



# EVERY STUDENT, EVERY DAY

***No Matter What:* Realizing the Power of Chronic  
Absence Data to Ensure Safe, Supportive  
Schools for All Students**

December 7, 2016



# Every Student, Every Day National Partners



EVERYONE  
GRADUATES



HEALTHY SCHOOLS  
CAMPAIGN



EVERY STUDENT,  
EVERY DAY

National Summit

# Poll: At what level are you engaged in?

- School
- District
- State
- Federal
- Multiple levels

# Why Realizing the Power of Chronic Absence is Essential: What is at stake?

## Jessica's Story

# How to Realize the Power of Chronic Absence Data

Effective **systems of support** rely on the effective use of chronic absence data.

- **Actionable data:** Early and ongoing identification of at-risk students
- **Positive Engagement:** Ensuring that students and families know that schools and communities care for them
- **Capacity Building:** Enhancing adults and systems' ability to understand and meet the needs of all students
- **Shared Accountability:** Chronic absenteeism is everyone's responsibility
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Schools need to be connected to organizations and agencies across a community to support all students

# ESSA: A Unique Opportunity

Ongoing implementation of the **Every Student Succeeds Act** (ESSA) gives states, districts, schools, and communities the unique opportunity to take systems of support to scale in order to ensure students' daily attendance, high achievement, and health and wellness.

- **Titles I, II, and IV** include allowable activities and approaches, including educator and staff training, related to addressing chronic absence
- States must now report **annual chronic absence data** on all students disaggregated by subgroup

# ESSA: A Unique Opportunity

Additionally, ESSA enhances state and local accountability by requiring at least **five measures** of student performance, including:

- Student engagement
- Educator engagement
- Access to and completion of advanced coursework
- Postsecondary readiness
- School climate and safety
- Any other indicator the state chooses that meets the requirements of this clause (e.g. chronic absenteeism)

# Chronic Absence Meets Key Criteria for School Quality and Student Success

ESSA: States must establish a measure of school quality or student success	Chronic Absence
Valid	✓
Reliable	✓
Calculated the same for all schools and school districts across the state	✓
Can be disaggregated by student sub-population	✓
Is a proven indicator of school quality	✓
Is a proven indicator of student success	✓



# ESSA: A Unique Opportunity

- ESSA plan **timelines** are looming.
- This virtual summit is meant to support states and districts in designing and enacting their plans.
- Important to prioritize the early years and PreK-Kindergarten since chronic absence and its effects manifest early among children and families.
- Without sufficient investment in early identification, prevention, and intervention, efforts to boost attendance and achievement could be undermined.

# Critical Importance of Interagency Partnerships

- Schools **cannot** do this work alone.
- Supporting all students requires **inter- and intra-agency coordination** to address students' various needs, including health, housing, nutritional, and justice concerns.
- System leaders should **prioritize** interagency partnerships and incentivize work that breaks down silos between agencies and schools.
- A **plethora of resources** exist to support interagency partnerships.

# Critical Importance of Interagency Partnerships

- Examples of effective **interagency partnership** to address and eliminate chronic absenteeism include:
  - ED, HUD, HHS, DOJ, and White House partnership to enhance federal policy: *MBK Every Student, Every Day Initiative*
  - Kent School Services Network (Kent Co., Michigan)
  - New York City Community Schools Approach
  - Hayward (CA) Schools/District Attorney Partnership

# Summit Overview

## 1. Why Chronic Absence Matters

## 2. What It Takes to Reduce Chronic Absence

## 3. Making It Real: Featured Guest Presentations

- What have you done to reduce chronic absence? What's been the impact? Who's been involved?
- What helps to advance the work? What can districts, states, and the federal government do?

## 4. National Student Attendance, Engagement, and Success Center



# What It Takes to Reduce Chronic Absence





## What is Chronic Absence?

### Average Daily Attendance

**How many students show up to school every day?**  
The percent of enrolled students who attend school each day. It is used in some states for allocating funding.

### Truancy

**Who is missing school without permission?** Typically refers only to unexcused absences. Each state has the authority to define truancy and when it triggers legal intervention.

### Chronic Absence

**Who is missing so much school they are academically at risk?** Broadly means missing too much school for any reason -- excused, unexcused, etc. Most researchers and a growing number of states define it as missing 10% of school. OCR currently defines it as missing 15 days.



**Additional analysis found chronic absence is both widespread and highly concentrated.**



**Table 1. Where are the Nation's CA Students found, By Quarter and By District? 2013-14**

	Total Number of Students Chronically Absent (CA)	Number of Districts	Average Number of Students CA	Min Number Students CA	Max number of Students CA	Percent of All Districts
ALL	6,472,466	16,240	399	0	72,376	100
1st Quarter	1,618,012	13,943 *	116	0	587	86
2nd Quarter	1,617,319	1,642	985	587	1,805	10
3rd Quarter	1,618,036	530	3,053	1,806	5,729	3
4th Quarter	1,619,079	124	13,057	5,817	72,376	1

*\* Includes 1, 798 districts reporting 0 chronically absent students*



**Over 50% of chronically absent students were found in 4% of districts and 12% of schools.**

**These included 2 types of districts: relatively affluent, & large but still have significant number of students in poverty and high poverty, racially segregated urban districts with high rates of chronic absence**

### Where are the Nation's Chronically Absent Students Found?

Chronic Absence Story Map



Introduction

Where are the 4% of Districts?

