Partnering with Expanded Learning to Reduce Chronic Absenteeism

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INTRODUCTIONS

Hedy Chang
Executive Director
Attendance Works

Jeff Davis
Executive Director
California AfterSchool Network

Staci Wendt
Senior Research Associate
WestEd

Marcus Strother
Director, Youth Development Support Services
Sacramento City USD

Onniel Sanchez
Be HERE Grant Supervisor
Sacramento City USD

Heather Williams *(Moderator)*
Program Director, Policy & Outreach
California AfterSchool Network

Who's Joining Us Today?

What is Chronic Absence?

Chronic absence is missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at risk. Attendance Works recommends defining it as **missing 10% or more of school for any reason**.

Excused absences + Unexcused absences + Suspensions → Chronic Absence
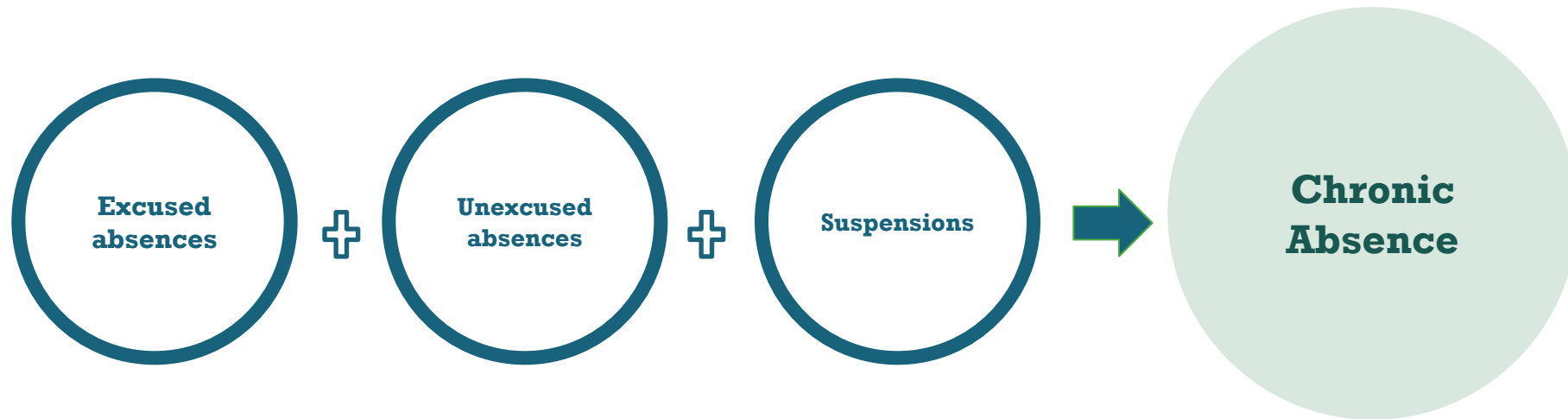
Chronic absence is different from **truancy** (unexcused absences only) or **average daily attendance** (how many students show up to school each day).

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Student Attendance is Strongly Associated with Academic Success

Chronic Absence = Warning Sign of Academic Risk

PK-1ˢᵗ Grade: Students who attend regularly in the early grades perform better on measures of academic and social and emotional capacities.

3ʳᵈ Grade: Students who attend school regularly are more likely to be able to read proficiently by the end of 3ʳᵈ grade.

Middle School Success: Students who attend school regularly are more likely to have passing grades in middle school

High School Completion: Students who attend school regularly are more likely to graduate from high school

