Talk Tuesdays

Developed by the CSDE in collaboration with

Attendance Works & SERC

11/28/2023

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Today's Agenda

Welcome
  Christine Kuehlewind, Stephen Proffitt, Ann Marie Cordisco, and Elisa Laudati,
  State Education Resource Center (SERC)

What's New at CSDE and Partners
  Kari Sullivan Custer, Attendance & Engagement Consultant, CSDE
  Jay Brown, Bureau of Special Education Consultant (Academic Office), CSDE

Executive Functioning, Mental Health, and Attendance
Christine Kuehlewind and Elisa Laudati, SERC

Upcoming Attendance & Engagement Meetings
  Christine Kuehlewind, SERC

Welcome

October 19, 2023
- **Press Release: The LEAP Effect: A Systemic Approach To Boosting Student Attendance and Engagement**
- 2022-23 School Discipline Data Posted on EdSight: **suspension rates**, **district tiers**, **incidents**, **sanctions**, and **bullying**.
- **CSDE launches Grades K-5 Computer Science Model Curricula**

October 23, 2023
- **CSDE's New Entry Age for Kindergarten: Considerations for Connecticut Schools**

October 26, 2023
- **Connecticut Special Education Data System (CT-SEDS) User Experience Pulse Survey**
- **Notice of Intention to Issue Declaratory Rulings**
- **Press Release: Governor Lamont and Commissioner Russell-Tucker Announce Release of $11.5 million to 46 School Districts to Boost High Dosage Tutoring**
- **Press Release: Governor Lamont Announces Kiana Foster-Mauro is Connecticut's 2024 Teacher of the Year**

Superintendent's Digest

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Welcome
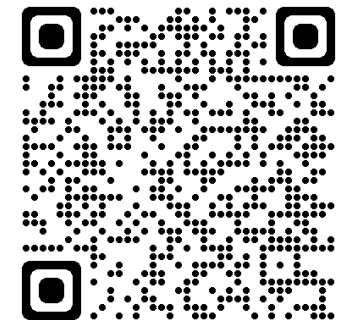
November 2, 2023
- [Just Released! Bright Spots: Improving High School Student Attendance in Connecticut](#)
- [2022-23 Education Financial System, Special Education Excess Cost Grant System, Public School Information System, and Independent Accountant's Report](#)

November 9, 2023
- [Student Recruitment for Choice Programs and Specialized Schools](#)

November 13, 2023
- [State Board of Education's Five-Year Comprehensive Plan for Education](#)
- Reminder: Certification Alerts
    - [Emergency Educator Certification Endorsements for the 2023–24 School Year](#)
    - [Certification Alert – July 2023 – Legislation Affecting Educator Certification](#)
- [CSDE and Connecticut Native American Tribes Release Curricula Resources](#)

Superintendent's Digest

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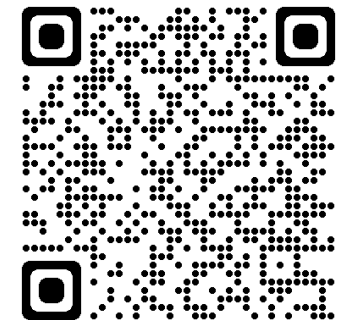*EQUITY | EXCELLENCE | EDUCATION*