Two Large Suburban Districts

High Minority-High Poverty Urban Districts

High Rates - Mostly Rural

Data Notes

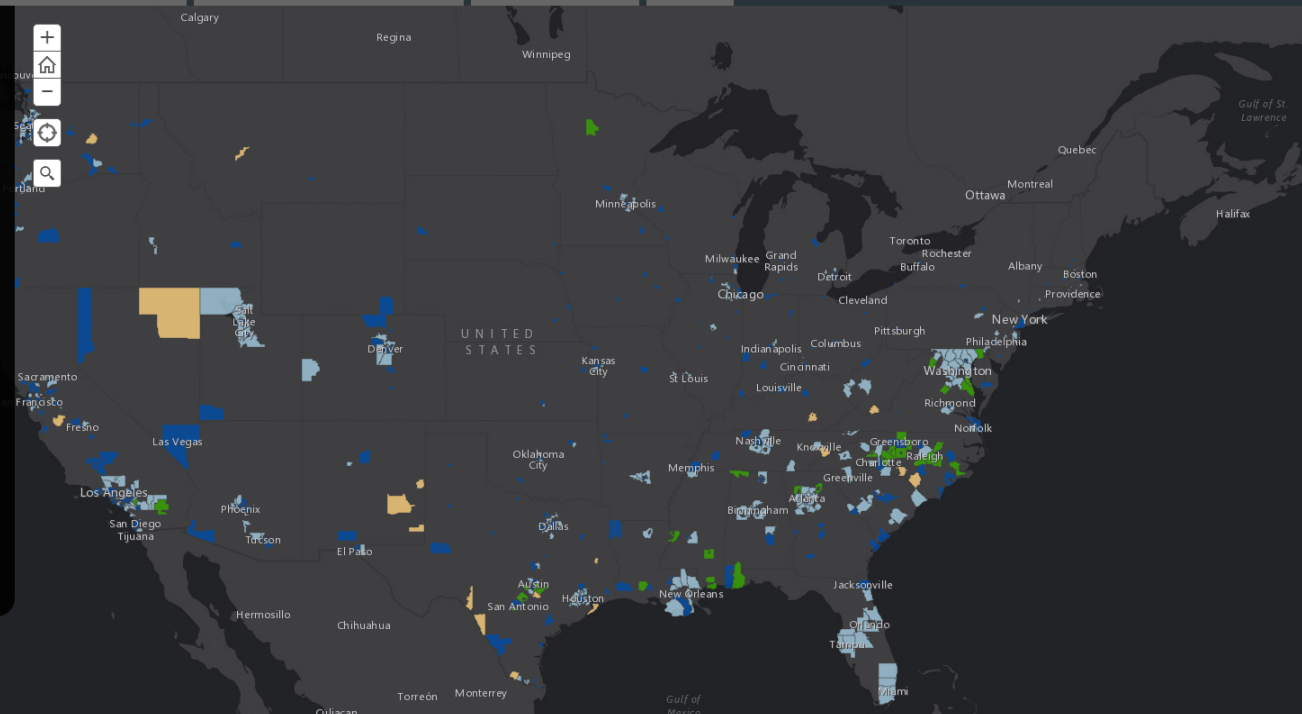
Half of the nation's chronically absent students were concentrated in 4 percent of the 16,240 school districts that reported the number of chronically absent students. These 654 districts were spread across 47 states and Washington D.C.

Overall, 47 percent were modest to large urban districts. About half of the urban districts had extremely high rates of chronic absence and poverty and were mostly comprised of students from communities of color (largely African American and Latino). Another 45 percent were suburban districts, and while their rates often were close to the national average, their large numbers reflect the sheer size of each district and their growing populations of low-income students.

Click on a school district to view its data.

#### School Districts

- City
- Suburb
- Town
- Rural



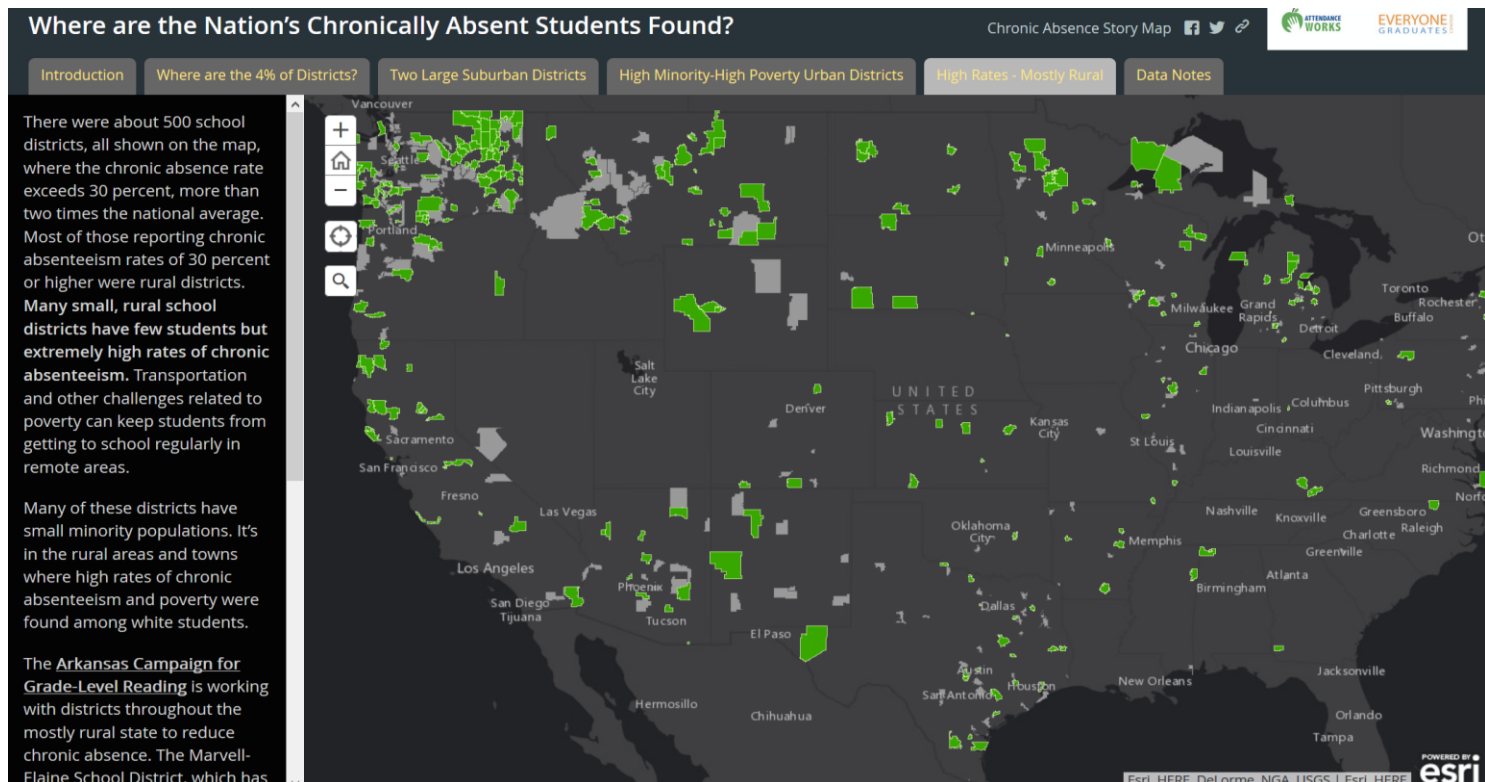
See Chronic Absence Story Map at <http://arcg.is/29jPgaZ>





## What about rural communities?

Many small, poor rural school districts have few students but face high rates of chronic absenteeism.



