

Reclaiming My Time:

The Impact of Chronic Absence on Instructional Time

Alabama State Department of Education
Accountability Section
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Let's talk...

- What do absences measure?
- Why is attendance important?
- Is absenteeism easy to address?
- Why is measuring chronic absence important?
- What should a snapshot of your district attendance be able to tell you?
- What role might you play in improving school attendance?



Accountability System - Indicator Descriptions

- Academic Indicators
 - ✓ Academic Achievement*
 - ✓ Academic Growth*
 - ✓ Graduation Rate
 - ✓ Progress in English Language Proficiency*
- School Quality/School Success Indicators
 - ✓ Chronic Absence
 - ✓ College and Career Readiness

“

Ensuring that all students receive the support they need to remain present and engaged in learning throughout their K–12 experience begins with obtaining an accurate picture of how much instructional time students are losing and why.



Over 7,000,000

students were chronically absent from school in 2015-16.

That's **16 %** of the student population or about **1 in 6** students.

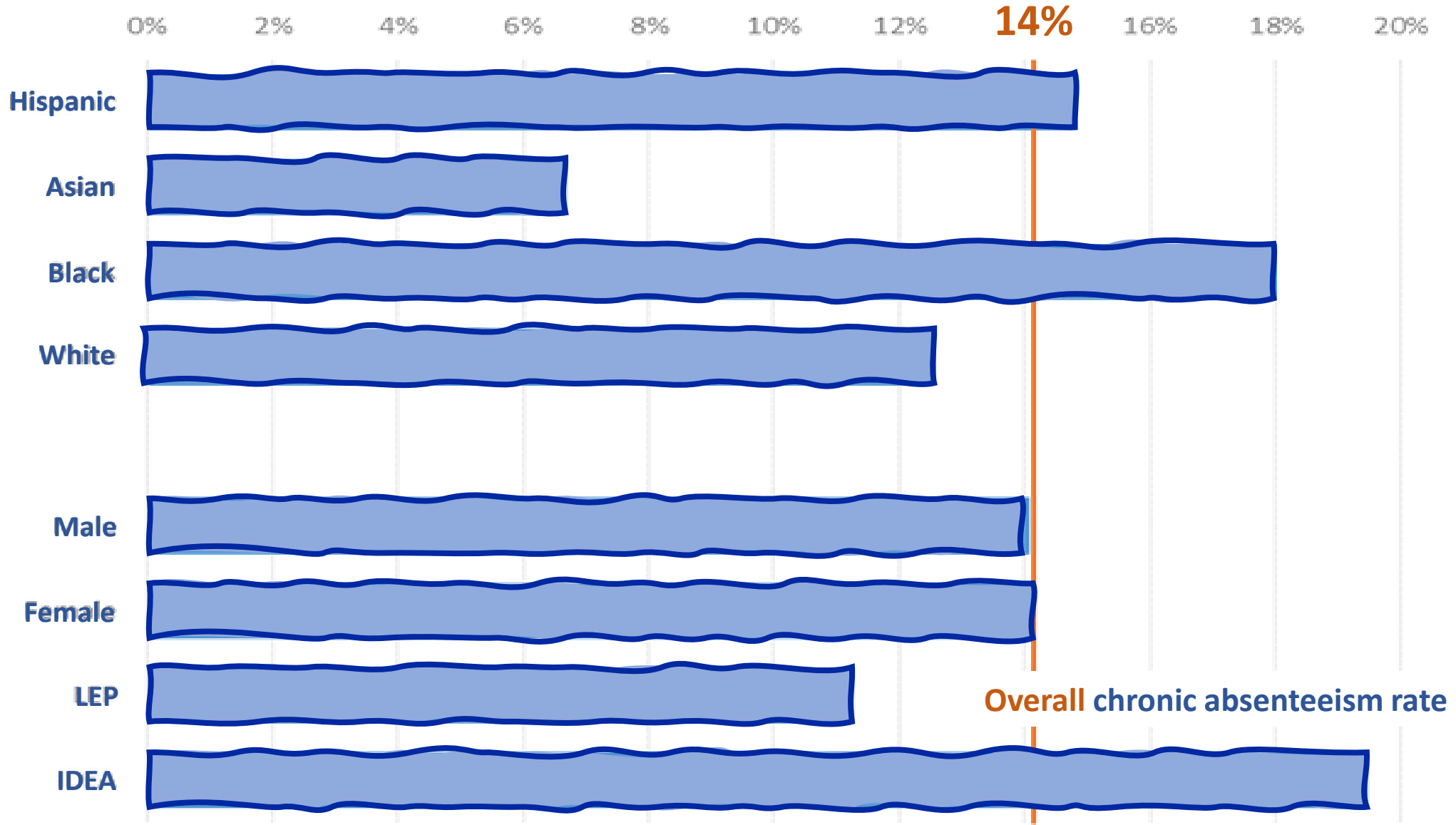
The Impact of Absenteeism

- Number of Chronically Absent Students
- Number of Truant Students
- Average Daily Attendance (ADA)
- Average Daily Membership (ADM)
- Federal Reporting
- Accountability
- Data Quality
- School Management
- Instruction
- School Culture/Climate
- Student Quality/Readiness
- Achievement and Growth
- Class Grades
- Behavior and Discipline
- Number of Suspensions/Expulsions
- Graduation and Dropout Rates
- Enrollment
- Transfers/Withdrawals
- School Safety Management

Who is Chronically Absent?

- Students who face significant academic challenges
- Students living in poverty
- Students with disabilities
- Students of color
- Students who are mobile/transient
- Students involved in the juvenile justice system

Chronic Absenteeism by Subgroup



Why Are Students Chronically Absent?

- Poor health
- Family and work responsibilities
- Limited transportation options
- Unsafe routes to school
- Bullying and other safety issues
- Homelessness
- Ineffective school discipline
- Undiagnosed disabilities
- Disengagement from school

Factors Related to Absenteeism

Student-specific

Teenage motherhood, low academic performance and repeating grades, lack of caring relationships with adults, negative peer influence, bullying

School-specific

Poor conditions of school facilities, low quality teachers, teacher shortages, poor student-teacher interactions, geographic access to school, less challenging courses, student boredom

Family-specific

Low family income, low parent involvement, unstable housing, at-home responsibilities, stressful family events conflicting home and school priorities, language differences/barriers

Community-specific

Poor conditions of school facilities, low quality teachers, teacher shortages, poor student-teacher interactions, geographic access to school, less challenging courses, student boredom