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November 16, 2023
- [Updated Guidance Regarding Public Act 23-137 Extending IDEA Eligibility](#)
- [Visual Access to Mathematics](#)
- Increasing Educator Diversity Plan Interactive Technical Assistance Webinars: [register for session 1](#) and [register for session 2](#)
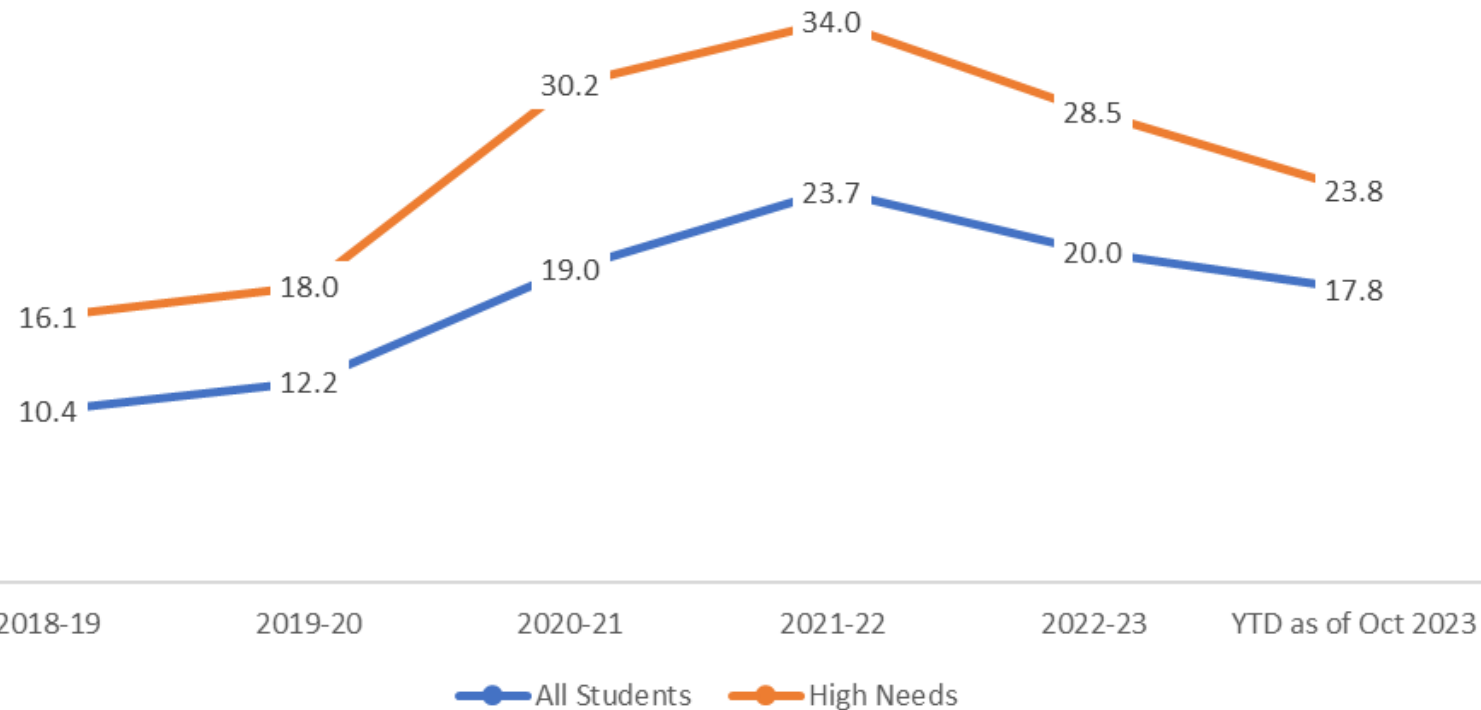
November 20, 2023
- [On behalf of CT Department of Transportation Commissioner Garrett Eucalitto – 2023 CTDOT Snowplow Naming Contest](#)
- [On behalf of the CT Department of Motor Vehicles – Annual Teen Safe Driving Video Contest](#)
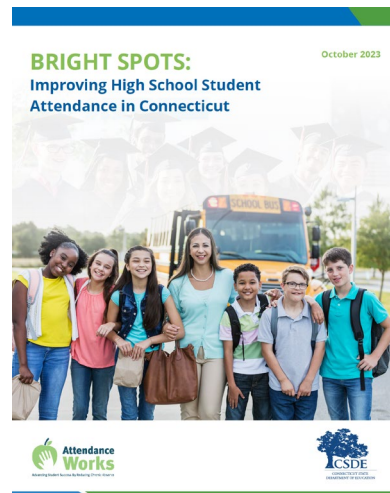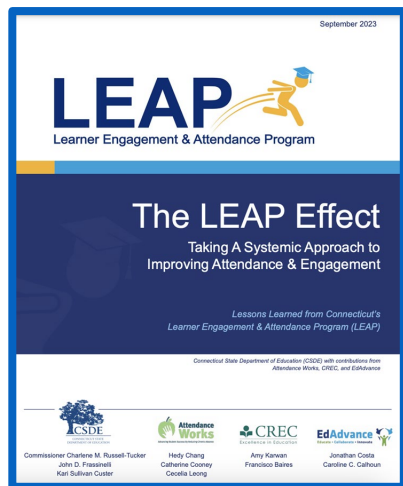
[Superintendent's Digest](#)