See Chronic Absence Story Map at <http://arcg.is/29jPgaZ>



## **What are implications for action?**

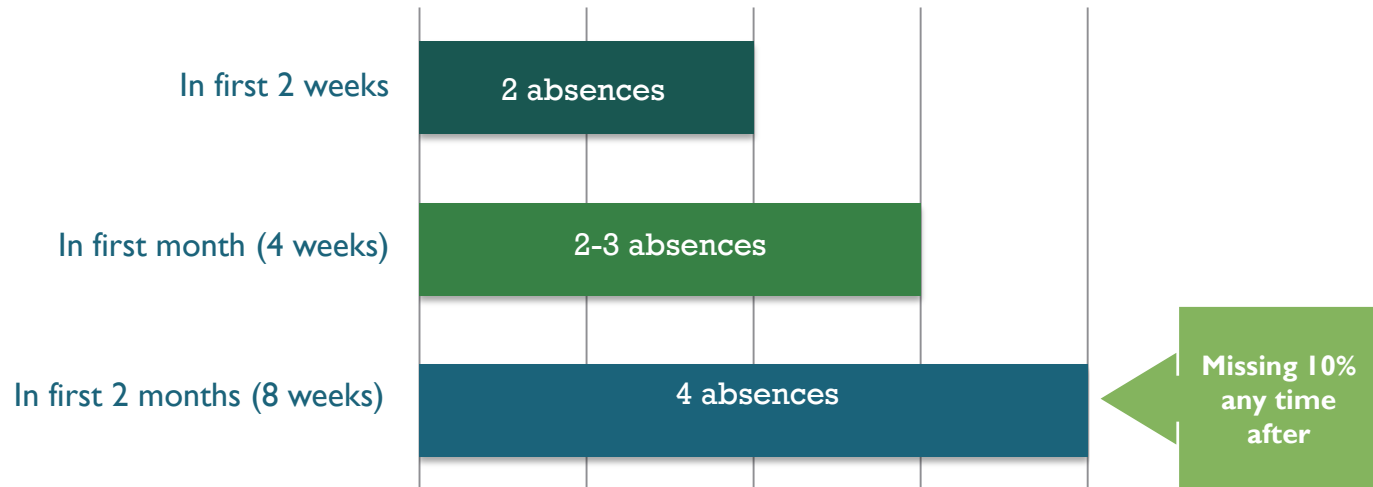
**All states and districts should use current data to determine how much chronic absence is a challenge for students**

- 1. Invest in consistent and accurate data collection**
- 2. Use data to understand need and disproportionate impact in order to target resources**
- 3. Leverage data to identify and celebrate bright spots**
- 4. Share data with key stakeholders and equip them to unpack barriers and take action**
- 5. Create shared accountability, leveraging ESSA**



## Use 10% definition to promote early warning

- ✓ Chronic absence (missed 10% or more of school) in the prior year, assuming data is available.
- ✓ And/or starting in the beginning of the school year, student has:





## Unpack and address contributing factors to chronic absence

### Myths

- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Don't realize just missing 2 days per month can affect learning
- Attendance only matters in the older grades

### Barriers

- Lack of access to health or dental care
- Chronic illness
- Poor Transportation
- Trauma
- No safe path to school
- Homelessness

### Aversion

- Child struggling academically or socially
- Bullying
- Ineffective and exclusionary school discipline
- Parents had negative school experience
- Undiagnosed disability

### Disengagement

- Lack of engaging relevant, culturally responsive instruction
- No meaningful relationships with adults in school
- Vulnerable to being with peers out of school vs. in school
- Poor school climate



## **Recommended Site-Level Strategies**

**A. Recognize Good and Improved Attendance**

**B. Engage Students and Parents**

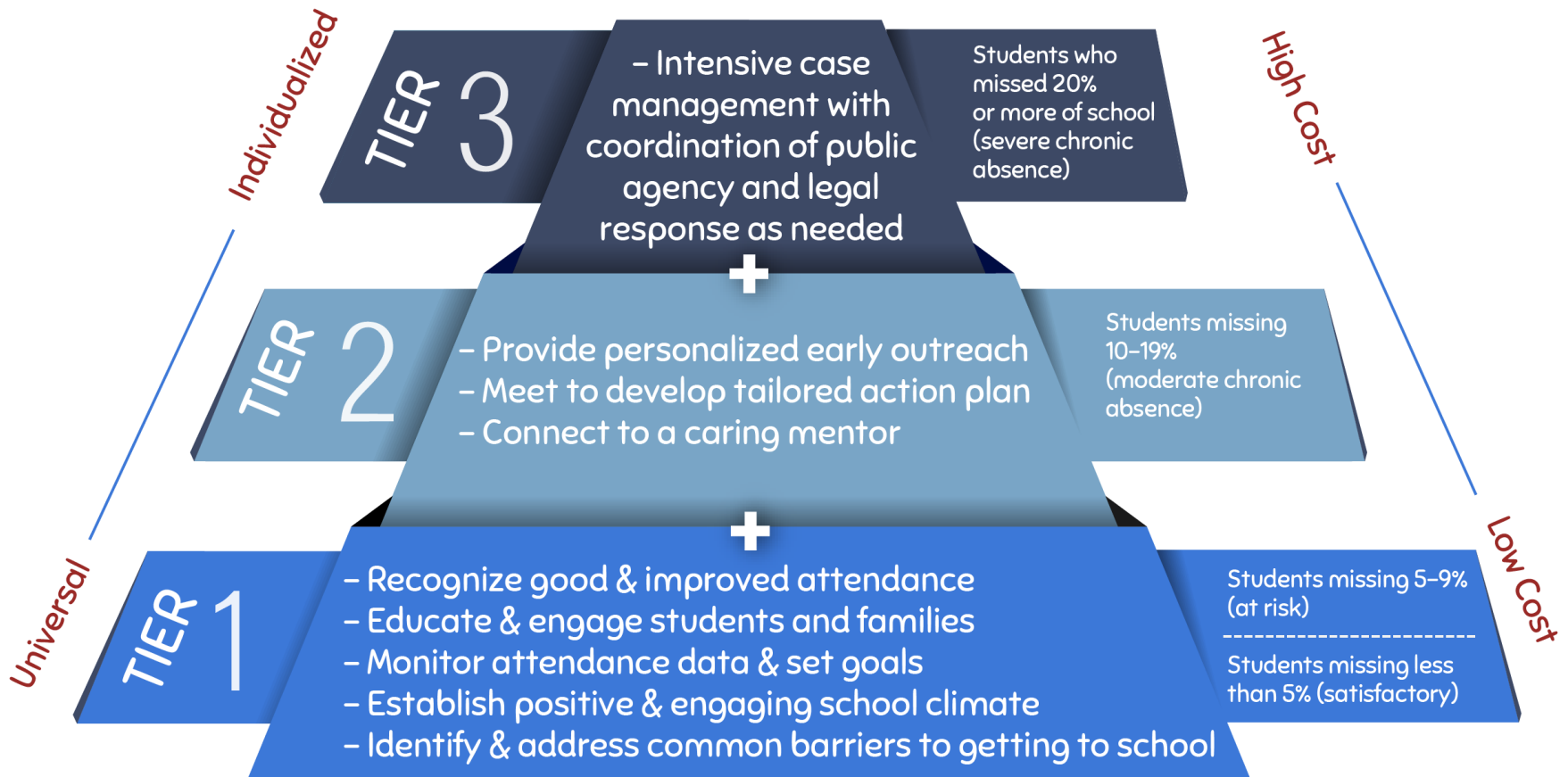
**E. Develop Programmatic Response to Barriers**