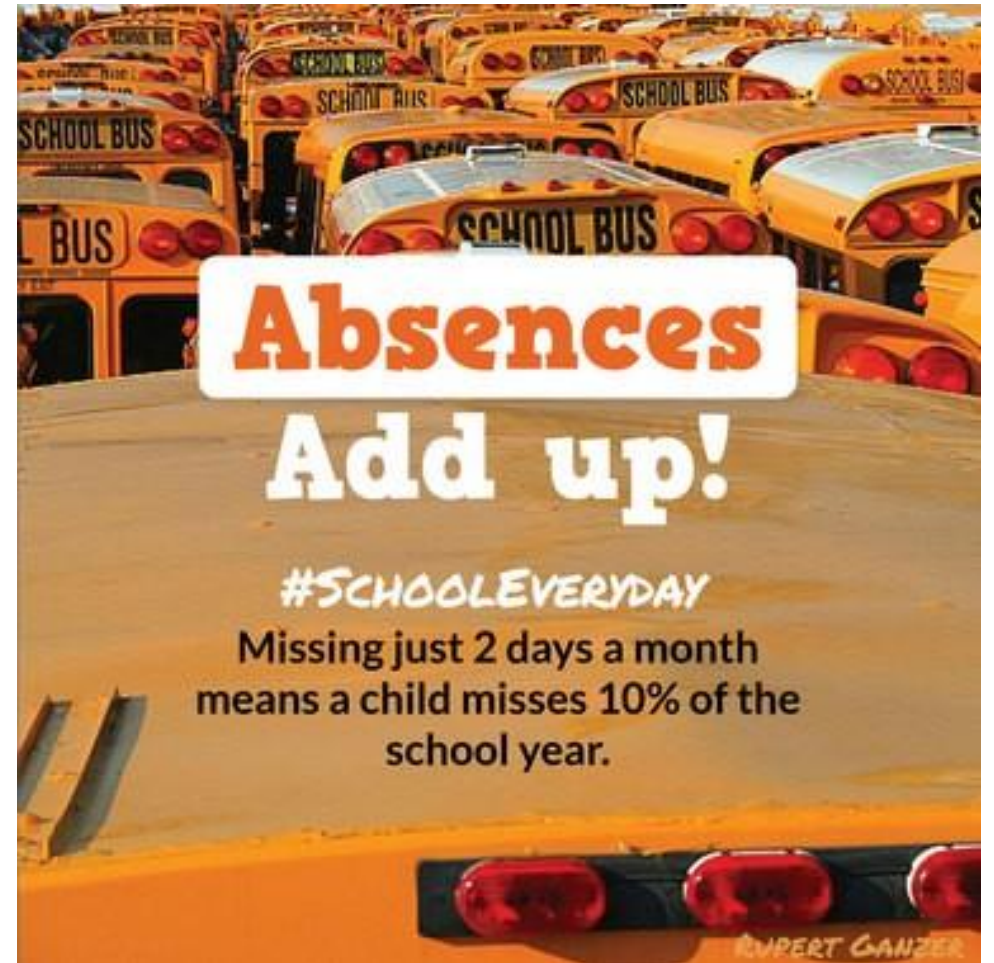
Objectives

- Dispel myths around chronic absence.
- Share current national research regarding the impact of chronic absenteeism on instructional time.
- Provide takeaways regarding policy, framework, data tools and model schools.

**Missing two days
per month doesn't
affect learning.**



“ One out of every six students missed three weeks or more of school in 2015-16. That translates to more than 100 million school days lost.





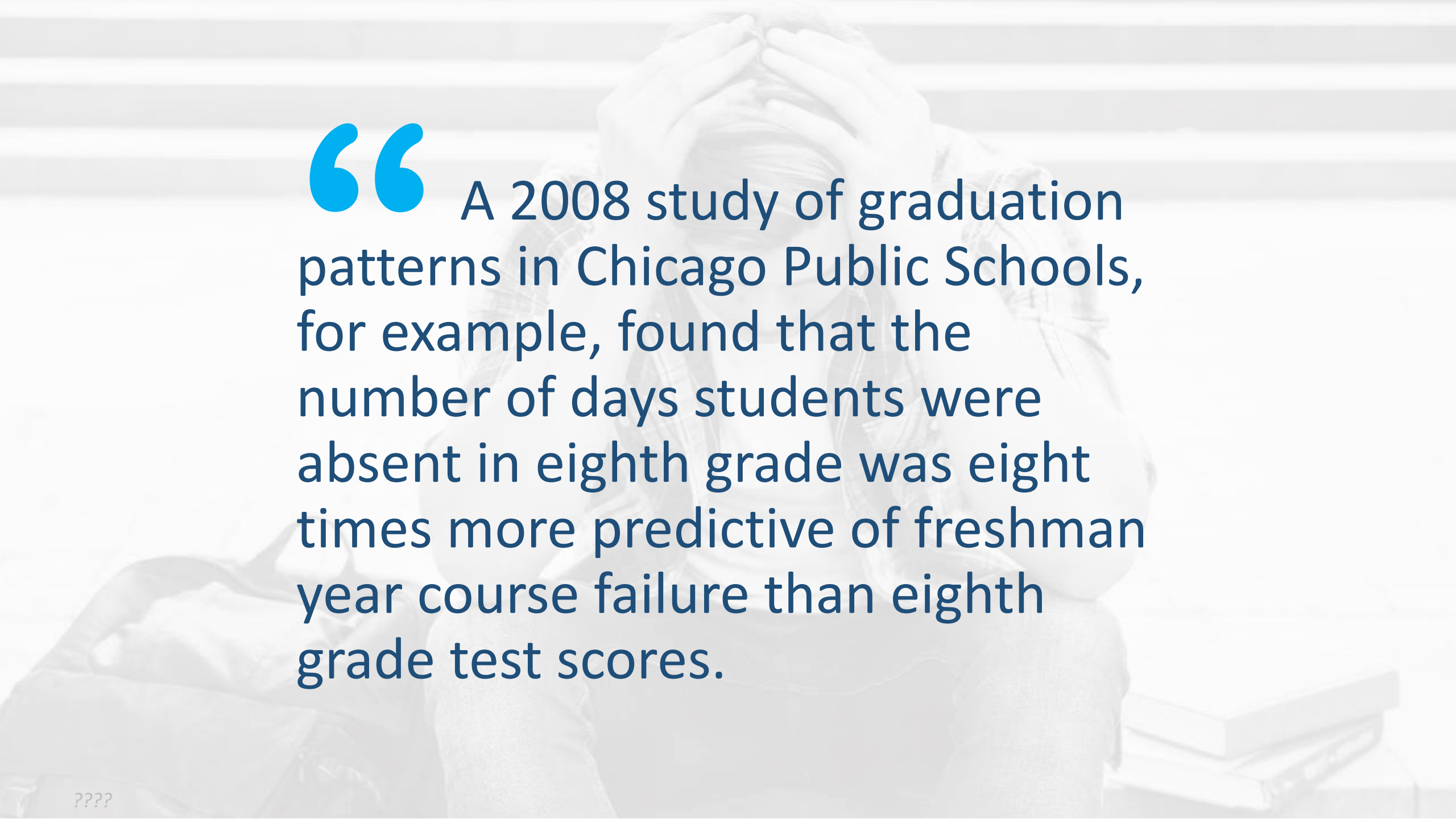
dis·en·gage·ment

/,disən'gājmənt/

- attention
- curiosity
- interest
- optimism
- passion

“ A study of public school students in Utah found that an incidence of chronic absenteeism in even a single year between 8th and 12th grade was associated with a seven-fold increase in the likelihood of dropping out.