College Completion: Students who attend school regularly in high school are more likely to persist in college and graduate
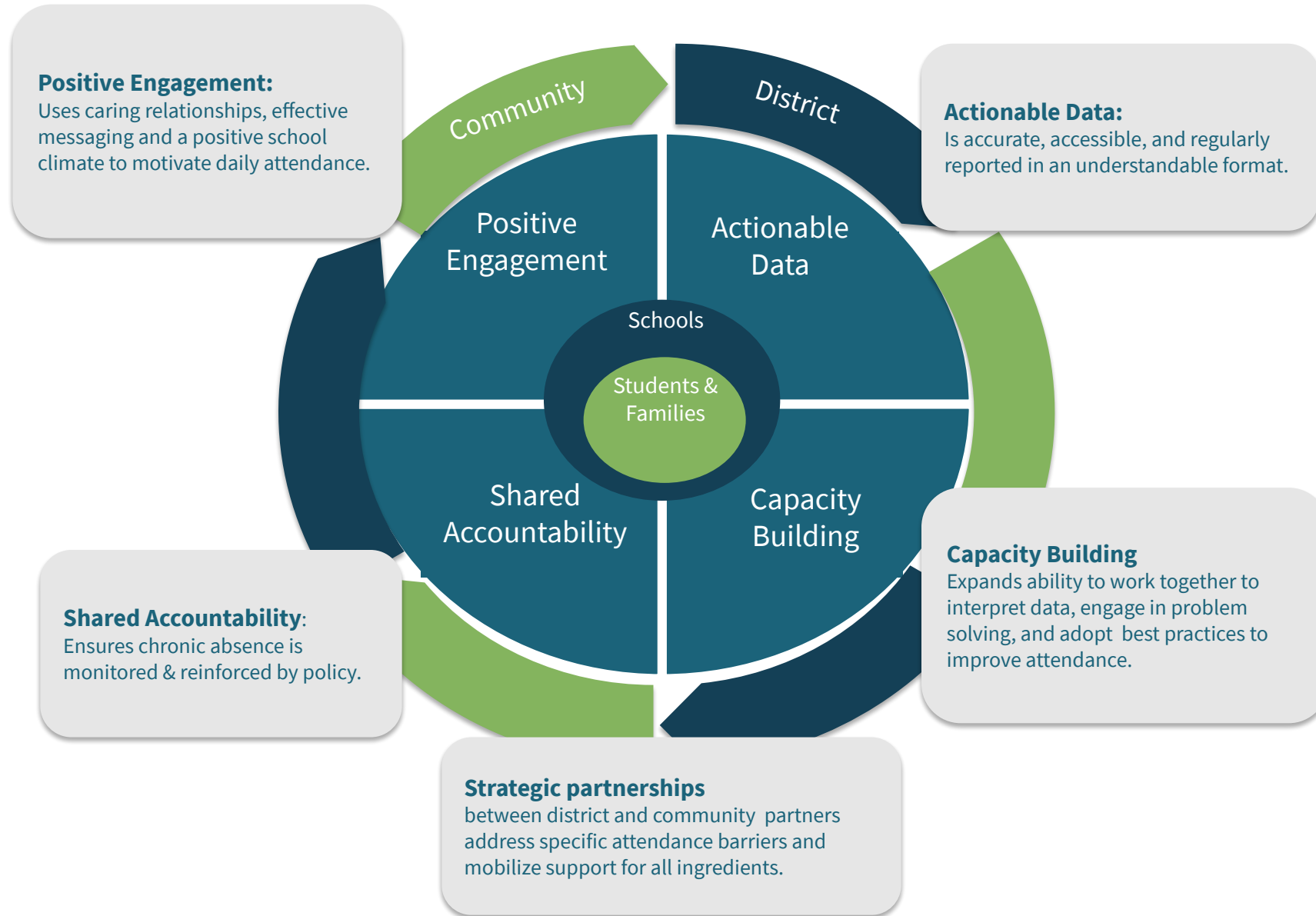
Chronic Absence Offers A New Attendance Paradigm

Truancy

- Counts unexcused absences
- Emphasizes individual compliance with school rules
- Uses legal, typically more punitive, solutions

Chronic Absence

- Counts all absences
- Emphasizes academic impact of missed days
- Uses preventive problem-solving, trauma-informed strategies

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.

Community

District

Positive Engagement

Actionable Data

Schools

Students & Families

Shared Accountability

Capacity Building

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II. Chronic Absenteeism Indicator

» **New!** Reported for first time in 2018 Dashboard

» One of two statewide indicators for students' level of Academic Engagement

» The indicator appears for LEAs, schools, and student groups in grades **K–8** with **30 or more students** who meet the **eligible enrollment requirements** in both the current and prior year will receive a performance level for this indicator on the Dashboard.

» Schools that do not certify (or submit) attendance data are automatically assigned an Orange performance level.

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www.attendanceworks.org

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American Indian

Orange

17.8% chronically absent

Maintained -0.3%

Number of Students: 21,667

African American

Orange

17.9% chronically absent

Increased 1%

Number of Students: 234,481

Students with Disabilities

Orange

15.1% chronically absent

Maintained 0.4%

Number of Students: 544,974

English Learners

Orange

8.6% chronically absent

Increased 0.6%

Number of Students: 1,088,575

Foster Youth

Orange

18.5% chronically absent

Maintained No Data

Number of Students: 32,589

Homeless

Orange

19.4% chronically absent

Increased 1.2%

Number of Students: 183,410

Pacific Islander

Orange

16.1% chronically absent

Increased 2%

Number of Students: 19,676

Socioeconomically Disadvantaged

Orange

11.4% chronically absent

Maintained 0.4%

Number of Students: 2,773,532

Hispanic

Yellow

9.7% chronically absent

Maintained 0.4%

Number of Students: 2,367,648

Two or More Races

Yellow

9.3% chronically absent

Maintained -0.2%

Number of Students: 203,294

White

Yellow

7.7% chronically absent

Maintained No Data

Number of Students: 992,430

Asian

Green

3.2% chronically absent

Maintained 0.3%

Number of Students: 396,095

Filipino

Green

4.3% chronically absent

Maintained 0.2%

Number of Students: 96,617

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How Can We Address Chronic Absence?

Factors That Contribute to Chronic Absence

High or extreme levels of chronic absence often indicate multiple causes of chronic absence exist for large numbers of students and further resources are needed to unpack factors affecting student attendance.