**D. Provide Personalized Early Outreach**

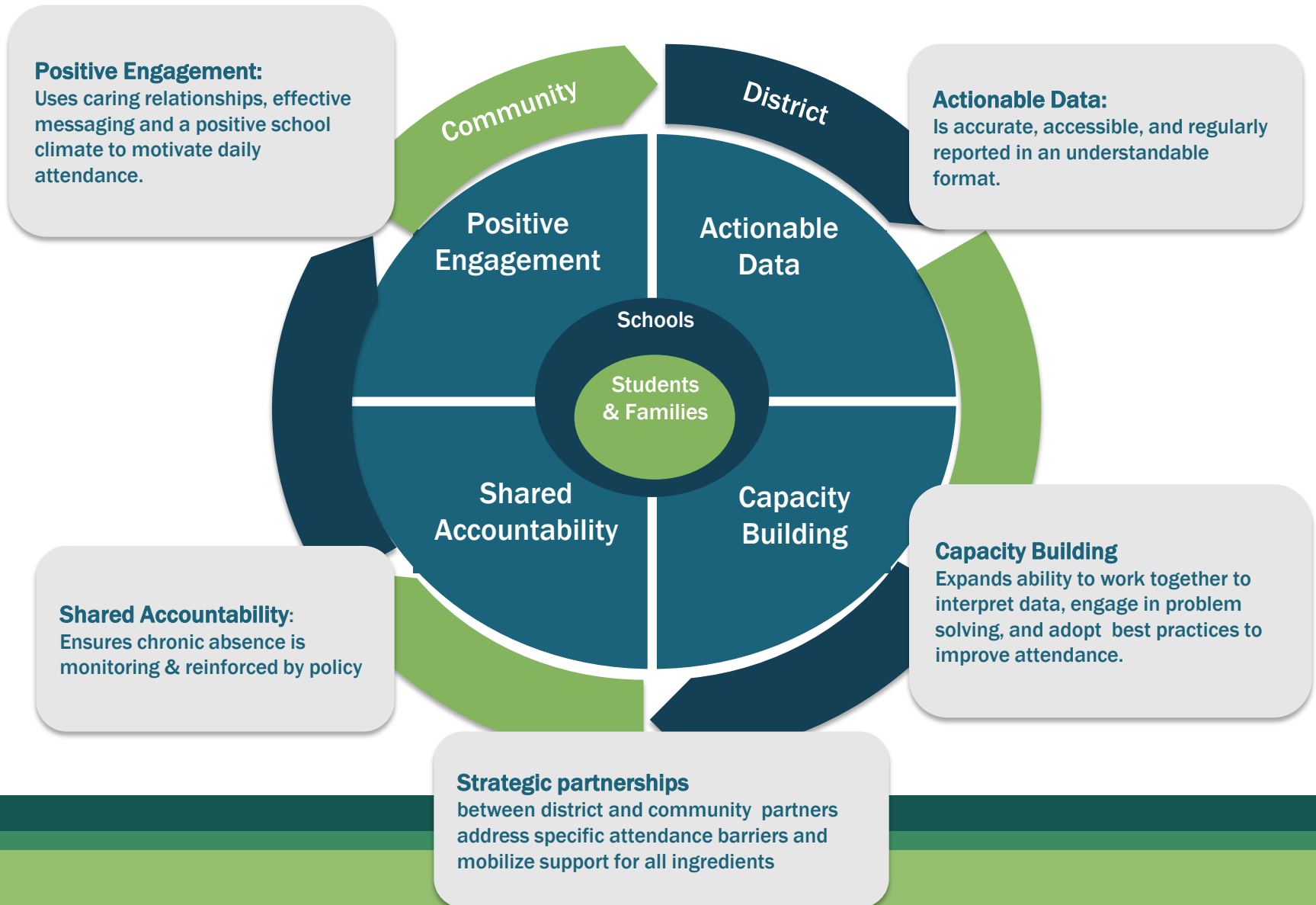
**C. Monitor Attendance Data and Practice**



## Invest in Prevention and Early Intervention

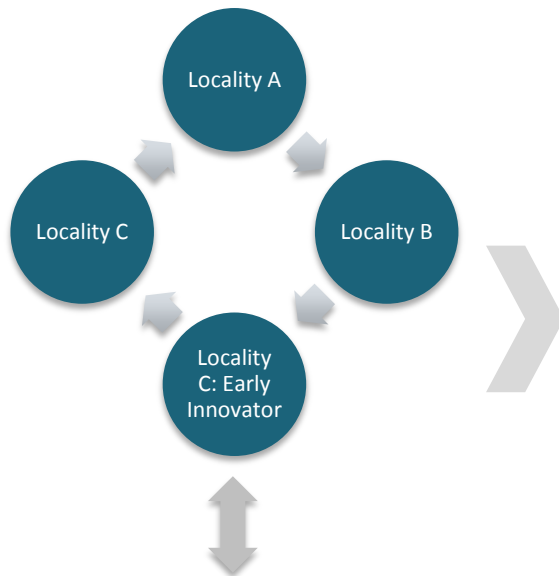


# Take a Data Driven Systemic Approach



# Proposed Pathway for Change: Cultivating peer learning to inform broader policy change and practice

## Advance practice through peer learning



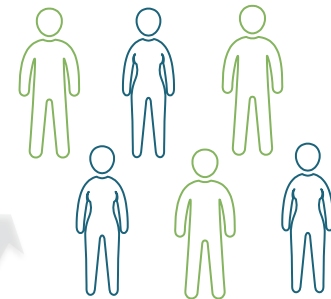
### Peer opportunities to:

- Compare data
- Share, demonstrate & learn about best practices
- Identify & problem-solve common challenges

## 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**



# Featured Guests & Panel Discussion

Today's **featured guests** will talk about what they are doing at school, district, and state levels to reduce chronic absence, including:

- What's been the impact
- Who's been involved

The following **panel discussion** will cover cross-cutting issues in the work to address and eliminate chronic absenteeism in our schools.