“ A 2008 study of graduation patterns in Chicago Public Schools, for example, found that the number of days students were absent in eighth grade was eight times more predictive of freshman year course failure than eighth grade test scores.

Preventing Student Disengagement and Keeping Students on the Graduation Path in Urban Middle-Grades Schools: Early Identification and Effective Interventions

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Attendance. Attending school less than 90% of the time in sixth grade increases the chance that students will not graduate. When attendance dips below 80% (missing 36 days or more in the year), our a priori threshold of 75% or more of the students not graduating is reached. Fifteen percent of sixth graders attended school less than 80% of the time. By the school year that ended in 2000, only 60% of these students were in the 9th grade as expected, and 28% had already left the district. Over time, an increasing number of the students with this flag slipped off the graduation path. For example, by 2002, only 15% of the students were in the 11th grade as expected, and 57% had left the district. Ultimately, as Table 1 shows, only 13% of the students with this flag graduated from the school district on time, with another 4% graduating 1 year late. Not only was this flag highly predictive, it had a 23% yield (identifying 1,605 of the 6,888 students in this cohort who never graduated from the school district).



“ High school dropout, which chronically absent students are more likely to experience, has been linked to poor outcomes later in life, from poverty and diminished health to involvement in the criminal justice system.

**Attendance only
matters in the
higher grades.**





“ Children who are chronically absent in preschool, kindergarten, and first grade are much less likely to read at grade level by third grade.

Behind the numbers...

- ✓ On average, children missed 5 days in kindergarten.
- ✓ However, almost 14% of kindergartners, at-risk absentees: they missed an average of 12 to 18 days during the school year.
- ✓ Over 11% of kindergartners were chronic absentees: they missed at least 18 days or more of the school year.
- ✓ In total, one-quarter of all kindergarten children were either at-risk or chronic absentees.





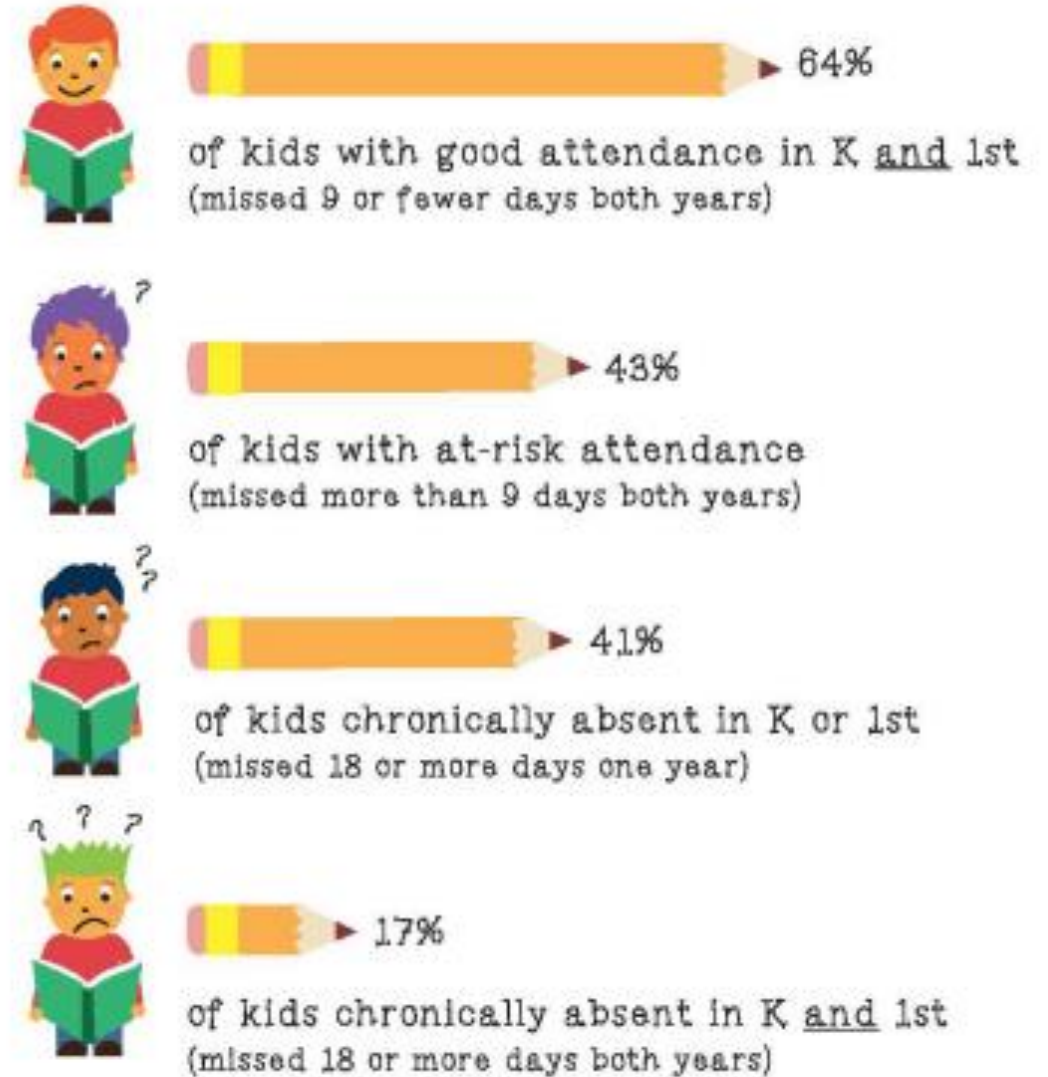
“ Students who cannot read at grade level by the end of third grade are four times more likely than proficient readers to drop out of high school.

Why It Matters

If children don't show up for school regularly, they miss out on fundamental reading and math skills and the chance to build a habit of good attendance that will carry them into college and careers.

Preliminary data from a California study found that children who were chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade were far less likely to read proficiently at the end of 3rd grade.

Who Can Read on Grade Level After 3rd Grade?³



³ Attendance in Early Elementary Grades: Association with Student Characteristics, School Readiness and Third Grade Outcomes, Applied Survey Research. May 2011.

Chronic Absence and Student Success

- Since students who already face significant academic challenges are disproportionately affected, persistent chronic absence has the potential exacerbate the achievement gap.*
- Students who are chronically absent in kindergarten are more likely to be chronically absent in first grade (Romero and Lee 2007), fall behind in English language arts (Ready 2010), and score poorly on test (Chang and Romero 2008).
- Beyond high school, chronic absence can predict lower levels of persistence and success in college.*

**Absences are only
a problem if they
are unexcused.**



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?*

Average Daily Attendance

A measure of the percentage of students in attendance each school day.