Barriers

- Illness, both chronic and acute
- Lack of health, mental health, vision, or dental care
- Trauma
- Unsafe path to/from school
- Family responsibilities
- Poor transportation
- Frequent moves or school changes
- Involvement with child welfare or juvenile justice systems

Negative School Experiences

- Struggling academically or socially
- Bullying
- Suspensions and expulsions
- Negative attitudes of parents due to their past and current school experiences
- Undiagnosed disability
- Lack of appropriate accommodations for disability

Lack of Engagement

- Lack of culturally relevant, engaging instruction
- No meaningful relationships with adults in school
- Stronger ties with peers out of school than in school
- Unwelcoming school climate
- Failure to earn credits/ no future plans
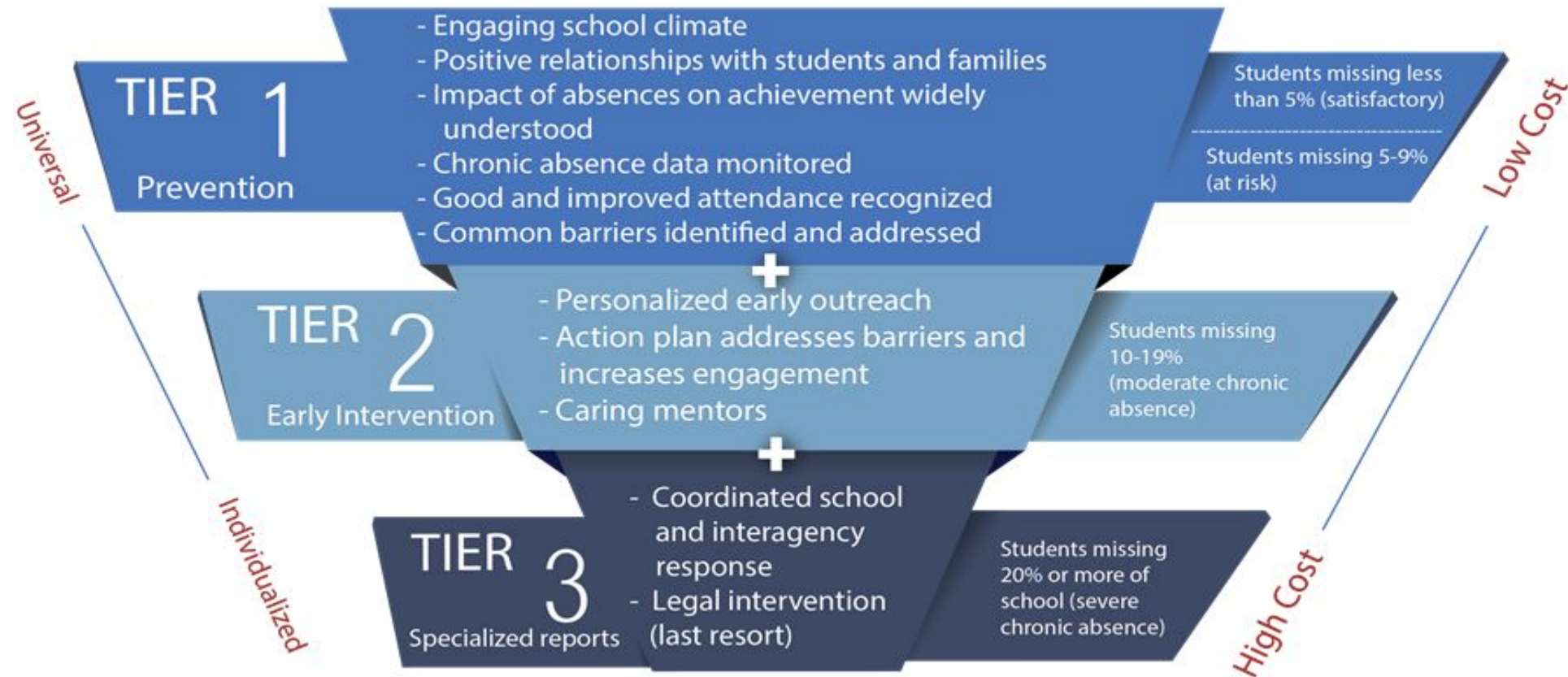- Many teacher absences or long-term substitutes

