Every Student Succeeds Act: Opportunities to Improve Health Outcomes for Students
I. What is chronic absence?
II. What is the academic impact?
III. How is ESSA a watershed moment?
IV. How common is chronic absence?
V. Why are so many students missing school?
VI. How leveraging peer learning can help to identify bright spots and policy opportunities and/or barriers?
VII. Bright spots: health and attendance from around the country
About Us

**Attendance Works** is a non-profit initiative that advances student success by reducing chronic absence. Since our launch in 2010, we have become the nation’s “go to” resource for student attendance with more than a quarter million users of our website ([www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org))

**We work at the local, state and national level – with each level of practice informing and influencing the other.**

Our cross-cutting objectives are to:

a. Promote meaningful and effective communications
b. Nurture proven and promising practice
c. Advance better policy
d. Catalyze needed research
What is chronic absence? Why is it important?

Chronic absence is different from truancy (unexcused absences only) and average daily attendance (how many students show up to school each day on average).
Multiple years of chronic absenteeism = high risk for low 3rd grade reading skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average Second Grade DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Chronically Absent</td>
<td>98.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=4,073)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronically Absent in</td>
<td>94.6***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>(n=1,381)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronically Absent in</td>
<td>88.9***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K and K</td>
<td>(n=423)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronically Absent in</td>
<td>81.8***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K, K, and 1st Grade</td>
<td>(n=255)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronically Absent in</td>
<td>72.9***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K, K, 1st, and 2nd Grade</td>
<td>(n=306)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ***Indicates that scores are significantly different from scores of students who are never chronically absent, at p<.001 level. + In the DIBELS 6th Edition Assessment and Scoring Guide (Good & Kaminski, 2002), these are labeled as “Some Risk,” indicating the need for additional intervention and “At Risk,” indicating the need for substantial interventions.
Passing Courses in High School Is Related to Attendance

Baltimore Education Research Consortium
No Child Left Behind

- Success determined by academic standards.
- Federal targets and interventions for schools; punitive system of responses.
- Accountability and data for student sub-groups.
- Each state defines and addresses truancy which typically emphasizes court-based, punitive, interventions.

Every Student Succeeds Act

- Success determined by academic & nonacademic standards.
- States set goals; supportive framework.
- Accountability and data for student sub-groups.
- Chronic absence is a required reporting & optional school quality metric. It emphasizes prevention and early intervention.

As a result, all states are now required to monitor chronic absence and had the option to include it as a metric for school accountability.
72% of states (36 + DC) adopted chronic absence as a metric in their ESSA plan.

Who's In: Chronic Absenteeism Under the Every Student Succeeds Act
Future Ed, Georgetown University, September 2017.
### Tailor Response to Scale & Intensity of the Challenge (Portraits of Change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of Students Chronically Absent</th>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
<th>Percent of Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Chronic Absence (30%+)</td>
<td>9,921</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Chronic Absence (20-29%)</td>
<td>10,330</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Chronic Absence (10-19%)</td>
<td>28,320</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modest Chronic Absence (5-9%)</td>
<td>21,190</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Chronic Absence (0-4%)</td>
<td>22,572</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>92,333</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Schools with More Students who Experience Poverty Have Higher Chronic Absence Levels

- **Extreme Chronic Absence (30%+)**
- **High Chronic Absence (20-29%)**
- **Significant Chronic Absence (10-19%)**
- **Modest Chronic Absence (5-9%)**
- **Low Chronic Absence (0-4%)**
**Why are so many students chronically absent?**

### Ignorance
- Thinking that absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Not realizing just missing 2 days per month can affect learning
- Belief that sporadic absences aren’t a problem
- Thinking that attendance only matters in the older grades

### Barriers
- Lack of access to health or dental care
- Chronic illness
- Trauma
- No safe path to school
- Poor Transportation
- Housing instability
- High mobility
- Involvement with child welfare or juvenile justice system

### Aversion
- Struggling academically or socially
- Bullying
- Ineffective / exclusionary school discipline
- Parents had negative school experience
- Undiagnosed disability

### Disengagement
- Lack of engaging and culturally relevant instruction
- No meaningful relationships with adults in school
- Vulnerable to being with peers out of school vs. in school
- Poor school climate
- Discouraged due to lack of credits
Health is a Significant Driver of Absenteeism

In this Chicago Education Research Consortium study of causes of absenteeism among students missing early education classes 61% of the families reported illness, chronic illness or a child wellness visit as the cause of absenteeism.
The greater the size of the challenge, the more partners are needed. Many different types of partners can be enlisted but local government and public agencies are especially important.