Chronic Absenteeism

A measure of how much school a student misses for any reason—including excused, unexcused and discipline-related absences.

Truancy

A measure of a student's unexcused absences only.

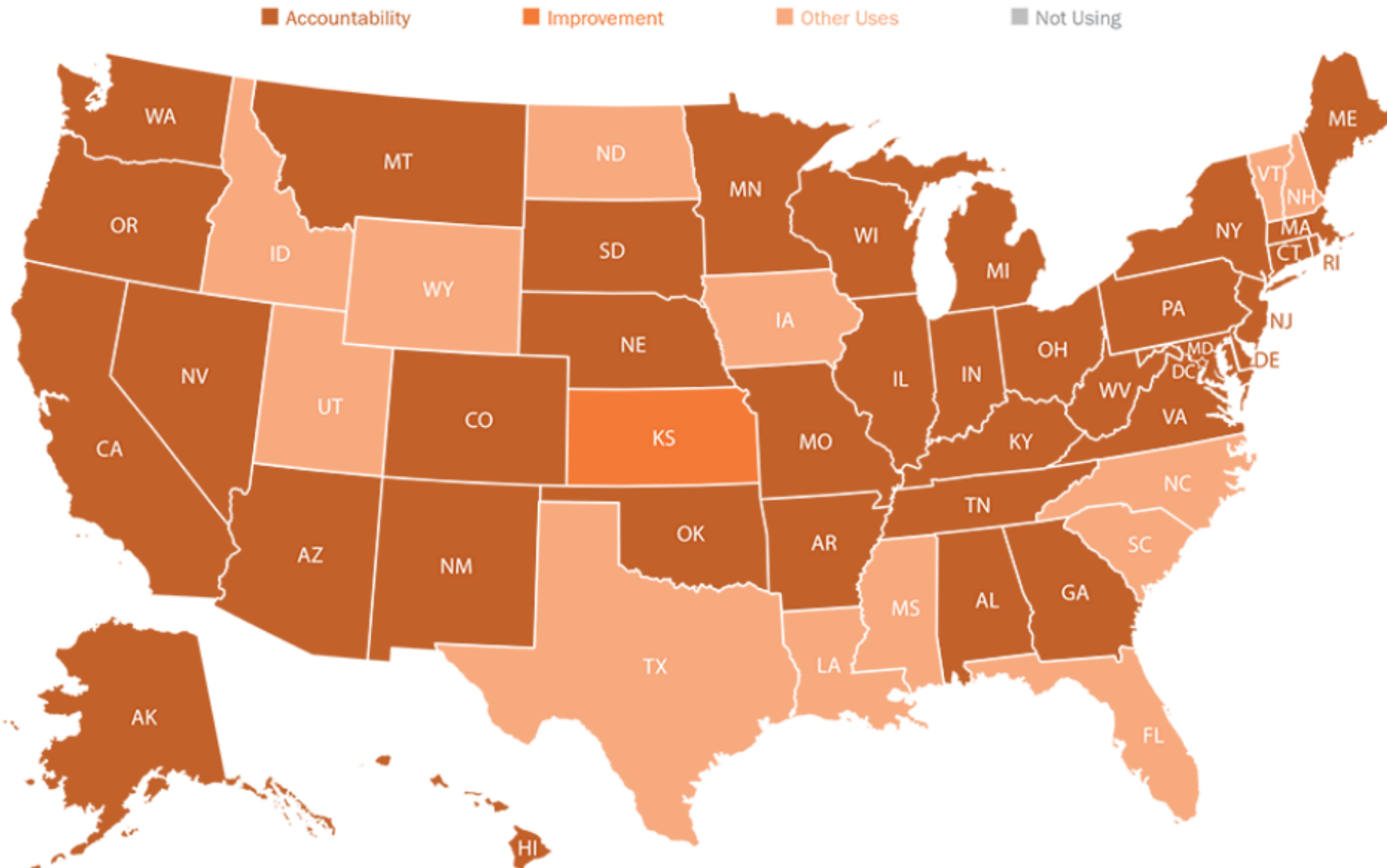
*While official state definitions vary, the definitions provided reflect the common understanding of each term.

ADA figures do not reveal whether absences are concentrated among a small group of students with many absences or dispersed amongst a larger number of students with fewer absences. ADA may mask chronic absenteeism problems because it will not identify students with excessive absences.

While states have varying definitions that can create difficulties in data comparison and analysis, at the root of all definitions is the common understanding that chronic absenteeism includes all days of MISSED INSTRUCTION, regardless of the reason.

Truancy measures a student's unexcused absences— omitting absences that are excused and/or related to disciplinary measures. Research suggests missed instructional time inhibits student success. As a result, truancy is not as accurate at measuring missed instructional time as chronic absence.

States Incorporating a Chronic Absenteeism Rate Indicator for School Identification or Improvement Purposes in Their Statewide Accountability Systems





Reclaiming Your Instructional Time!!

- Policy References
- Sample Framework
- Follow the Data
- Model Systems/Schools



KEY
TAKE
AWAYS

ALSDE Attendance Handbook



Alabama State Department of Education

Application
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Calendar

Every Child a Graduate. Every Graduate Prepared.

Search...



Prevention and Support Services > Attendance: Handbook - Handbook

General Information

Handbook

How To

Immunization

Laws/Policies

Parent(s)

Presentations

Resources

Videos

FAQs

Title

Description

Modified

[2015 Alabama Attendance Manual](#)

2015 Alabama Attendance Manual

6/3/2016

[2016 Alabama Attendance Manual Update](#)

2016 Alabama Attendance Manual Update

6/28/2019

[2019 Alabama Attendance Manual](#)

2019 Alabama Attendance Manual

6/28/2019

[Attendance Manual](#)