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
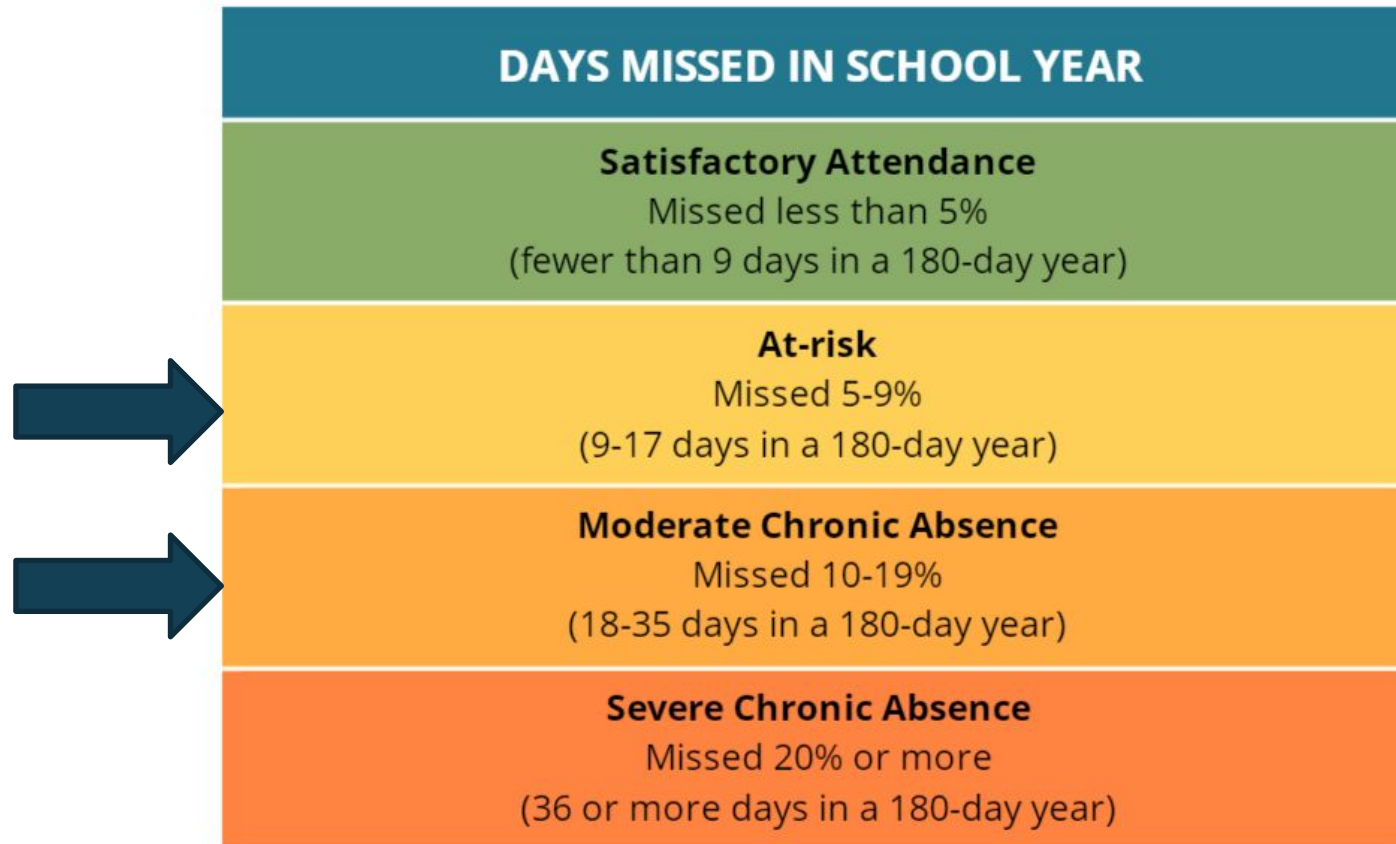- Attendance only matters in the older grades

Invest in Prevention and Early Intervention

High and extreme levels of chronic absence are an alert that additional support is needed to address chronic absence.

TIER 1
Prevention
Universal

- Engaging school climate
- Positive relationships with students and families
- Impact of absences on achievement widely understood
- Chronic absence data monitored
- Good and improved attendance recognized
- Common barriers identified and addressed

Students missing less than 5% (satisfactory)
Students missing 5-9% (at risk)
Low Cost

TIER 2
Early Intervention

- Personalized early outreach
- Action plan addresses barriers and increases engagement
- Caring mentors

Students missing 10-19% (moderate chronic absence)

TIER 3
Specialized reports
Individualized

- Coordinated school and interagency response
- Legal intervention (last resort)

Students missing 20% or more of school (severe chronic absence)
High Cost

Making a Difference Within A School Year Requires Attention to At-Risk and Moderate Bands

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)

Tier 1: Creating a positive, engaging school climate that supports attendance

Attendance is higher when schools:
- ✓ Promote a sense of belonging and connection including noticing when students show up
- ✓ Make learning engaging so students don't want to miss class Engage in restorative practice not punishment
- ✓ Meet the basic needs of our most economically challenged families so all have the opportunity to get to school
- ✓ Build awareness about how absences can easily add up to too much time lost in the classroom

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Parents underestimate the number of year-end absences

Ad Council research commissioned by the CA Attorney General asked parents with students with a history of absence about their children's absences in two ways:

1. Was your child absent an average of 2 or more days a month?
2. Was your child absent more than 10 days over the year?

60% of parents said their child was absent an average of 2+ days a month, **but not** 10+ days a year
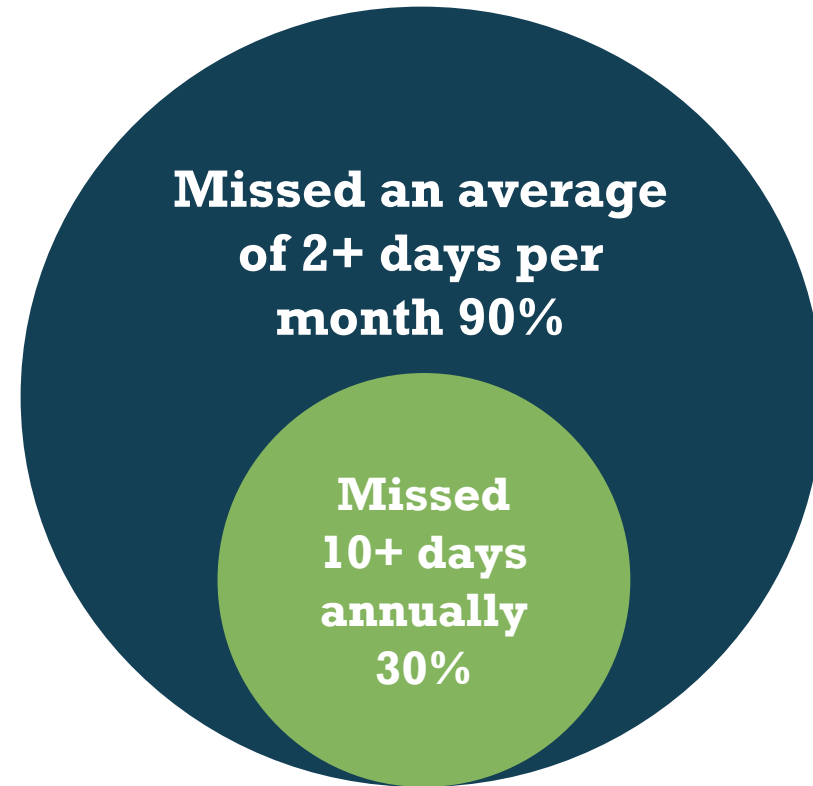
The math: If a child is absent an average of 2+ days a month, then he/she is absent far more than 10+ days a year