Chronic Absenteeism Trend
Percentage of Students Chronically Absent

Line chart showing chronic absenteeism percentages:

Year	All Students	High Needs
2018-19	10.4	16.1
2019-20	12.2	18.0
2020-21	19.0	30.2
2021-22	23.7	34.0
2022-23	20.0	28.5
YTD as of Oct 2023	17.8	23.8

- A student is "in attendance" if present for at least half of the instructional school day

- Chronic absenteeism is missing at least 10 percent of school days (e.g., 18 of 180 days)

- From 2021-22 to 2022-23, chronic absenteeism declined by 3.7 percent for all students and 5.5 percent among students with high needs

- Approximately 18,000 more students attended school regularly in 2022-23 as compared to in 2021-22

- Around 100,000 students were chronically absent in 2022-23

- For 2023-24, YTD rates as of October 2023 are heading in the right direction

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Supports and Resources

- [CSDE Chronic Absence Webpage](#)
- [EdSight Data Portal](#)
- [Guidelines for Excused and Unexcused Absences](#)
- [Mental Health Wellness Days Guidance](#) (2022)
- [Reducing Chronic Absence in Connecticut's Schools: A Prevention and Intervention Guide](#)

- Clear policy guidance aligned with research
- Cross-agency collaboration (internal)
- State-level teams that include partner agencies, district and family representatives (external)
- Blended funding sources (Title IV, IDEA, ARPA)

Survey

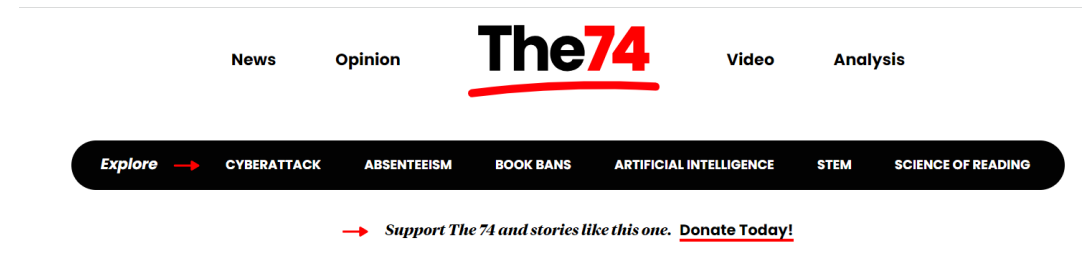https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeJdnBga2h1-wGrreH7MJEKpFw4xnXILu_MkzXzRu85x5cmPA/viewform?usp=pp_url

Executive Functioning, Mental Health, and Attendance

Christine Kuehlewind and Elisa Laudati, SERC

Why EF and Attendance?

- The link between EF and mental health challenges

- EF dysfunction as a barrier to consistent and on time school attendance

- EF screening and skill building as opportunities for prevention and intervention

- EF as an opportunity for home – school - community collaboration and learning in conjunction with socio-emotional and/or clinical care

News   **Opinion**   **The74**   **Video**   **Analysis**

Explore → CYBERATTACK   ABSENTEEISM   BOOK BANS   ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE   STEM   SCIENCE OF READING

→ *Support The 74 and stories like this one.* **Donate Today!**

NEWS

Six Hidden (and Not-So-Hidden) Factors Driving America's Student Absenteeism Crisis

1. Worsening mental health

In a recent survey by the National Center for Education Statistics, 70% of public schools reported an increase in the percentage of students seeking mental health services at school since the start of the pandemic; 76% reported an increase in staff voicing concerns about students with symptoms of depression, anxiety and trauma.