Alabama School Attendance Manual 2011

6/28/2019

ALSDE Attendance Handbook

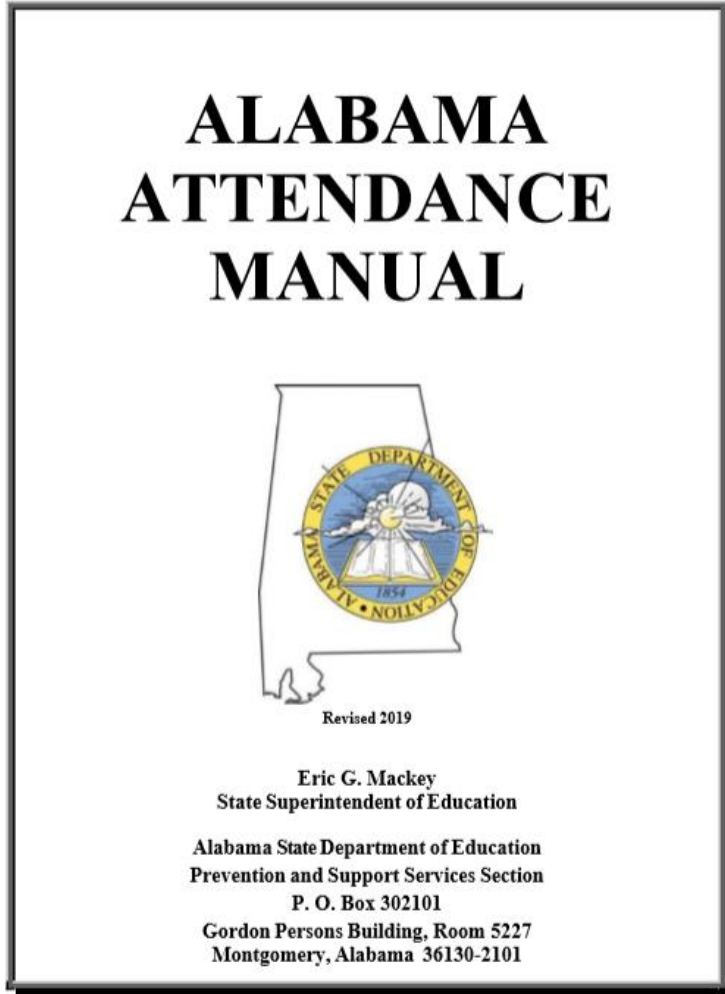


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Attendance	1
The System/School Attendance Officer	2
School Calendar/School Day	7
Admission to Public School	10
Exclusion from Public School	18
Private Tutors	22
Non-Enrollment	25
Absenteeism	28
Attendance Reporting	35
Temporary Closing of Schools	39
Dropouts	41
Attendance/Promotion/Retention	47
Chronic Absenteeism	51
Truancy	58
Missing Children	68
Child Labor	72
Attendance/Driver License/Learner Permit	76
Web Resources	82
Laws and Regulations Related to School Attendance	85
Glossary	89
Appendix	94

Alabama State Department of Education, Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Education

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WHEN IS SICK TOO SICK FOR SCHOOL?

Send me to school if...

- I have a runny nose or just a little cough, but no other symptoms.
- I haven't taken any fever-reducing medicine for 24 hours, and I haven't had a fever during that time.
- I haven't thrown up or had any diarrhea for 24 hours.

Keep me at home if...

- I have a temperature higher than 100 degrees even after taking medicine.
- I'm throwing up or have diarrhea for more than two days.
- My eyes are pink and crusty.

Call the doctor if...

- I have a temperature higher than 100 degrees for more than two days.
- I've been throwing up or have diarrhea for more than two days.
- I've had the sniffles for more than a week, and they aren't getting better.
- I still have asthma symptoms after using my asthma medicine (and still feel like having trouble breathing after using an inhaler).

Attendance Works
Reprinted with permission from Birmingham City Public Schools.

F. CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM PREVENTION TOOLS

1. Improving hand hygiene practices in schools include increased frequency of hand-washing and use of hand sanitizers.
2. School-located influenza vaccination programs have been shown to reduce school absenteeism during influenza season.
3. School immunization requirements have been shown to increase immunization coverage in the community, and high levels of coverage are necessary for the prevention of outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases that could lead to school absenteeism.
4. School nurses have the expertise to identify and intervene on health issues that may affect the learning environment, and the nurses are critical team members for ensuring that students' individualized education programs, 504 plans, or health-care plans are appropriately designed and implemented.
5. School-Based Health Services Center (SBHSC) can include preventive services such as, dental, mental, or behavioral health services. Research has shown that the SBHSC can reduce absenteeism. Reference, Web Resource Section, *The Link Between School Attendance and Good Health*, M. Allison, E. Alisha, and Council on School Health.
6. The sample forms in this section are powerful tools to aid school personnel and parents in the prevention of chronic absenteeism. Refer to Appendix O for Sample Medical Information Release Form and Appendix P for Sample Anticipated Absence Form Cover Sheet and Sample Anticipated Absence Form.

57

Alabama's ESSA Plan



ESSA > State Plan Development: Alabama's Approved Plan

Alabama anticipates submitting its plan in Fall 2017. Alabama's plan will be aligned to the goals and strategies in Alabama Ascending. When creating the plan, Alabama consulted with stakeholders. During the fall of 2016, the Alabama State Department of Education along with the Governor's established Task Force held several topic area meetings to explore the Every Student Succeeds Act with stakeholders. During the fall of 2016, a statewide tour was held to inform stakeholders of the initial work of Alabama's ESSA team.

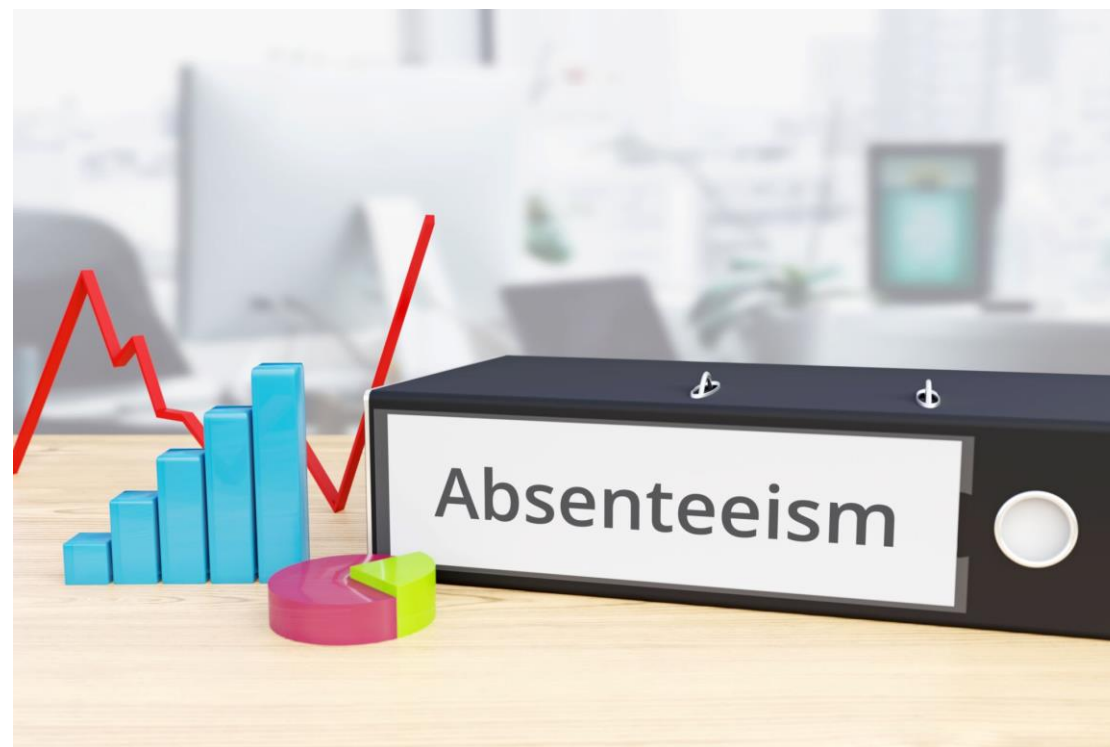
Alabama's Approved Plan		Alabama's Approach	Alabama's timeline for ESSA Implementation
Title	Description		
Alabama Approved ESSA Plan 11-15-19	The latest Alabama ESSA State Plan, approved 11-20-19.		