# Featured Guests & Panel Discussion



Maribel Childress,  
Principal  
Monitor  
Elementary School  
Springdale, AR



Tammatha  
Woodhouse,  
Principal  
Excel Academy at  
Francis M. Wood  
Baltimore, MD



Nancy Sarra,  
Superintendent  
Consolidated School  
District of New Britain,  
CT



Robin Shobe,  
MS CCC-SLP  
Education Specialist  
Oregon Department of  
Education  
Office of Learning ~ Student  
Services

# Monitor Elementary School Springdale, Arkansas

## Flight Plan to Reduce Chronic Absences



735 Students PreK – 5<sup>th</sup> grade

88% Qualify for free meals

53% English language learners

10 Languages spoken

38% English as primary language

33% Spanish as primary language

25% Marshallese as primary language

# Goal Setting



# Always Welcoming Customer Service

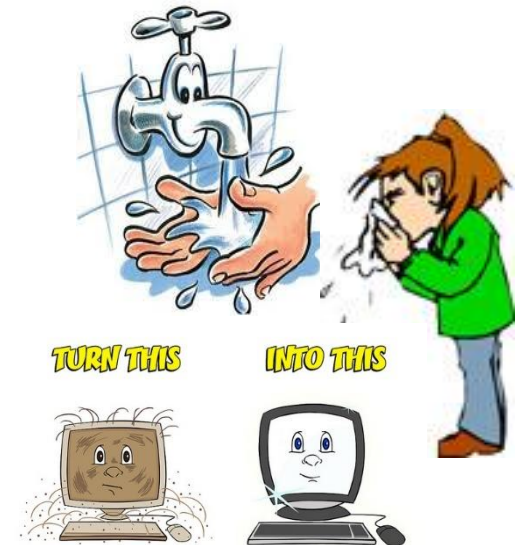
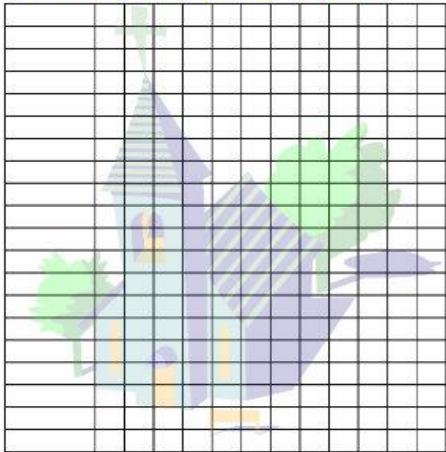


# Making Personal Connections



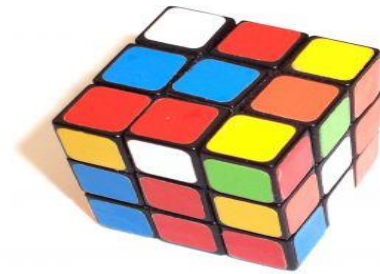
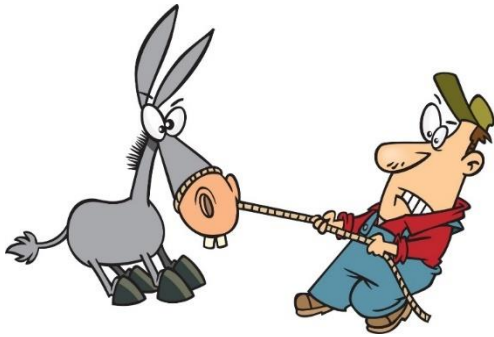
# Engaging Students

Attendance Chart





# Never Giving Up





# Excel Academy

- Excel Academy @ Francis M. Wood serves students who are overage and under credited in grades 6 -12.
  - offers supports to address the social and environmental issues that plague our students daily.
  - is designed to move students towards graduation and beyond through an acceleration model.
  - 21.4% of the student population receive special education services and 88.6% of the student population were eligible for Free and Reduced Meals
- 2012-13 SY – 2014-15 SY tripled 9<sup>th</sup> grade promotion rates and doubled 10<sup>th</sup> grade promotion rates



# Issues Impacting Student Attendance

- Homelessness - 15/3% (self-reported; actual number is much higher)
- Substance Abuse - 13/2% (actual number is much higher)
- Teen Pregnancy - 43/9%
- Mental Health – 119/25%
- Lack of Adequate Family Financial Resources – 107/22%
- Student Incarceration - 95/20%
- Total Population- 479      Special Education-133/28%

# Action to Improve Attendance

## Homelessness

- Identification
- Provide clothing voucher for free school uniform and school supplies
- Connect students and families with housing resources in the community.
- School-based: Clothes Closet, Food Pantry, After School Supper

### Partners:

- Bon Secours Hospital,
- Maryland Food Bank,
- Northrup & Grumman

# Actions to Improve Student Attendance

## Substance Abuse

- Curriculum Offering: Issues of Drug Abuse
- Identification: self, parents, teachers, clinicians
- In-school substance abuse counseling

### Partners:

- Treatment Resources for Youth
- Mountain Manor Treatment Center

# Actions to Improve Student Attendance

## Teen Pregnancy

- Educational Support Group for pregnant and parenting students
- Assistance with Childcare Voucher Process
- Monthly Literacy Sessions with Parent and Child
- Modified schedules are provided for students who have childcares challenges

### Partners:

- Bon Secour Hospital
- Mercy Medical System
- Baltimore City Department of Social Services

# Actions to Improve Attendance

## Mental Health

- 3 full Time Social Workers
- 1 Full Time School Psychologist
- 2 full Time School Guidance Counselors
- Mentoring Support Services
- Referral for Community health Services

# Actions to Improve Student Attendance

## **Lack of Adequate Family Financial Resources**

- Career Research Development course seeks out student employment and internship opportunities, resume writing, and interviewing skills
- Modified schedules are provided for students who currently work full and part-time.
- In-school and off-site job fairs