"Executive function is a set of mental skills that include working memory, flexible thinking, and self-control. We use these skills every day to learn, work, and manage daily life. Trouble with executive function can make it hard to focus, follow directions, and handle emotions, among other things." – Understood.org

"Executive function and self-regulation skills are the mental processes that enable us to plan, focus attention, remember instructions, and juggle multiple tasks successfully. Just as an air traffic control system at a busy airport safely manages the arrivals and departures of many aircraft on multiple runways, the brain needs this skill set to filter distractions, prioritize tasks, set and achieve goals, and control impulses."- Center on the Developing Child- Harvard

Types of EF Skills

Skill Type	The ability to...
Impulse Control	Resist the urge to say or do something allowing time to evaluate situation
Working Memory	Hold information in mind and use it to complete a task
Emotional Control	Manage feelings in order to achieve goals, complete tasks, or control behavior
Sustained Attention	Maintain attention to a situation or task in spite of distractions, fatigue, or boredom
Task Initiation	Begin projects without undue procrastination, in an efficient or timely fashion
Planning/ Prioritizing	Create steps to reach a goal and make decisions about what to focus on
Organization	Create and maintain systems to keep track of information or materials
Time Management	Determine how much time have, how to allocate it, and how to stay within time limits
Flexibility	Adapt plans in face of obstacles, setbacks, new information, or mistakes
Goal-Directed Persistence	Have a goal, follow through to completion, and not be put off or distracted by competing interests
Self-Monitoring	Observe oneself in situation; monitor and evaluate how problem-solve

- EF skills are distinct, but inter-related mental processes needed to regulate thinking, feeling, and behavior in order to reach a future goal (not a unitary concept)

- EF skills continue to develop through childhood and begin to solidify in adolescence into early adulthood

- EF skills are necessary for academic, social, and post-secondary success and they can be explicitly taught to increase efficacy

- **Its not only about knowing what to do, but doing what you know at the right time**

- EF difficulties can be normative strengths and weaknesses for a child

- ACEs can negatively impact the development of executive functions

- Acute stress can impair core executive functions (specifically working memory and cognitive flexibility)

- A challenge in one or multiple EF skills is not a mental health disorder in it of itself

- Executive dysfunction is present in a wide range of mental health disorders

- Two explanations are proposed

when little people are overwhelmed by big emotions, it's our job to share our calm, not to join their chaos. -l.r. knost