Alabama's ESSA Plan

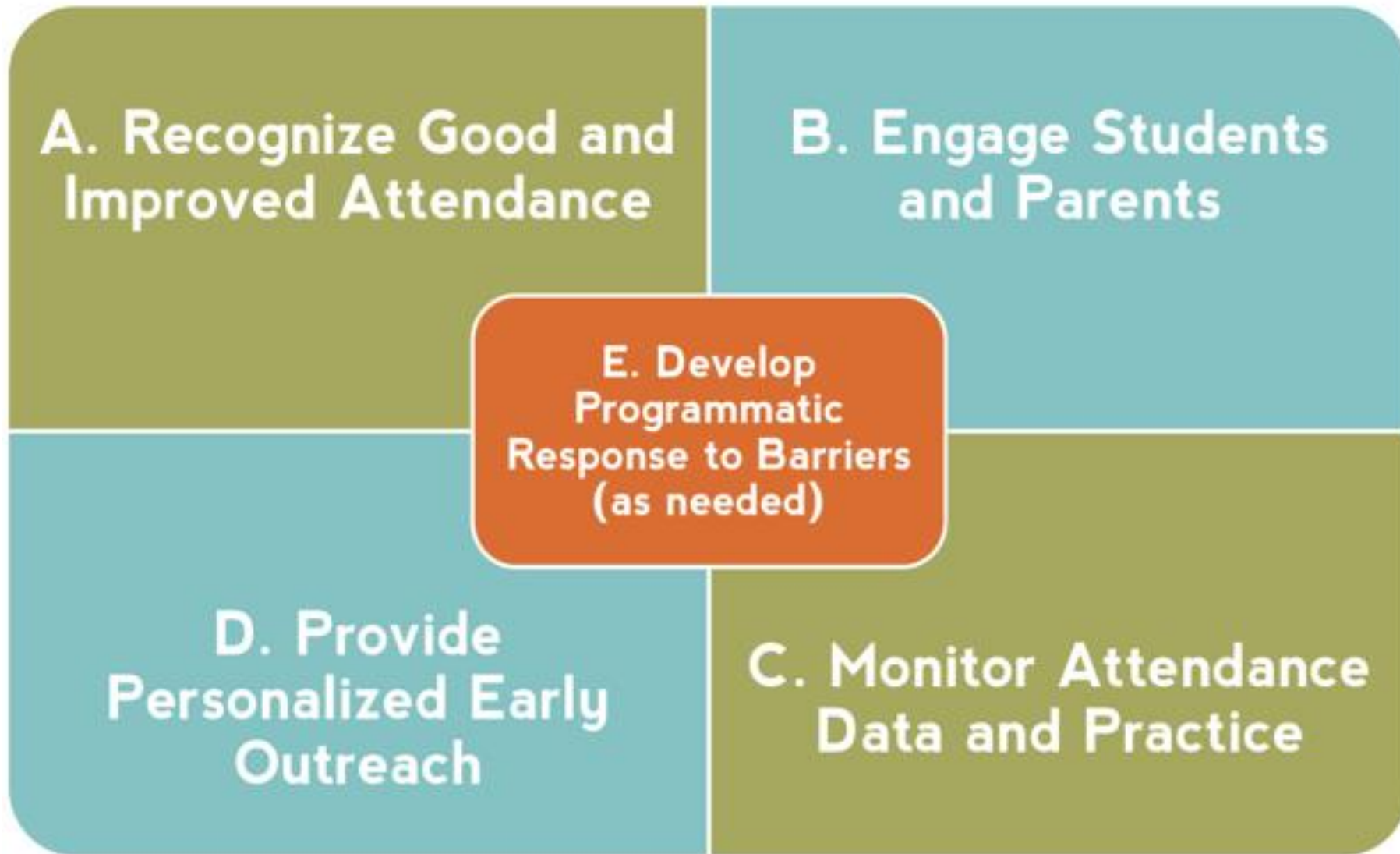
Alabama's ESSA Plan

“Alabama has defined chronic absenteeism as the percentage of students having ~~15~~ 18 or more absences in a given school year. The goal is to decrease the overall chronic absenteeism rate to no greater than 5% by 2030 for all LEAs, schools and the state.”

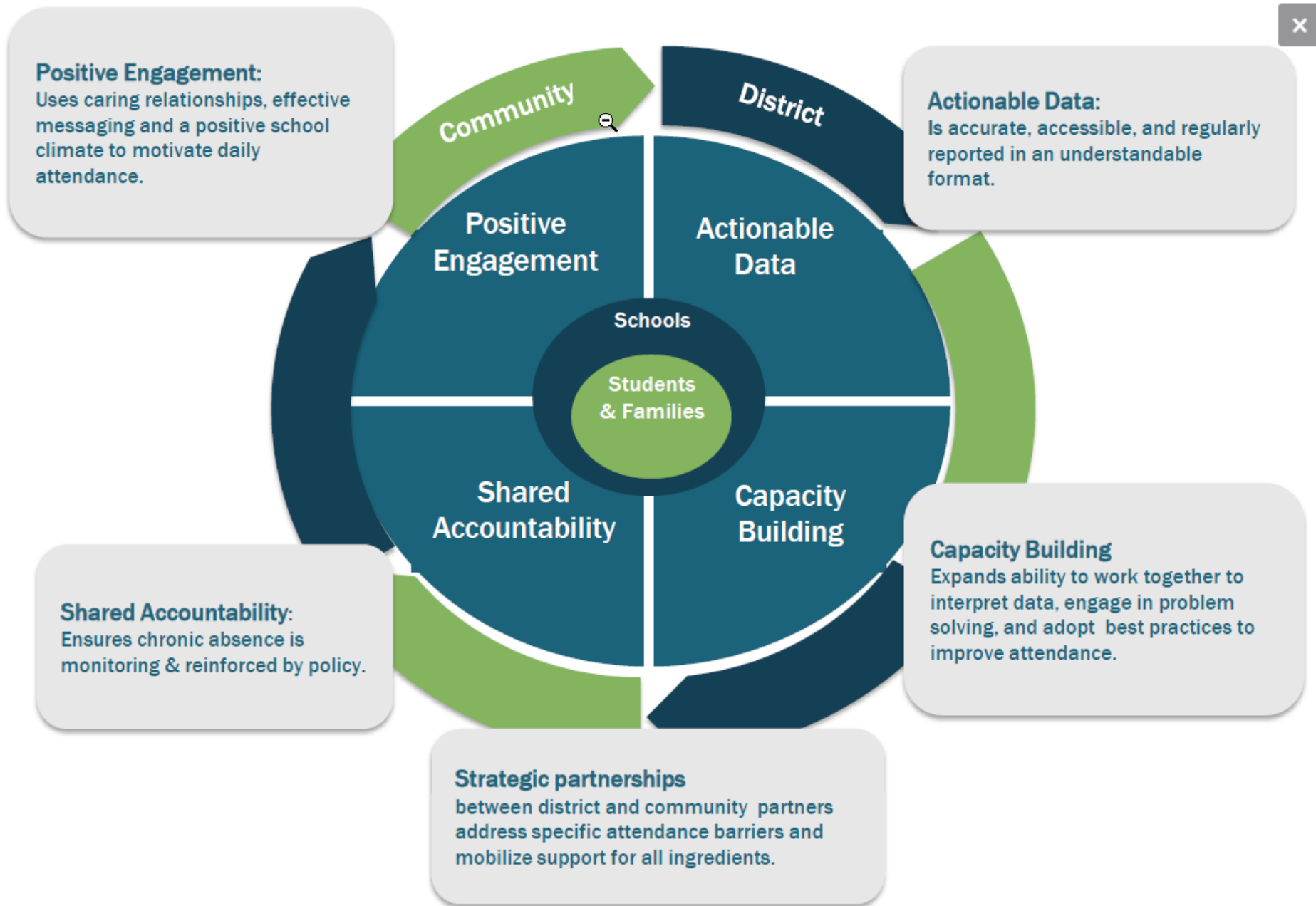
This information is reported in the Accountability section of the State's Report Card.