Missed an average of 2+ days per month 90%

Missed 10+ days annually 30%

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Parent Video & Discussion Guide

Bringing Attendance Home Video *(6 minutes)*

✓ Facilitated conversation
✓ The consequences of chronic absence
✓ How to improve absenteeism
✓ Family practice
✓ Increase social capital
✓ Identify how school can help
✓ Community services

http://www.attendanceworks.org/tools/for-parents/bringing-attendance-home-video

Help families make back-up plans

Tier 2 Interventions

Tier 2

- Targeted interventions that remove identified barriers and increase positive connections that motivate improved attendance.

Who are the families in Tier 2?

- Missing 10-20% of the prior or current school year for any reason.
- Families experiencing some challenge e.g. chronic disease, job loss, divorce, etc.

For which families is Tier 2 sufficient?

- Families with barriers to school attendance who may not understand how to access support.
- Families who see school as "the deliverer of bad news."
- Families who are more successful when there is a positive relationship with someone at the school.

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Tier 2 Interventions Are Especially Critical

Priority Early Outreach for Positive Linkages and Engagement

- Partner with families/students to develop Student Attendance Success Plan
- Recruit for engaging before-or-after-school activities
- Connect to Walk-to-School Companion
- Add attendance goals and supports to IEP
- Assign caring mentors
- Offer plan or contacts for health support

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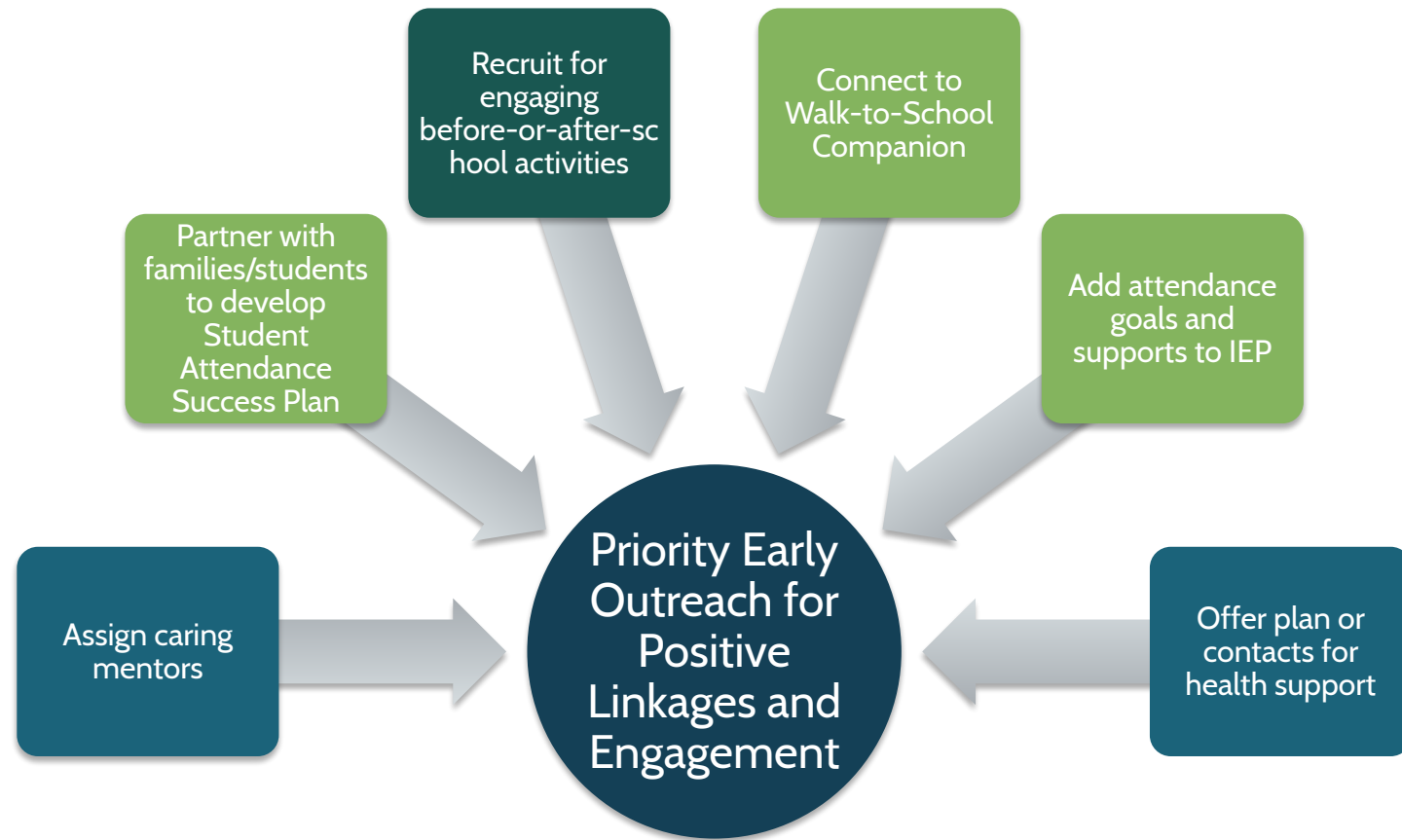
Research Shows Impact of Quality Out of School Time

