# Attendance Works

# Session 3:

# Partnering to Make a Difference

CT E-Learning Series

February 23, 2023

# Welcome!

**Hedy Chang**
Executive Director

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# Three E-Learning Sessions

During these sessions, participants will learn how to work as a team to take a multi-tiered approach to improve attendance in their schools:

❖ **Session 1** — Whole School Engagement Strategies for Reducing Student Absenteeism

❖ **Session 2** — Early Intervention Strategies: Using Teams to Monitor and Identify Students in Need of Support

❖ **Session 3** — Partnering to Make a Difference

# Welcome!

**If you wish to review Session 2, please take a look at the slides, list of materials and the recording.**

- ❖ Recording:  Session 2
- ❖ Session 2 Presentation slides
- ❖ Session 2 Outline & Summary of Resources

## Getting Started: Introductions

## Use the Chat and share:

✓ Your name, role, community, and state

✓ A key community partner for engaging students in school

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# Pop Quiz

1. Early intervention begins when students miss 20% of school. (True or False)

2. There are many factors affecting student attendance. (True or False)

3. Schools must form a stand-alone attendance team. (True or False)

4. You matter! (True or False)

## Learning Goals for Session 3

**Participants will:**

- Learn strategies for mobilizing school staff and community agencies to partner with families to improve attendance and engagement.

- Find out about how to determine if your efforts are making a difference.

Session 2

1. Organize a multi-tiered attendance strategy that begins with prevention and early intervention.

2. Examine attendance and absenteeism data to assess which groups of students have higher or lower levels of absence.

3. Identify assets, barriers and strategies that affect attendance.

Session 3

4. Mobilize everyone in the school community to address attendance.
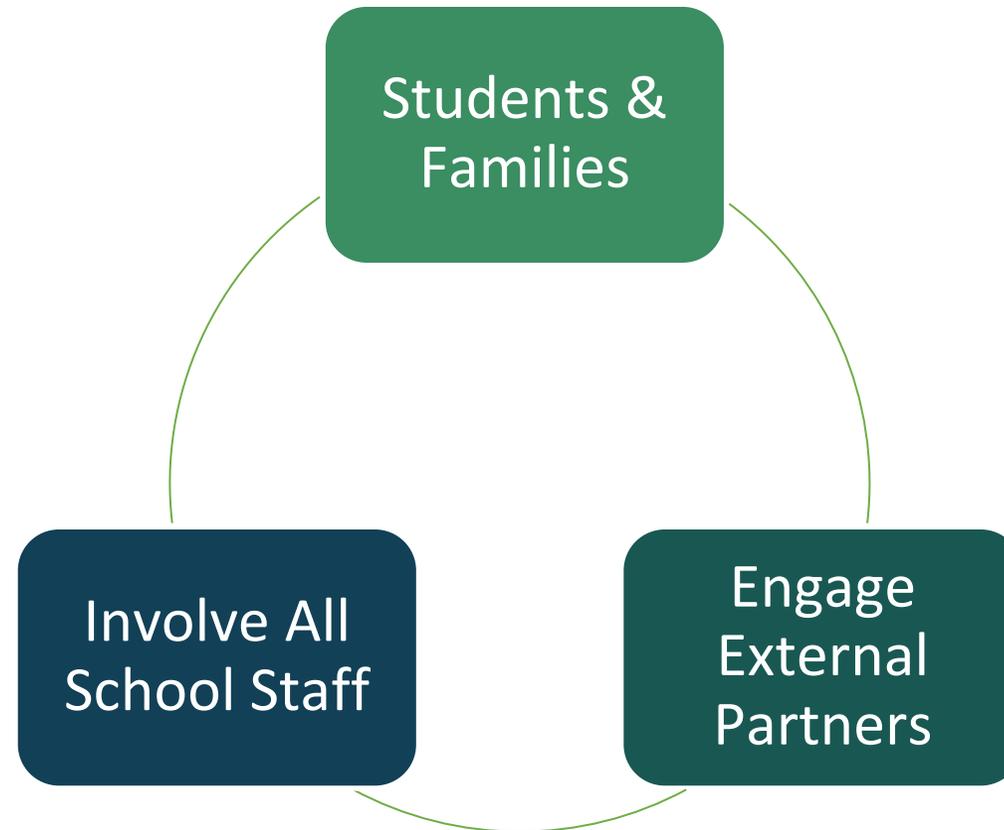
5. Determine if you are making a difference.