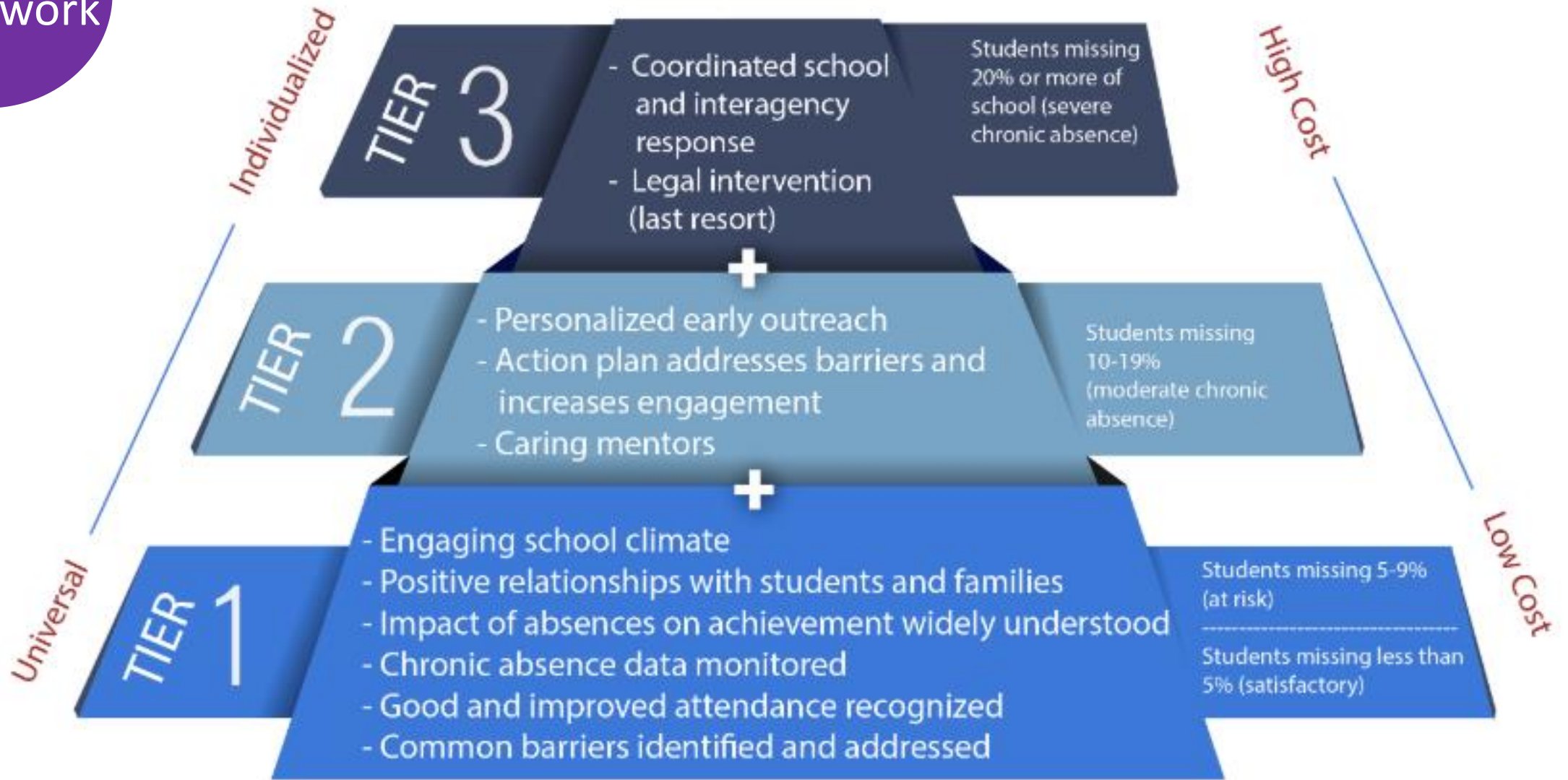
Sample
Framework



Sample Framework



Sample Framework



Follow the Data

As educators, we are required to record student attendance following federal, state and local laws. The quality of chronic absence data, depends upon the validity of the data recorded. This “is the foundation for understanding where students are during the day.”



“There is strength in numbers.”

