013-14: 4.3%
- 2014-15: 4.1%
- 2015-16: 3.8%
Cohort-Based Dropout Rates by District, 2011-12 through 2015-16

Above State Average
Below State Average
Florida’s Early Warning Indicators Grades K-8 (s. 1001.42, F.S.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Threshold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>Student missed 10% or more of school days (absences, OSS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>One or more suspensions (ISS or OSS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Performance</td>
<td>• Course failure in ELA or math (any grading period)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Level 1 statewide standardized assessment ELA and Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• K-3 substantial reading deficiency s. 1008.25(5)(a), F.S.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Take a Data Driven Systemic Approach

Positive Engagement:
Uses caring relationships, effective messaging and a positive school climate to motivate daily attendance.

Actionable Data:
Is accurate, accessible, and regularly reported in an understandable format.

Shared Accountability:
Ensures chronic absence is monitored & reinforced by policy.

Capacity Building
Expands ability to work together to interpret data, engage in problem solving, and adopt best practices to improve attendance.

Strategic partnerships
between district and community partners address specific attendance barriers and mobilize support for all ingredients.
Strategic Partnerships
Best Practices: Community Engagement

- Community outreach and messaging on the importance of attendance

- Absences Add Up!
  - [http://absencesaddup.org/the-campaign](http://absencesaddup.org/the-campaign)

- Engage community partners in problem solving to assist in developing and implementing interventions to break down barriers to school attendance
Positive Engagement

SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS
STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING PROTECTIVE FACTORS AMONG YOUTH
Engaging Parents

• Encourage parents to keep track of their student’s attendance

• Use your parent groups and/or volunteers to assist other parents in promoting positive relationships to encourage attendance

• Give Parents a Voice
Table Discussion: Planning

- Actionable Data
- Positive Engagement
- Capacity Building
- Shared Accountability
- Strategic Partnerships

Next Steps ....
Action Plan Activity


Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Jayna Jenkins, Project Coordinator
Student Support Services Project
Jayna@usf.edu

Iris Williams, School Social Work Consultant
Student Support Services Project
IrisWilliams@usf.edu

Bureau of Family and Community Outreach

Angelia Rivers, Bureau Chief
Family and Community Outreach
Angelia.Rivers@fldoe.org

Janine Rogers, Director
Dropout Prevention
Janine.Rogers@fldoe.org