# Actions to Improve Student Attendance

## Adjudicated Students

- Encompass about 20% of total population
- On-site Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Supervision and counseling

### Partnerships:

- University of Maryland Baltimore County
- Choice Program
- Northrup & Grumman



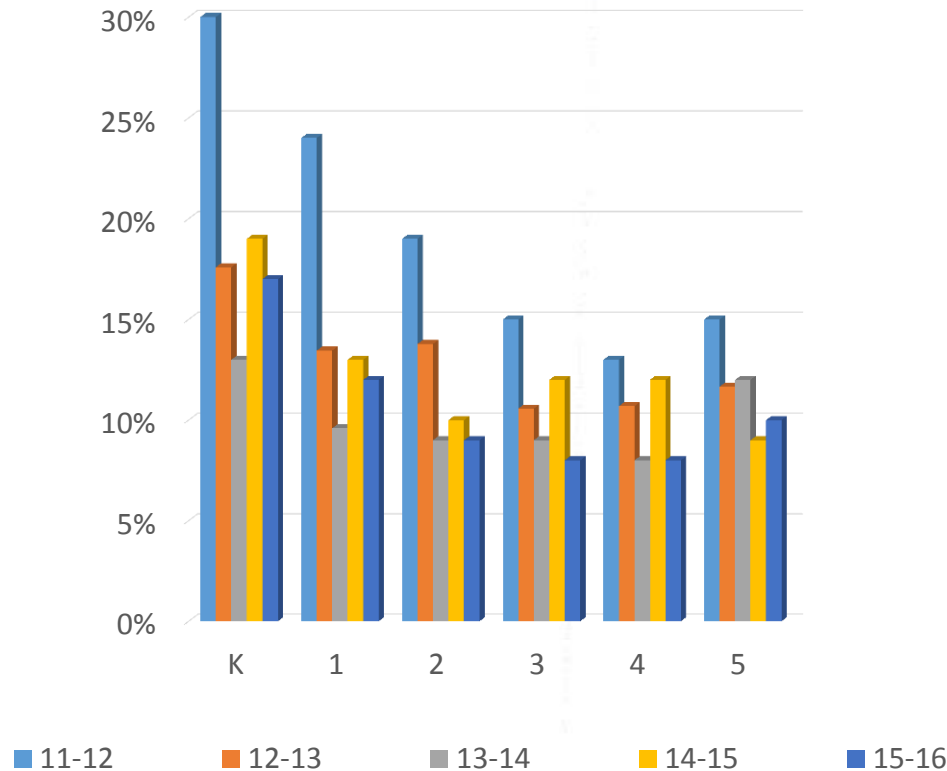
# New Britain District Profile (2015-2016)

- Approximately 10,000 students in the district
- 5,093 elementary school students
- 64% of students identify as Hispanic
- 14% of students identify as Black
- 16% of students are English Language Learners
- 81% of students are eligible for free and reduced lunch
- 18% of students receive special education services



PURSuing EXCELLENCE ONE STUDENT AT A TIME

# Changes in Chronic Absenteeism by Grade Level (2011-2016)



# Intervention and Best Practices

## Professional Development for ALL stakeholder groups

- PD for building admins, social service teams, community agencies, funders, etc.
  - Understanding the difference between ADA and Chronic Absenteeism
  - How chronic absenteeism impacts your building
  - Understanding what the root cause of chronic absenteeism is
    - Problems: systemic, health issues in community, policy at the board level
    - Culture and climate of each building
    - Family dynamics
  - Trained site administrators and teams to interpret attendance data, adopt best practices and engage in peer learning.

# Intervention and Best Practices

## How do we build tools for staff to address these barriers?

- Attendance teams at the building level
  - Analyze data, assess situation & ensure appropriate interventions are put in place for student success
- Send chronic absenteeism reports to schools every 10 days.
  - Indicates how many and which students are chronically absent.

## Strategic Actions

- Weekly attendance teams with chronic absenteeism reports every ten days
- Bi-Weekly reports to Board of Education with attendance reports sorted by building
- SRBI/RTI Procedures and Strategies
- Home visits throughout the school year
- Close Collaboration between DCF, court support services and mental health agencies