Follow
the Data

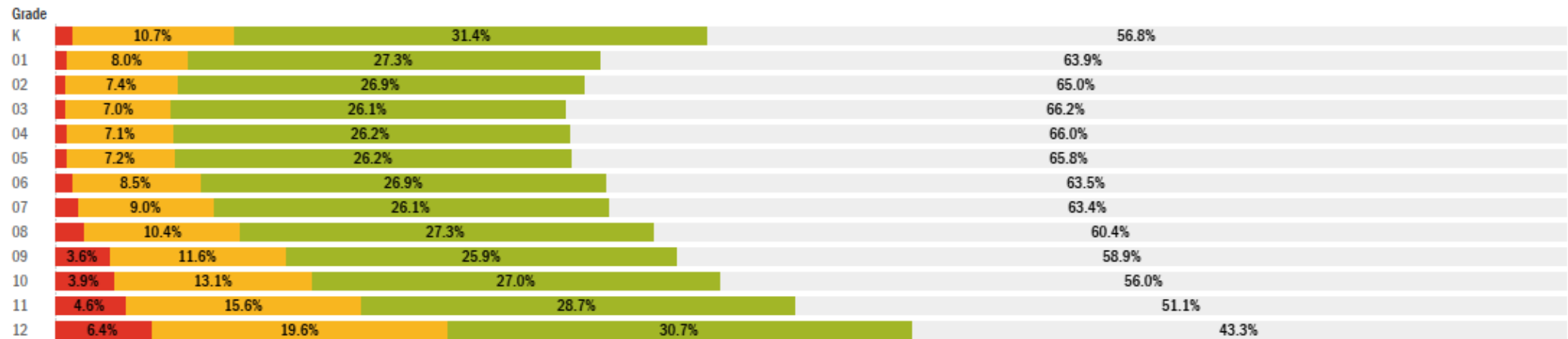
Chronic Absenteeism (18+): By State, District or School
Attendance Tiers: Grade Spreadsheet/Bar Graphic Distribution and Absences
Reference: Preventing Missed Opportunity, Attendance Works (2016)

Chronic Absence Tool Conception

Select Year

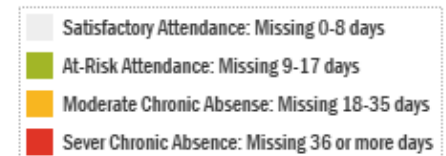
2017

Grade	Sever Chronic Absence: Missing 36 or more days				Moderate Chronic Absence: Missing 18-35 days				At-Risk Attendance: Missing 9-17 days				Satisfactory Attendance: Missing 0-8 days			
	Number of Students	% of Students	Total Absences	% of Total Absences	Number of Students	% of Students	Total Absences	% of Total Absences	Number of Students	% of Students	Total Absences	% of Total Absences	Number of Students	% of Students	Total Absences	% of Total Absences
K	692	1.1%	33,014	6.0%	6,433	10.7%	147,951	26.7%	18,945	31.4%	229,654	41.4%	34,328	56.8%	143,501	25.9%
01	505	0.8%	23,609	4.7%	5,191	8.0%	117,877	23.2%	17,689	27.3%	212,489	41.9%	41,418	63.9%	153,462	30.2%
02	415	0.7%	19,505	4.1%	4,589	7.4%	104,337	21.7%	16,569	26.9%	197,592	41.0%	40,088	65.0%	160,081	33.2%
03	403	0.6%	18,883	4.0%	4,360	7.0%	98,816	20.9%	16,225	26.1%	193,014	40.8%	41,156	66.2%	161,868	34.3%
04	441	0.7%	20,186	4.3%	4,381	7.1%	99,413	21.2%	16,031	26.2%	191,739	40.9%	40,448	66.0%	156,958	33.5%
05	476	0.8%	22,654	5.0%	4,215	7.2%	96,152	21.2%	15,442	26.2%	184,724	40.7%	38,814	65.8%	150,032	33.1%
06	645	1.1%	31,130	6.5%	4,947	8.5%	114,306	23.9%	15,637	26.9%	187,778	39.3%	36,966	63.5%	144,205	30.2%
07	879	1.5%	43,408	8.9%	5,225	9.0%	121,212	24.7%	15,204	26.1%	183,070	37.4%	36,889	63.4%	142,078	29.0%
08	1,090	1.9%	54,260	10.4%	6,002	10.4%	139,762	26.8%	15,815	27.3%	191,519	36.7%	35,000	60.4%	136,565	26.2%
09	2,207	3.6%	121,198	19.6%	7,131	11.6%	169,733	27.4%	15,858	25.9%	192,523	31.1%	36,106	58.9%	136,154	22.0%
10	2,314	3.9%	125,995	19.7%	7,839	13.1%	186,731	29.1%	16,151	27.0%	198,375	30.9%	33,472	56.0%	130,066	20.3%
11	2,635	4.6%	136,682	20.6%	8,844	15.6%	211,189	31.8%	16,254	28.7%	200,104	30.1%	28,966	51.1%	116,387	17.5%
12	3,496	6.4%	183,985	24.5%	10,725	19.6%	257,311	34.3%	16,834	30.7%	210,251	28.0%	23,728	43.3%	98,417	13.1%



Absences Summary Metrics			
Number of Students	Excused Absences	Unexcused Absences	Total Absences
776,113	4,103,044	2,998,861	7,101,905

Chronic Absence Summary Metrics				
CA18+	Sever Chronic Absence: Missing 36 or more days	Moderate Chronic Absence: Missing 18-35 days	At-Risk Attendance: Missing 9-17 days	Satisfactory Attendance: Missing 0-8 days
12.4%	2.1%	10.3%	27.4%	60.2%



Providence Public Schools, Robert L Bailey IV Elementary (RI)

- 20% of students were chronically absent from school each academic year
- Parents working overnight shifts were frequently unable to wake up in time to take their children to school
- To help with the problem, the school offered before-school programming, including early childcare and breakfast,
- Chronic absence dropped from 21% to 10% following its school-level attendance interventions

Reading scores rose from 28% performing at the grade level in 2006 to 59% in 2010

Covina Valley Unified School District (CA)

- *Dedicated position – Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance*
- *Expanded the county attendance campaign through training*
- *Established reliable student data accessibility through the district*
- *Principals receive reports at the beginning of the year details chronic absenteeism data*
- *School Attendance Review Board*
- *Saturday Academic School, designed for students to make up the learning loss from absences*

The district's daily attendance rate increased from 95.6% to 97.8%, and the chronic absence rate dropped from 10% to 8.1%.

Summary of Objectives

- Dispel myths around chronic absence.
- Share current national research regarding the impact of chronic absenteeism on instructional time.
- Provide takeaways regarding policy, framework, data tools and model schools.



Questions & Answers

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The screenshot shows the Alabama State Department of Education website. At the top is the state seal and the text "Alabama State Department of Education" with an "Application Login" link. A navigation bar includes links for "Department Offices", "Learners & Parents", "Support Systems", "Education Professionals", "Schools & Systems", "Data Center", "Communications", and "Calendar". Below this is a search bar and social media icons. The main heading is "Accountability". A sub-heading "Alabama's Accountability System" is followed by a paragraph explaining the system's purpose. To the right is a list of links: "AL Act No. 2012-402", "Dec. 2018 Accountability FAQs", "AAA No. 2015-434", "ESSA", and "Feb. 2018 Prototype Report Card FAQs". A large graphic for "ALABAMA ESSA EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT" is centered. Below this is a navigation bar with "ESEA Flexibility Plan", "Accountability Reports", "Resources", and "Contact Information". The "What's New in Accountability" section features a "REPORT CARD" graphic, a "WHAT'S NEW" graphic, and a paragraph about the Alabama's Accountability Report, with a link for "All Items...". A second "ALABAMA ESSA EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT" graphic is on the right.