- Perseveration

- Disinhibition

- Poor problem solving

- Concreteness/mental inflexibility

- Difficulty getting started

- Poor organization

- Errors due to self-monitoring

- Slow processing speed

- Overreactions

- Easily overwhelmed

- Upset by sudden changes in routines

- Low frustration tolerance

- Does not notice impact of behavior on others

- Difficulty with social initiation
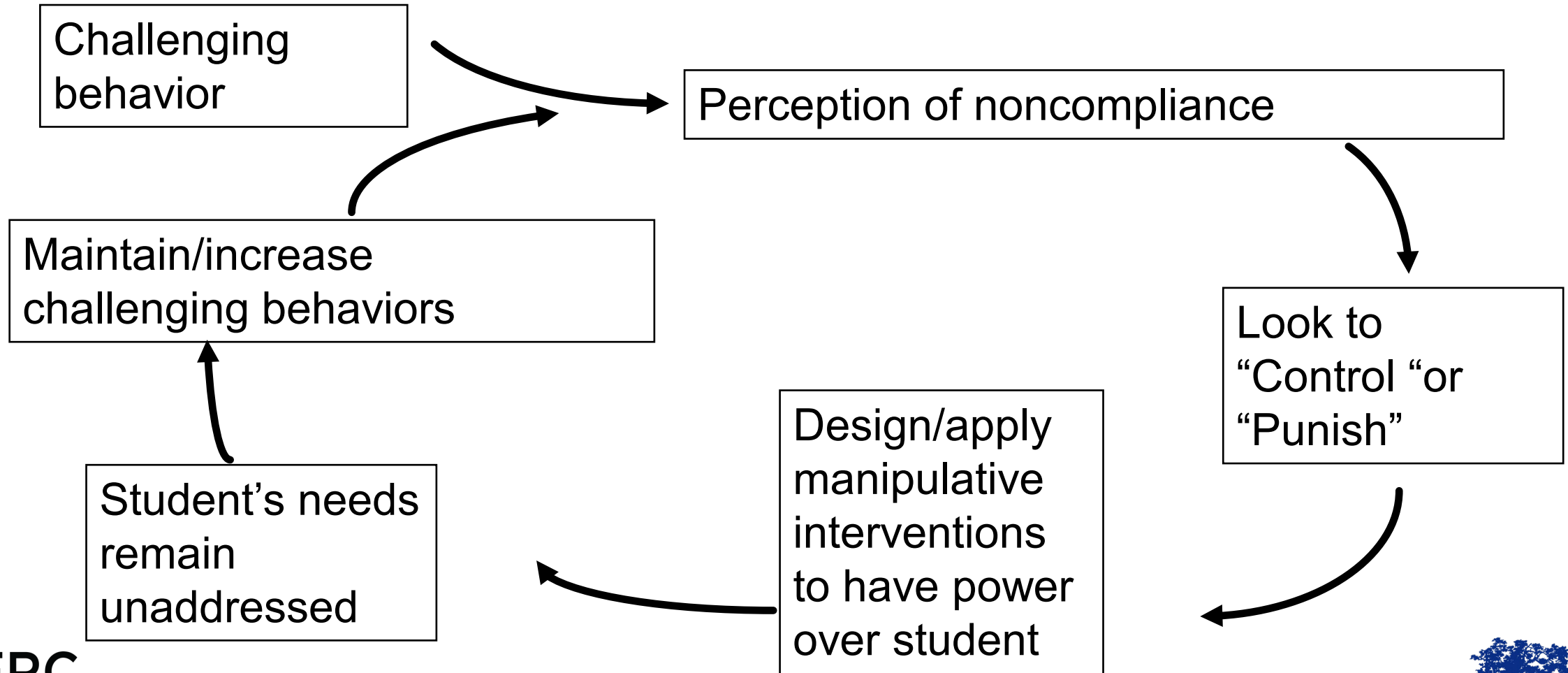
Effective Behavioral Support

Challenging behavior

Perception of unmet needs

Look to understand needs and develop hypothesis

Design/deliver prevention/ intervention strategies based on hypothesis

Meet needs in a more Socially/contextually appropriate manner

Reductions in challenging behaviors by learning alternative skills

Personal growth improves self control

Improved Outcomes

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EF and Attendance Interventions within MTSS

What do we do for the **FEW** needing intensive support?

What do we do for **ALL**?

What do we do for the **SOME** needing more support?

~5%

~15%

~80% of Students

- EF skill building as a layer to robust intervention plans for attendance

- Understanding Root Causes to Absences

- Screening measures for all students and/or as a tool to design intervention for students in tier 2/3
  - Identify EDF contributing to absences
  - Teaching EF skills within specific contexts
  - Conduct item analysis through EF scale (ex. Brown EF Scales; Dawson and Guare)

Students Missing 20% or More — Tier 3 Intensive Intervention

Students Missing 10% - 19% — Tier 2 Early Intervention

All Students and Families — Tier 1 Universal Prevention

All Students and Families — Foundational Supports Which Promote Positive Conditions for Learning