7th and 8th graders attending Boys & Girls Club afterschool programs skipped school fewer times, increased school effort and gained academic confidence. (2009)

Afterschool participants attending Pathways to Progress in Minneapolis and St. Paul came to school an average 18.4 more days than their peers. (2004)

School-day attendance improved for students in California's Afterschool Learning and Safe Neighborhoods Partnerships Program. Students absent 10 % of the year came an additional 11 days. (2002).

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Step 1: Create Culture of Attendance

a. Forge caring relationships that motivate students to show up every day
b. Partner with schools to educate families and students about the importance of attendance
c. Reach out to students/families with poor attendance
d. Offer incentives for attendance
e. Use engaging program activities to motivate students to come to school.
f. Analyze program attendance data to identify areas in need of improvement.
g. Engage students in helping develop messages for other students about what is good attendance.

Step 2: Monitor Attendance Data on Program Participants

a. Seek parent waiver allowing A/S to see attendance and grades, ideally as standard part of enrollment.

b. Regularly get data on in-school attendance for program participants.

c. Find out if you are serving any students with problematic attendance.

d. Use poor attendance in afterschool to identify students who might begin to have trouble showing up to school day program.

e. Partner with school staff to find out what are the challenges facing students with poor attendance and what would help get them to school.

Step 3: Find Out About Attendance In Schools Served

a. Find out what the school is doing to reduce chronic absence and improve attendance. Identify if there is a role for the afterschool program, for example, serving as a success mentor.

b. Learn if your school has a team that monitors attendance data; Seek membership on the team or at least access to review school day attendance

c. Use the afterschool program as an opportunity to solicit insights from students and if possible parents about what are the barriers to attendance in the school day and what could help overcome them.

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Reducing Chronic Absence Requires A Team

Primary Purpose of A Team Approach

Organize and facilitate a schoolwide attendance strategy and ensure it is an integral component of the school's plan to improve outcomes for all students.

Key Team Functions

1. **Monitor attendance data** to assess which groups of students are most affected and what works to reduce chronic absence.

2. **Develop and organize a year-round multi-tiered attendance strategy** that begins with prevention and early intervention and determine which teams and/or staff are responsible for implementation.

3. **Use data to understand and remove common attendance barriers** for students.

4. **Ensure chronically absent students receive services** from a student support team.

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5 seconds# Tackling Student Absenteeism Requires a Whole School Strategy

The Attendance Strategy should be led by the school principal and the leadership team.

Teams working on improving student attendance should include the school's:

* Nurse
* Counselor
* Social Worker
* Administrative support staff
* Special education staff
* Teachers
* <mark>Afterschool staff</mark>

Teams should seek to incorporate input from families and students along with the community.

Key Resource: Attendance Awareness Website

PROMOTE LOCALLY

✔ **Download our free materials and our online Count Us In! toolkit and share with local districts.**

✔ **Encourage schools and community partners to join our listserv: 18,000+ members.**
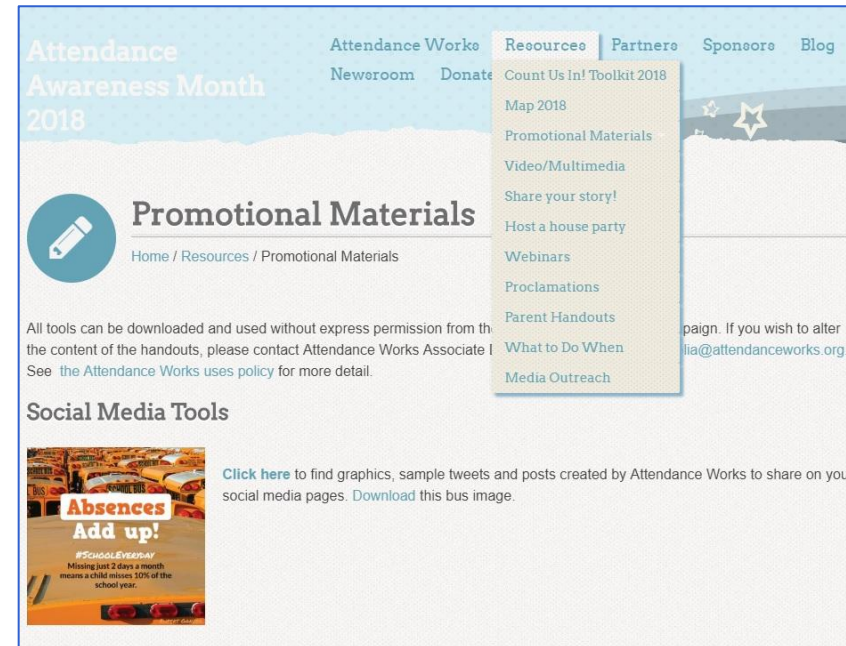
Sign up for Updates: www.awareness.attendanceworks.org