# Mobilize the School Community to Address Attendance

Students & Families

Engage External Partners

Involve All School Staff

# Every Opportunity



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Nyr1OizVo0

# Reflection
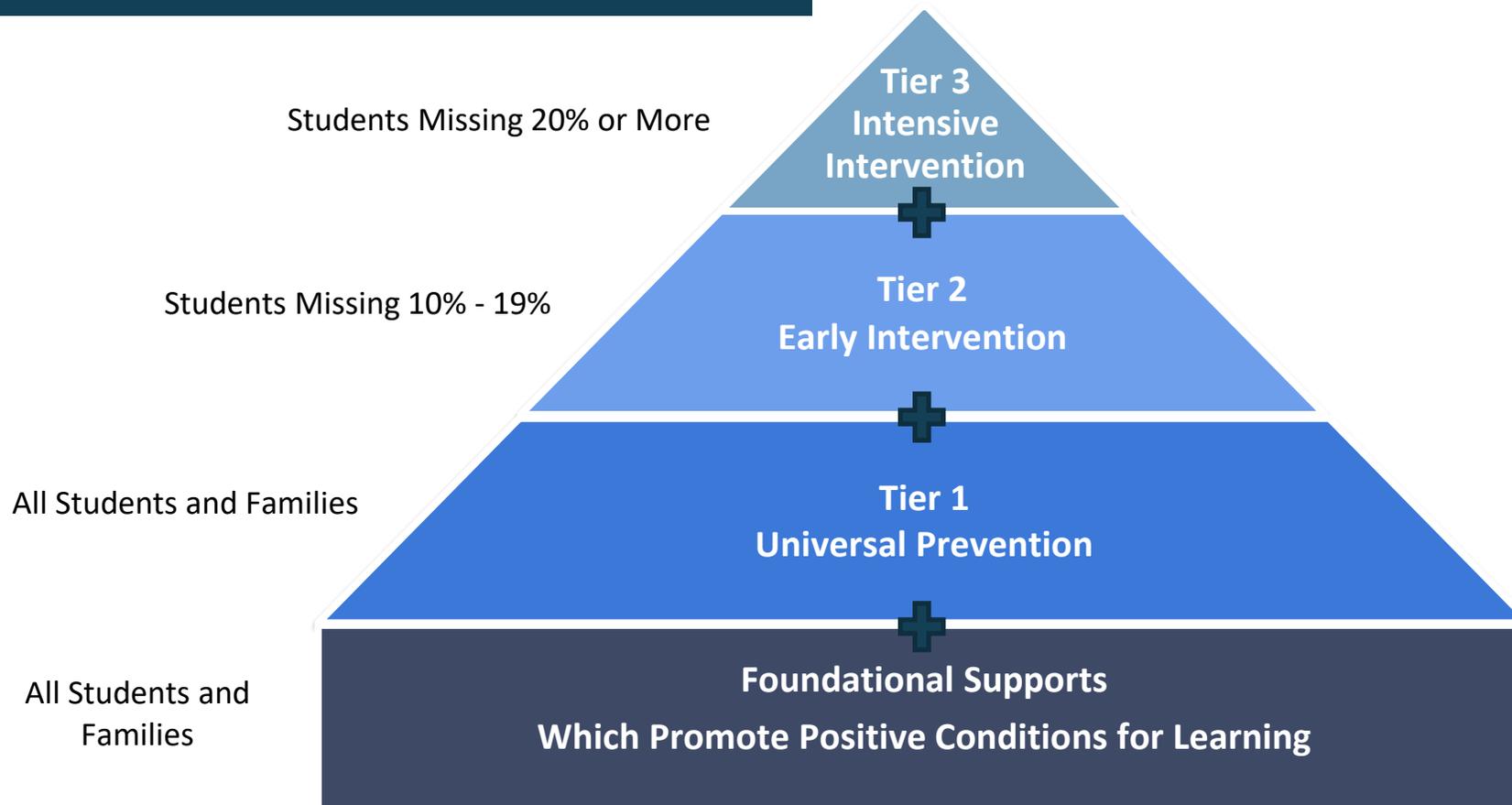
## *Share your thoughts in Chat:*

1. What's the connection between this video and attendance?

2. How are you encouraging everyone at your school to get involved in attendance and engagement?

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# Mobilize the Community:
## *Involve All School Staff in Caring Conversations*