Attendance Works ©

www.attendanceworks.org
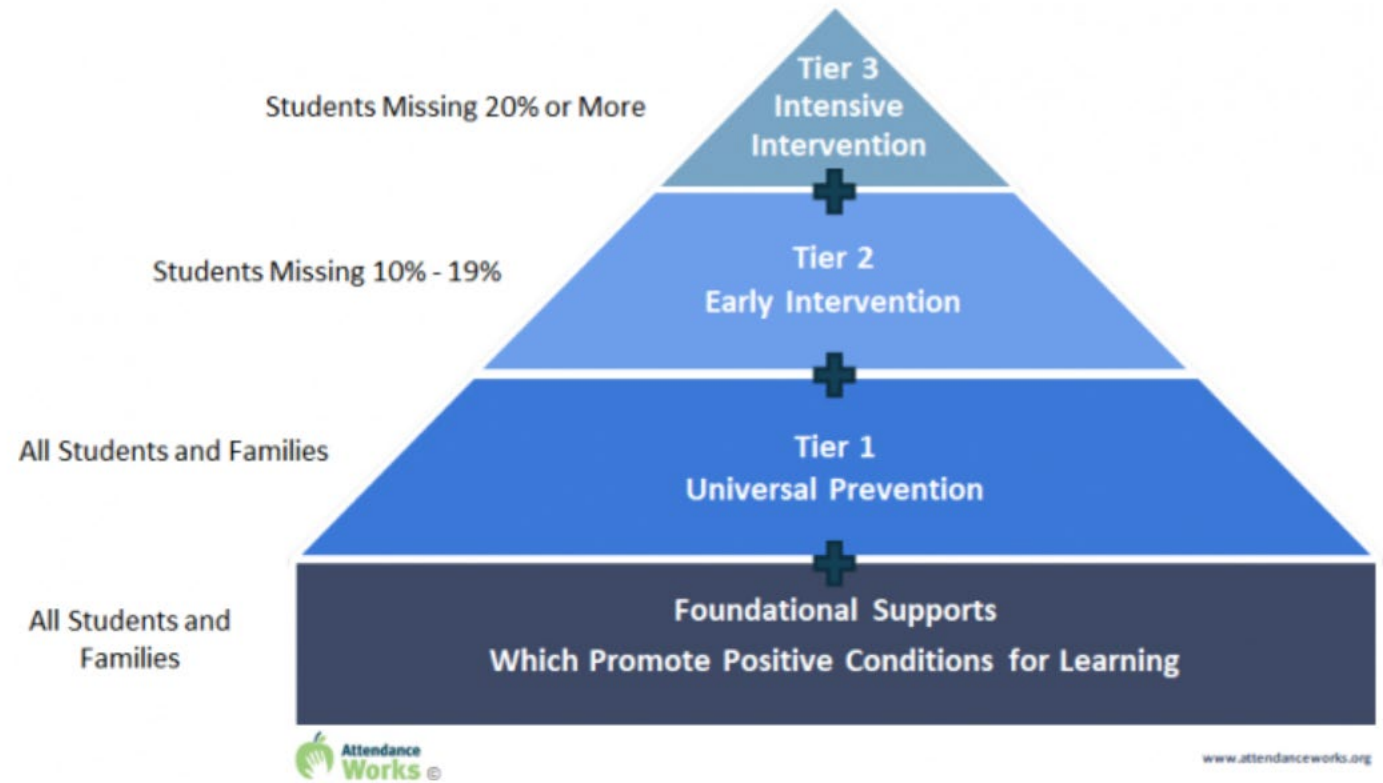
EF and Attendance Interventions within MTSS