Expanded Learning Context

Jeff Davis
Executive Director
California AfterSchool Network

Staci Wendt
Senior Research Associate
WestEd

Supportive Environments with Meaningful Youth Engagement:
A Research-Based Approach for Promoting Success in School and Life

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: RESILIENCE IN ACTION

A groundbreaking report validates decades of research
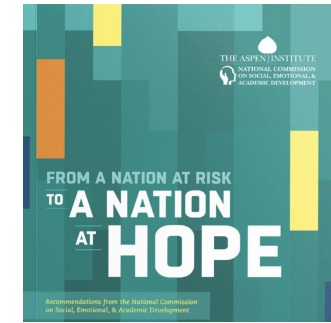
LEARNING SETTINGS

Learning and development are influenced by the familial, community, and societal contexts in which students grow. Learning settings that support young people's comprehensive growth often focus on 3 essential elements:

STUDENT EXPERIENCES

These settings can lead to learning experiences where young people are more likely to be engaged and grasp complex academic content:

STUDENT OUTCOMES

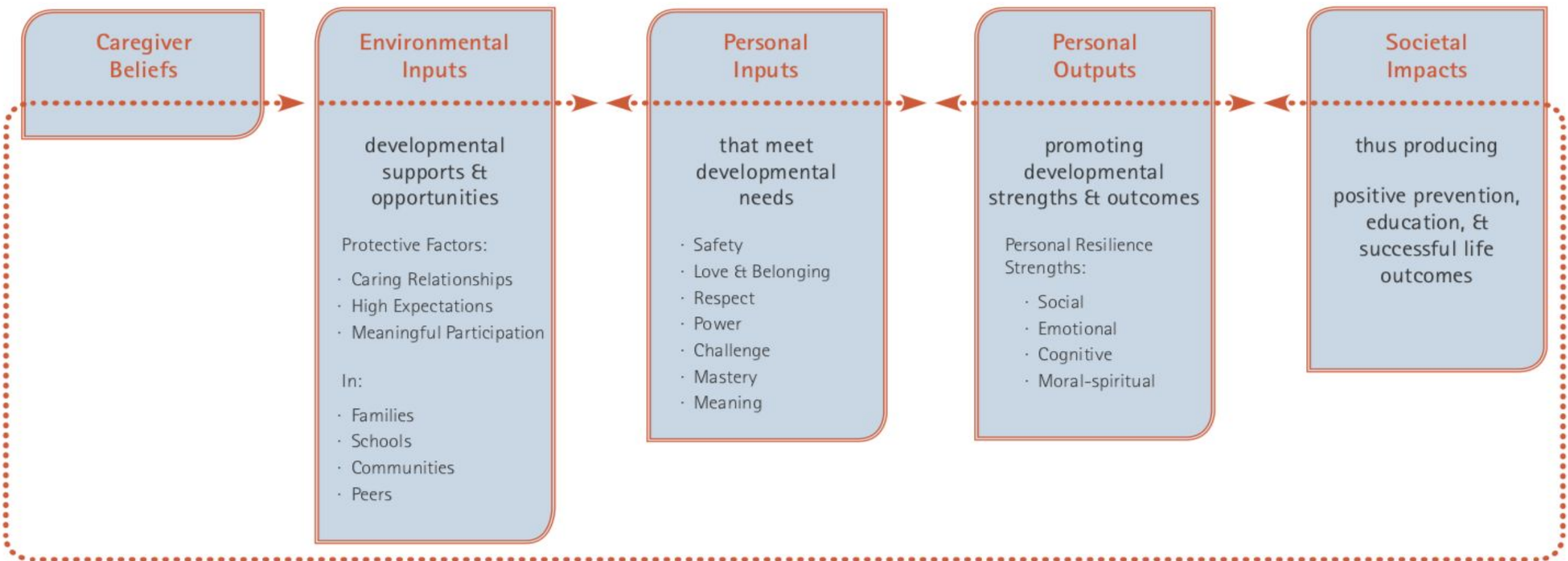The evidence shows that students who experience these learning settings are more likely to achieve success both now and in the future:

Teaching and practicing social, emotional, and cognitive skills

Embedding social, emotional, and cognitive skills into academic learning

Safe, relationship-based, and equitable learning environments

Rigorous academic content and learning experiences

Engagement, ownership, and purpose

Sense of belonging and connection to community

Academic success and educational attainment

Civic and community engagement

Life well-being (e.g., physical, family, and emotional well-being)

Workforce and career readiness

FROM A NATION AT RISK
TO **A NATION** AT **HOPE**

Meaningful youth engagement is generally lacking

- **Opportunities for meaningful participation are a critical factor leading to success in school and in life**

- But since 2003, the lowest scores from 5th – 11th grade (on the CA Healthy Kids Survey) are related to Opportunities for Meaningful Participation.