PURSuing EXCELLENCE ONE STUDENT AT A TIME

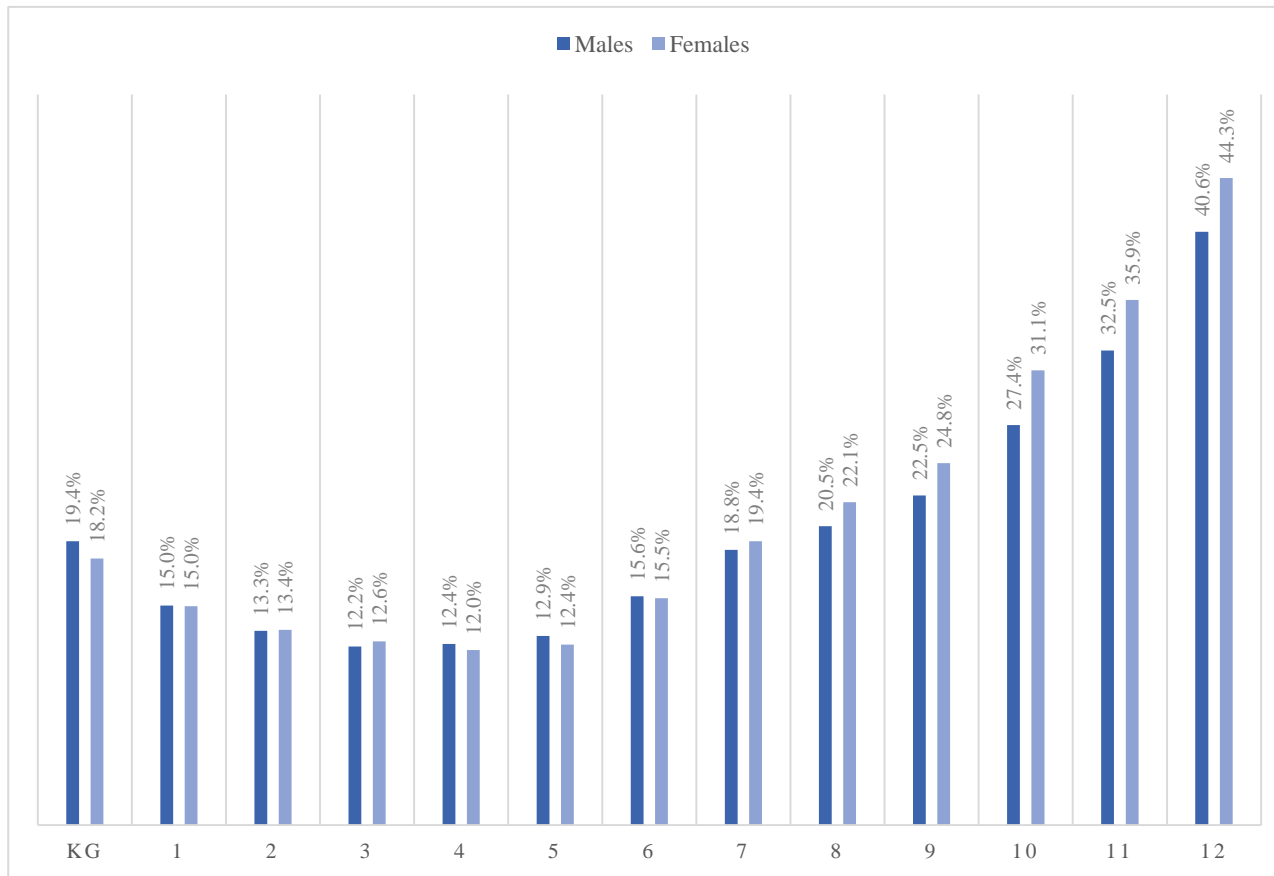
# Intervention and Best Practices

## Next Steps

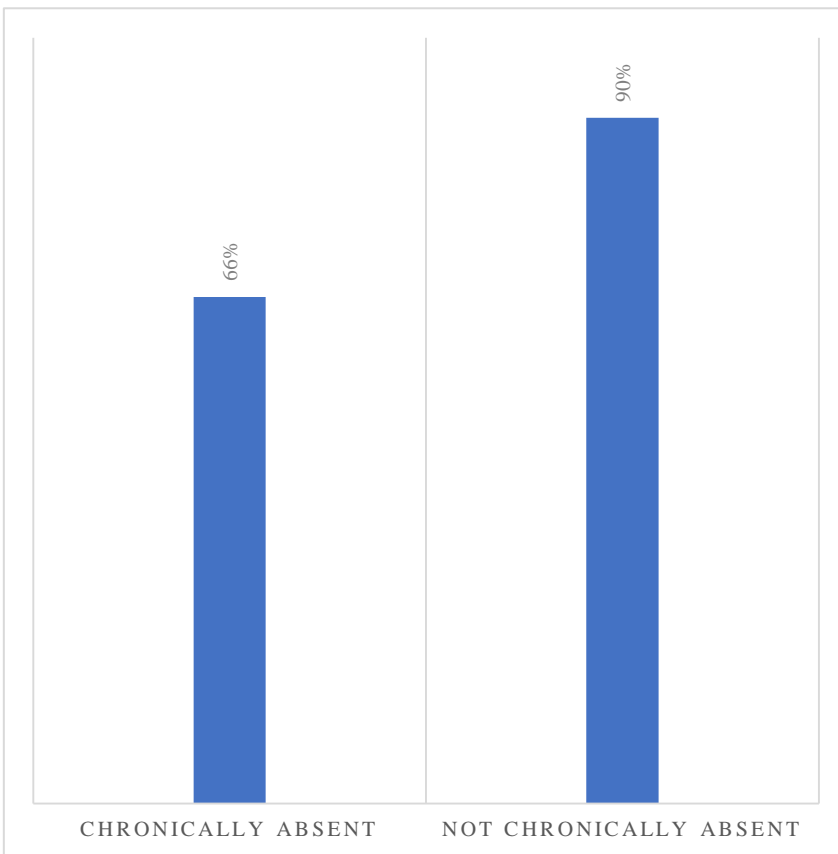
- Focus on student and family engagement
- Focus on student engagement via developmentally appropriate practice
- Summer Enrichment Experience (SEE) for at-risk students (NSLA Award of Excellence)
- Out of school time programming as an intervention
  - Take students who attend SEE and make sure they have a spot in the after-school programs
  - Lengthen school day and school year with experiential learning for at-risk students
- Expand out of school summer experiences for grades 4-8.
  - Currently serve K-3 – need to replicate best practices
- Re-Imagining/Leveraging Family Resource Center Staff to reach BT3 population
- Strategies at the building levels – Part of their school improvement plans



PURSuing EXCELLENCE ONE STUDENT AT A TIME



Percent of Oregon students chronically absent in the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school year [1].



On-Time Graduation  
Rate by 12th Grade  
Attendance (ODE,  
2015)

# Populations most impacted

- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Students with Disabilities
- Students economically disadvantaged
- Students of color
- Students living in rural communities (versus towns, suburban, urban)



Healthy kids learn better;  
Kids who receive a quality education  
and graduate high school go on to lead  
happier, healthier and longer lives.