Attendance Pyramid with Examples

	Family Engagement	Positive Student Engagement	Behavioral and Mental Health	Physical Health	Academic Support	Extended Learning	Basic Needs
Tier 3: Intensive Intervention	Assign family advocate to coordinate supports	1:1 connection with adult advocate (e.g. social worker)	Individual plan developed with psychologist/social worker	Coordinated care plans with local health provider	Individualized learning and success plan leading to graduation	Accelerated credit recovery	Provision of targeted resources, e.g. housing assistance
Tier 2: Early Intervention	Targeted, positive family visits	Clubs Success Mentors Check-In / Check-Out	Small group counseling	Plans for students with chronic illnesses such as asthma and diabetes	Attendance strategies added to IEPs and 504 plans Tutoring and intensive classroom supports	Music or art program prioritized for students who have experienced trauma	Bus passes, walking school bus, bike program, or ride sharing services
Tier 1: Universal Prevention	Clear communications about attendance expectations Recognition of good and improved attendance	Connection to a caring adult (*Relationship Mapping*) Establish positive, caring, daily attendance practices and routines	Open-door policy for students, families, and staff to seek mental health services	Build time into routines for students and staff to wash hands Immunization clinic Health screenings	Learning objectives are clear and students can make up work after they are absent	Summer enrichment for every student	School-based clothing closet
Foundational Supports	Family resource centers Universal family visits	Grade-level advisories or morning meetings	Schoolwide mindfulness	Clean school campuses with good ventilation P.E. and recess	All students have access to challenging and engaging curriculum	Plentiful, high-quality afterschool programs exist in the community	Universal free meal program

https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/

Adapted from format created by Nancy Erbstein, Associate Professor of Education in Residence, with the UC Davis Center for Regional Change and Sacramento City USD.

- Classroom Planning, Schedules, and Routines

  - Integrating into classroom daily classroom instruction
  - Post schedules, directions, class rules, and expectations; make sure the student sees them.
  - Have a daily routine that changes as little as possible.
  - Provide folders and a basket of supplies to keep the student's desk organized.

- Giving Instructions and Assignments

  - Give step-by-step instructions and have the student repeat them.
  - Use attention-getting phrases like, "This is important to know because…."
  - Say directions, assignments, and schedules out loud.
  - Check in frequently to make sure the student understands the work.
  - Give simple and concrete written and spoken directions.
  - Checking for work completion or progress on assignments
  - Let the student use speech to text (dictation) technology for writing.

- Introducing New Concepts/Lessons

  - Highlight key words and ideas on worksheets.
  - Give a short review or connection to a previous lesson before teaching.
  - Allow different ways to answer questions, like circling or saying them.
  - Provide a rubric that describes the elements of a successful assignment.
  - Share the test format ahead of time so the student can focus on content.
  - Give the student an outline of the lesson.
  - Give notice (when possible) about schedule changes.

- Building Organization and Time Management Habits

  - Use organizers, apps, or online tools
  - Help the student create a daily to-do list to track assignments.
  - Use an assignment notebook.
  - Provide an extra set of books for the student to keep at home.
  - Break bigger projects into smaller pieces and give specific deadlines for each piece.
  - Provide colored strips to place under sentences or equations when reading.

- Small group instruction and application within/outside the classroom

- Homework clubs

- Assistive technology tools for organization, prompting, time management

- Individual and more specific lists and routines

- Digital self-control interventions- small group

- Individual intervention plans

- CICO with focus on routines and organization

- Integrating EF skill building into mentoring

- Executive functioning coaching

- Individual counseling and coordination of care with outside providers

- Family training in EF skill building (can be integrated into tier 1 family engagement practices)

- Structured and/or individualized home-school communication systems

- Partnering with community members and agencies to reach families and design supports

- Identify priority areas to address
- Talk about the "why"
- Set a specific goal
- Outlines steps needed to achieve the goal
- Provide prompting to perform each step and give feedback to improve performance
- Celebrate strengths and successes
- Monitor efficacy
- Fade supervision and prompting

- [Attendance Works- 3 Tiers of Intervention](#)

- [Attendance Works- Root Causes](#)

- [CSDE High Impact Family Engagement Strategies](#)

- [Harvard Center on Developing Child- Executive Function and Self-Regulation](#)

The Everything Parent's Guide to Children with Executive Functioning Disorder: Strategies to help your child achieve the time-management skills, ... in school and life

Smart but Scattered

Scales and screening tools:
• Brown Executive Functioning/Attention Scale
• McCloskey Executive Functions Scale
• Dawson and Guare (free)

Talk Tuesdays
for the 2023-24 School Year

2023

- December 12

2024

- January 9
- January 23
- February 6
- February 20
- March 5
- March 19
- April 2
- April 30
- May 14
- May 28

Register for Talk Tuesdays

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