- Businesses
- Community Schools Initiatives
- Family Support Organizations
- Early Childhood Providers
- Faith Based Organizations
- Health Providers
- Housing Agencies
- Hunger Relief Organizations
- Institutes of Higher Education
- Local Government

- National Service/Volunteers/Mentors
- Out of School Time providers
- Social Emotional Learning Providers
- Social Services
- Population-Specific Service or Civic Organizations
- Philanthropy (including foundations and United Ways)

We also encourage folks to tap into existing initiatives and coalitions as resources for engaging/convening potential partners.
Proposed Pathway for Change:
Cultivating peer learning to inform broader policy change and practice

**Advance practice through peer learning**

**Inform actions w/ insights from local practice**

- Policymakers
- Education Leaders & Assoc. (K-12 & ECE)
- Associations of public health agencies (housing, health, social services, transportation)
- Unions
- Parent Organizations
- Advocacy organizations
- Philanthropy
- Others

**Spread work through TA and policy**

Ongoing peer learning, technical assistance, administrative guidance, regulations, legislation, etc. promote best practices & systemic change

Peer opportunities to:
- Compare data
- Share, demonstrate & learn about best practices
- Identify & problem-solve common challenges
Opportunities for Health and Attendance

✓ ESSA
  o Chronic absence as accountability metric
  o Needs assessment

✓ Building momentum
  o American Academy of Pediatrics
  o National Association of School Nurses
  o Campaign for Grade Level Reading
  o School Based Health Alliance
Challenges for Health and Attendance

- Data Sharing
  - HIPAA/FERPA
  - Consent
- Siloed systems
  - Data Availability and Use
  - Accountability
  - Funding and Resources

Opportunity: Make Chronic Absence a Must Respond to Indicator for Youth Serving Agencies
The Role of the Pediatric Clinician in Addressing Student Absenteeism: Attendance as a Vital Sign in Pediatric Care

✓ Parents trust their pediatricians: A 2012 statistical analysis on the physician-parent relationship found that on average parents indicated a high level of trust in their child’s pediatrician.

✓ Families self-report that health is a significant driver of absenteeism.

✓ Created three work groups: Health, Community, and School factors and identified the role of the pediatrician in diagnosing the cause of the absence and how a pediatrician could follow up.

✓ Piloting the strategy through an opt-in approach with select schools and pediatricians in Baltimore.
Children and Families Levy ($235 million over seven years) requires data driven accountability.

Seattle Public Schools (SPS), City of Seattle Office for Education, and Public Health of Seattle and King County (PHSKC) developed a system to link SBHC’s health-related data with students’ academic and demographic data.

School-based health providers are held accountable for education outcomes; 25% of provider funding is contingent on student grades and attendance.
Overcoming Siloed Systems Challenges: San Diego Unified

- Increasing school nurse positions by braiding funds despite district budget deficit
- Launched Chronic Absence Pilot (CAP) in 27 schools in Fall 2017
- Nurses are tasked with convening and/or participating in the school’s Attendance Team, calling home when students miss school, and proactively addressing the health-related barriers of the 10 most chronically absent students in their schools
- Allocating 2.4 FTE district positions as “Attendance Nurses” to support CAP
Munson Healthcare Charlevoix Hospital (MHCH) partnered with the school district to fund full-time school nurses starting in Fall 2011.

Nurses are tasked with engaging in public health tasks including teaching handwashing, to developing medical management plans for students with chronic illness, to engaging with teachers about health.

One school saw a 32% decrease in absences with the addition of a school nurse onsite just one day a week.
Opportunities for Action

✓ Identify and/or push out data to school districts on health and attendance

✓ Provide guidance and disseminate resources for districts on how to address health and attendance, including needs assessments

✓ Identify and promote funding mechanisms for districts and schools to address health-related barriers to learning

✓ Engage state and local school nurses associations

✓ Collect bright spots from around the state

✓ Facilitate peer learning opportunities
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Health Interventions</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asthma</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Asthma friendly schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Environmental assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Asthma friendly homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oral Health</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community –based oral health programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School-based sealant programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Mobile clinics</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nutrition</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community eligibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Universal breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Food backpack programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Farm to school programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bullying</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Safe Routes to Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bullying education programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mental Health</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School-based mental health programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Universal interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School-based vision screening programs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pair and Share

What other promising practices are you aware of or currently helping to implement in your states?

Popcorn share.
Thank you!

For additional information about Attendance Works, see: [www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org)

or contact:
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or
Annie Reed
[annie@attendanceworks.org](mailto:annie@attendanceworks.org)
Insert Gordon’s slides
Reflection

What is the opportunity in your state to leverage chronic absenteeism to build a cross sector partnership to support improved social, emotional, physical, and academic health of students?
6.2 Million Students
10,500 Schools
Coordinated Student Support Division
Over 1,000 School Districts
58 County Offices of Education
300 Teachers
Educational Options, Student Support, and American Indian Education Office
Focus on Chronic Absence for Almost 10 Years
Chronic Absence: California’s Past Steps

• In 2010, Senate Bill 1357 defined a chronic absentee and encouraged the California Department of Education (CDE) to add chronic absenteeism as an indicator.

• In 2011, State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) convened first Chronic Absenteeism Policy Forum.