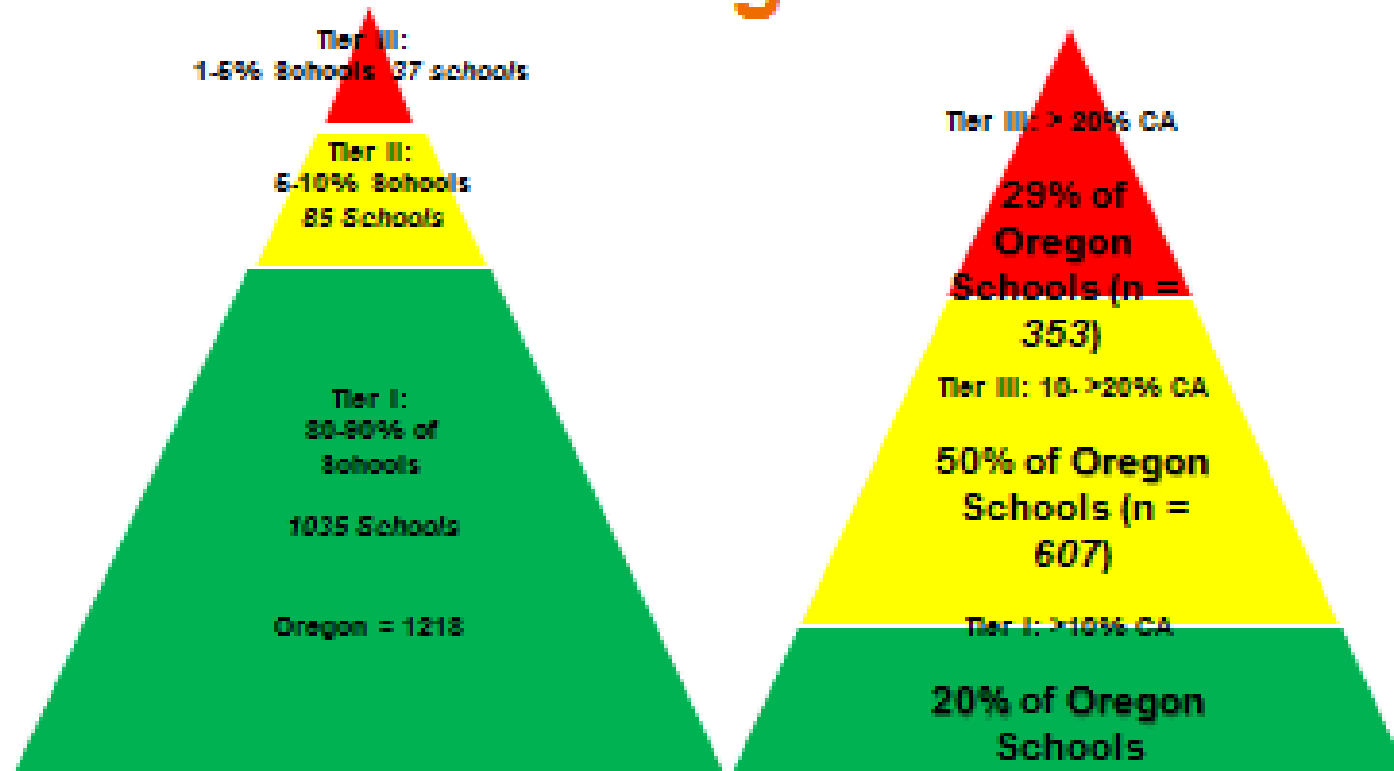




# House Bill 4002 (HB 4002): Chronic Absenteeism Statewide Plan

1. A process from [publicly disclosing annual](#) information on chronic absenteeism rate for each school & [adopt statewide definition of CA](#)
2. [Guidance and best practices](#) for all schools and school districts to use to track, monitor, and addressed chronic absence and improve attendance
3. Process for [identifying schools in need of support](#) to reduce chronic absenteeism and improve attendance
4. A description of [technical assistance](#) is available to schools identified as needing support, including technical assistance that will be provided by the Oregon Department of Education
5. The [estimated costs](#) associated with implementing the plan

# *A View of Oregon's data*



# Components of a System to Address Chronic Absenteeism

- **Data System:** Definitions of CA, ability to pull CA data vs ADA daily (school, district), pull CA data quarterly/annually (district, region, state). Early Warning Systems
- **MTSS:** to identify schools & as a framework for support
  - Screening, Progress Monitoring, Fidelity, Data-based problem-solving
- **Cross-sector Collaboration:** with community agencies, health, housing, family support, etc.
- **Equity:** collecting the right data for all underserved students, focus on EBPs that reflect root causes of disengagement, routine review of disaggregated data
- **Professional Development:** Peer learning networks, webinars/remote learning (restorative practices, PBIS, Tiered strategies, implicit bias, STEM/CTE, classroom management, data review, etc)
- **State-wide and/or Local Messaging:** Building awareness, educational in nature, viewed by educators/all as a priority
- **Coaching:** School Team leader, District Coach, Regional Coach/Specialist (ESD/RAC), State Coordinator
- **Teaming:** School, District, Region (ESD/RAC), State

# Thank You!



Maribel Childress,  
Principal  
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Tammatha  
Woodhouse,  
Principal  
Excel Academy at  
Francis M. Wood  
Baltimore, MD



Nancy Sarra,  
Superintendent  
Consolidated School  
District of New Britain,  
CT



Robin Shobe,  
MS CCC-SLP  
Education Specialist  
Oregon Department of  
Education  
Office of Learning ~ Student  
Services



## **JOBS FOR THE FUTURE**

# **NATIONAL STUDENT ATTENDANCE, ENGAGEMENT, AND SUCCESS CENTER**

***‘LEVERAGING EWS AND SUCCESS MENTORS TO KEEP KIDS ON TRACK’***

Bob Balfanz, EGC and Patricia Balana, JFF  
December 7, 2016

**EVERYONE**  
**GRADUATES** CENTER



### ❖ Vision:

- ❖ Develop **Early Warning System Network** and continue **My Brothers Keeper Success Mentor Initiative** .... provide resources, peer learning and technical assistance support to enable use of early warning systems and success mentors aimed at reducing chronic absenteeism and keeping students on track to graduation

### ❖ By:

- ❖ building on '***Every Student, Every Day***' efforts
- ❖ supporting nationwide implementation of the **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**
- ❖ Focusing on **School Success Mentor sites**, My Brothers Keeper, and **School Improvement Grants (SIG) sites** to implement EWS, Success Mentors and address chronic absenteeism





- Two Communities of Practice, **one common space**;
  - **Early Warning Systems -SIG schools**;
  - **My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Success Mentors cities.**
  
- **GOALS:**
  - *Develop trusting, long-term relationships between participants*
  - *Disseminate and explore research and evidence-based approaches to address chronic absenteeism, behavior and effort, and course failure*
  - *Provide a safe, judgment-free venue for participants to share information/test ideas.....in the spirit of continuous improvement*
- Website (currently under development) central hub for activity within the Communities of Practice



- > **A website** with discussion boards, web-based resources, in-depth information about the initiative, and space to connect to other areas of the CoP.
- > **Monthly communication** to all CoP members
- > **Continuation** of MBK Success mentor districts monthly team leader and principal calls
- > **Formal webinars** on key components of Early Warning Systems
- > **Office hours** with Center experts
- > **Online certification** that will be available for members of the CoP and required for at least one member of each team that will be accessing on-site technical assistance.
- > **A national convening** for in-person learning and sharing with other cities and teams.
- > **On-site technical support** for formal training of school staff, targeted work in areas of need, or problem solving to address key issues.



- Launch - National Student Attendance, Engagement, and Success Center
- Application for Technical Assistance (sites visits – early 2017)
- Website development
- Webinars – commencing December 2017

- Communication to states, districts and schools
- Questions:
  - Contact: Patricia Balana, Jobs for the Future
  - [pbalana@jff.org](mailto:pbalana@jff.org)

# Thank You!

**Thank you** for your commitment to eliminating chronic absenteeism and building system of support for all students—**no matter what.**

*Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.*

President Barack Obama