Afterschool can change that!

- When people have meaning and purpose, they show up

Why meaningful participation matters

"After school programs literally saved my life."

Protective Factors Associated with Expanded Learning Participation

CalSCHLS and the California Healthy Kids Survey

- Addresses school climate, health risks and behaviors, and youth resiliency

- Provide local data to schools, districts, and partner communities to improve student achievement and socio-emotional, behavioral, and physical health

- Students self-report afterschool participation

  - **"How many days a week do you usually go to your school's afterschool program?"**

Protective Factors Associated with Expanded Learning Participation

- **Identified Expanded Learning Participants and non-Participants**

- **Developed a comparison group of non-Participants who were demographically similar to Participants**

  - Sex

  - Ethnicity

  - Language spoken at home

  - Student grades

  - Free and reduced lunch participation

Protective Factors Associated with Expanded Learning Participation

Students who regularly attended Expanded Learning programs had significantly higher levels of <u>meaningful participation</u>

Expanded Learning participation was particularly beneficial for high school students

- Increased school connectedness

- Increased caring adult relationships

- Increased high expectations

Protective Factors Associated with Expanded Learning Participation

Higher levels of protective factors like:

- Meaningful participation
- School connectedness
- Caring adult relationships
- High expectations

Directly related to the "Lack of Engagement" factors that contribute to chronic absence.

- We can then posit that increases in protective factors experienced as a result of Expanded Learning participation will increase school day attendance.

Featured Program: Sac City USD

Marcus Strother
Director, Youth Development Support Services
Sacramento City USD

Onniel Sanchez
Be HERE Grant Supervisor
Sacramento City USD

Be HERE
EVERY DAY COUNTS

LCSSP Grant to address Chronic Absenteeism

3 Departments:
Attendance and Enrollment, Student Support Services, Youth Development

- ## Be HERE Marketing Campaign
  - ### Youth Led Awareness and Education Campaign
  - ### Rallies/ Outreach
  - ### MLA/WLA
- ## Standardization of District-Wide Attendance Practices

- ## Attendance Improvement Program
  - ### Targeted Site work to address chronic absence

Be HERE Marketing Campaign

Standardization of District-Wide Attendance Practices

- Developed Attendance Business Process for all school sites
- Created district-wide Attendance Toolkit
- Formed district-level Attendance MTSS Team
- Scheduled quarterly trainings for all attendance staff
- Completed district-level attendance diagnostic with Attendance Works
- Provided site administrators and district staff with consistent actionable attendance data

Be HERE
EVERY DAY COUNTS

Attendance Improvement Program
20 identified Grant Schools

- Current Chronic Absence Best Practices- *Creating a System*
  - Form Site Attendance Teams that meet regularly
  - Establish site attendance goals based on data
  - Create site specific attendance MTSS
  - Regularly review Attendance Data (patterns, trends)

- Peer Learning Network (AIM)
  - Monthly meeting: Principals, Attendance Staff, Student Support Staff

Be HERE
EVERY DAY COUNTS

BE HERE

Source Media is working with Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) attendance office, and the Youth Development and Support Services in order to decrease chronic absenteeism.

Source Media Agency

- Founded in November 2017
- Youth led marketing
- Currently have 9 members
- We run the Be Here Campaign
- Some of our other projects:
  - YTAC
  - Sacramento Kings
  - Future Forward
  - Building Healthy Communities
  - California Endowment

How to reduce chronic absenteeism at a state level ?

- ◆ Identify what is preventing students from attending school
- ◆ Create reasonable solutions to these barriers
- ◆ Ensure there is a support and motivational system for students who are chronically absent

Statistics

School	2018 (Fall)	2019 (Spring)
Hiram Johnson High	29.5%	23.5%
Harkness Elementary	14.0%	9.79%
Oakridge Elementary	20.8%	15.32%
Parkway Elementary	25.2%	16.7%
Rosemont High	16.0%	12.6%

Stay Connected With Us!

@beheresac

@sourcemediaagency

@wlasacramento

@mlasacramento

Discussion

Resources & Next Steps

- Current Resources:

  - [Attendance Works: Self-Assessments](#)

  - [Attendance Works: Expanded Learning Self-Assessment](#)

  - [Building a Culture of Attendance: Schools and Afterschool Programs Together Can and Should Make a Difference](#)

- Future Resources:

  - First ever CDE EXLD Biennial Report to the Legislature

  - Short Brief

- The opportunity moving forward:

  - Partnership with Schools & Expanded Learning

    - [California Expanded Learning Summits](#) (Sept 17 - Bakersfield | Oct 1 - Sacramento | Oct 4 - San Diego)

  - District Plan/LCAP

  - September is [Attendance Awareness Month](#)!

Get Connected

- Attendance Works
  - attendanceworks.org
  - @attendanceworks
- California AfterSchool Network
  - www.afterschoolnetwork.org
  - @ca_afterschool
- Sacramento City Unified School District
  - www.beheresac.com
  - @BeHereSac
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  - @mlasacramento
- WestEd
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  - @WestEd

THANK YOU!