• In 2013, Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) legislation passes which mandates that Local Educational Agencies address chronic absenteeism rates in the companion Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).
Local Control and Accountability Plan

Priorities

The LCAP must include a description of annual goals to be achieved for state priorities and any local priorities must be identified.

State Priorities

- Pupil Achievement
- Course Access
- Parental Involvement
- Implementation of Common Core State Standards
- School Climate (suspension and expulsion rates)
- Pupil Engagement (attendance rates, chronic absenteeism rates, dropout rates, graduation rates)
- Basic Services
- Other Pupil Outcomes

Parental Involvement

Course Access

Pupil Achievement

School Climate (suspension and expulsion rates)

Pupil Engagement (attendance rates, chronic absenteeism rates, dropout rates, graduation rates)

Basic Services

Other Pupil Outcomes
Priority 5: Pupil Engagement

Pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

A. School attendance rates.

B. Chronic absenteeism rates

C. Middle school dropout rates, as described in paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 52052.1

D. High school dropout rates.

E. High school graduation rates. Education Code Section 52060(d)(5).
Chronic Absence: California’s Path Finally Taken

- In 2013, the SSPI convened second Chronic Absenteeism Policy Forum.

- In 2016, the State Board of Education (SBE) announced that the LCFF evaluation rubrics would include chronic absenteeism rates.

- In 2017, the SBE approved California’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan which includes chronic absenteeism as part of the accountability index for pupils in kindergarten through eighth grade.
Capturing Chronic Absence Data
What’s Next?

- Beginning in the spring of the 2016–17 school year, chronic absence rates were collected in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) for all California schools in accordance with ESSA.

- Resulting data must be reviewed in the early part of the 2017–18 school year to determine the baseline and establish associated goals.

- California data will be available to the public via Dataquest and our new California School Dashboard in late 2017.
California’s Chronic Absence Efforts Are Fortified in Every Student Succeeds Act

Chronic absenteeism reduction has been integrated into California’s ESSA aligned strategy to also prevent students from dropping out of high school. This strategy includes:

- The role of the State School Attendance Review Board (SARB) in providing statewide policy coordination and annual recommendations to the SSPI.

- The Model SARB Recognition Program to encourage the development of new strategies to reduce chronic absence.

- The use of the *SARB Handbook* to disseminate effective practices to improve chronic absenteeism rates and dropout rates.
Progress of School Districts in Addressing Chronic Absenteeism

27 Districts were recognized last year for their model SARB programs in the state
LCAP Priority 5 Goals are the Goals of the SARB

Model SARBs have ambitious goals to reduce chronic absenteeism rates for all significant student populations by providing a multi-tiered system of support that include student mental health and general health in addition to academic support.

SARB chairpersons ensure that attendance patterns are monitored weekly with a focus on student groups and grade levels that are higher than the district average.
Model SARBs Use a Multi-Tiered System to Reduce Chronic Absenteeism Rates

Model Practices for Priority 5

Three Tiers to Reduce Chronic Absence in Schools

TIER 3: INTENSIVE INTERVENTION
For students missing 20 percent or more of days enrolled, principals:
- Refer persistent cases for intensive case management that combines the expertise and resources of all SARB members and the agencies they represent.

TIER 2: EARLY INTERVENTION
For students missing 10 percent or more of days enrolled, school staff members:
- Notify parents of the consequences of poor school attendance.
- Provide personalized early outreach, such as a home visit.
- Meet with the student and family at the school to develop a plan for overcoming barriers to regular attendance.
- Offer an attendance mentor or buddy at the school.

TIER 1: PREVENTION
To improve overall attendance and prevent chronic absence, school staff members:
- Recognize good and improved attendance of schools, classes, and individual students.
- Educate and engage all students with an awareness of school attendance, especially during September (Attendance Awareness Month).
- Monitor school attendance data regularly to measure individual and group progress.
- Establish a positive and engaging school climate with low suspension rates.
Model SARB Approach

Model SARBs develop a school attendance supervision plan to better understand current and long-term needs of all significant student groups in a tiered approach which begins with prevention of chronic absenteeism by supporting positive school climate and positive behavior intervention. The prevention strategy includes recognition of improved or excellent attendance among individuals, classrooms, and grade levels.

SARBs carry out regular meetings with key personnel, such as principals, as a cornerstone to an effective attendance supervision plan based on an analysis of school attendance patterns and linking students and families to appropriate resources.
Recognizing Schools and Students for Improved Attendance
Moving Forward Step-By-Step Addressing Chronic Absence to Improve Schools

• “You can have the best facilities, the best teachers, and the best curriculum in the world, but none of that matters if students are not in school.” – Superintendent Tom Torlakson.

• Coordinated Student Support Division will develop additional Web-based assistance to support schools and districts with chronic absence data mining.

• California’s State System of Support, currently under development, will examine how best to deliver technical assistance to support schools and districts.
Gordon Jackson, Director
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California Department of Education
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