# Multi-tiered System of Support for Attendance

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**

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

# Know Your Students' Attendance Status

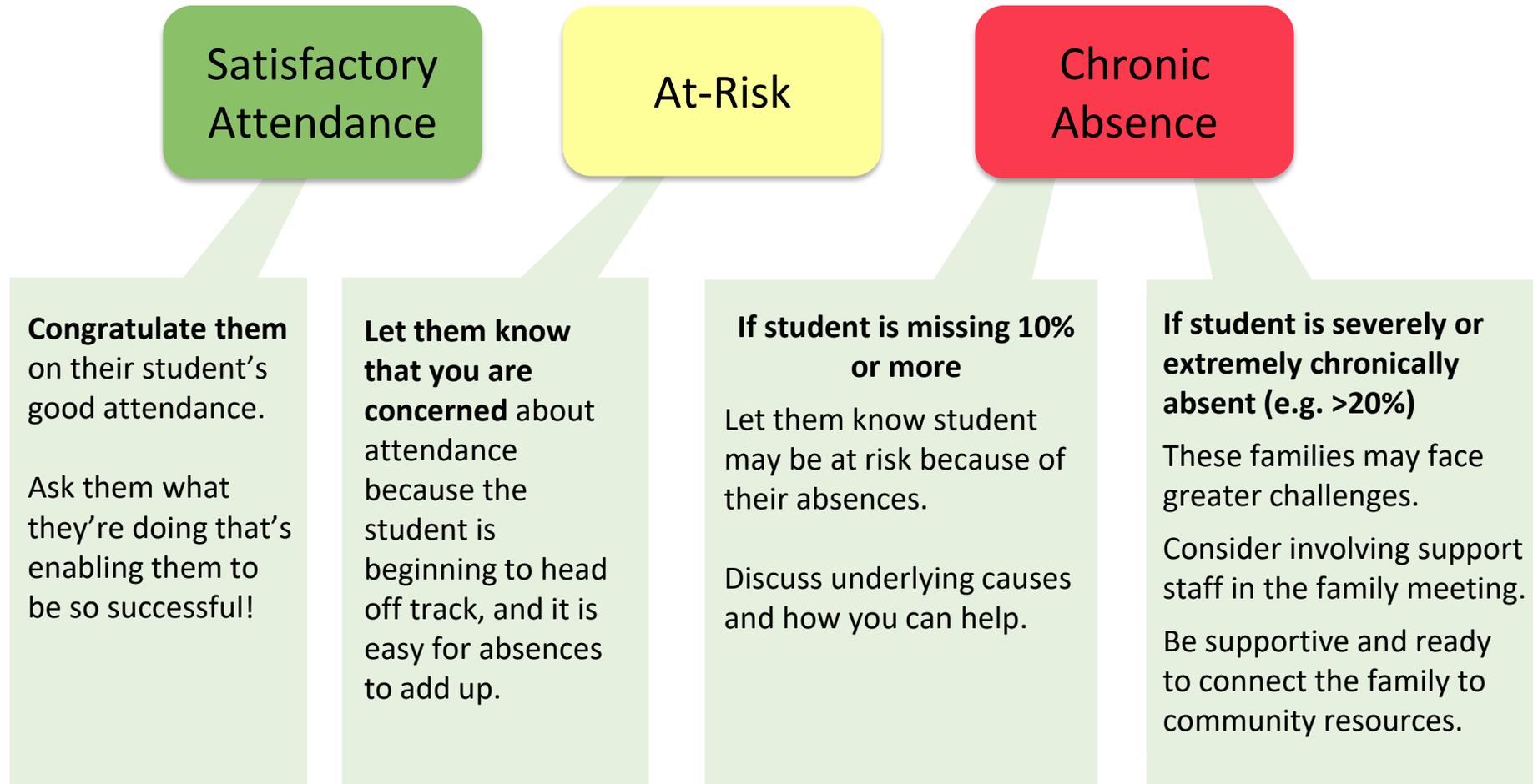| DAYS MISSED IN SCHOOL YEAR | |
|---|---|
| **Satisfactory Attendance** | Missed **less than 5%**<br>(fewer than 9 days in a 180-day school year) |
| **At-risk Attendance** | Missed **5-9.99%**<br>(9-17 days in a 180-day school year) |
| **Moderate Chronic Absence** | Missed **10-19.99%**<br>(18-35 days in a 180-day school year) |
| **Severe Chronic Absence** | Missed **20-49.99%**<br>(36-89 days in a 180-day school year) |
| **Extreme Chronic Absence** | Missed **50% or more**<br>(90 or more days in a 180-day school year) |

# Let's Practice!

Can you calculate the chronic absence rate and attendance category for these students?

It's the 100th day of school…

- *Which students have satisfactory attendance?*
- *Which students are in the at-risk category?*
- *Which students are chronically absent?*

| Student | Number of Absences | Calculation | Chronic Absence Rate (%) | Attendance Category |
|---------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Harry | 11 | 11 ÷ 100 = | 11% | Moderate |
| Hermione | 1 | 1 ÷ 100 = | 1% | Satisfactory |
| Ron | 6 | 6 ÷ 100 = | 6% | At-risk |
| Draco | 22 | 22 ÷ 100 = | 22% | Severe |
| Voldemort | 63 | 63 ÷ 100 = | 63% | Extreme |

# Tailor Conversations to Students' Attendance Status

**Satisfactory Attendance**

**At-Risk**

**Chronic Absence**

**Congratulate them** on their student's good attendance.

Ask them what they're doing that's enabling them to be so successful!

**Let them know that you are concerned** about attendance because the student is beginning to head off track, and it is easy for absences to add up.

**If student is missing 10% or more**

Let them know student may be at risk because of their absences.

Discuss underlying causes and how you can help.

**If student is severely or extremely chronically absent (e.g. >20%)**

These families may face greater challenges.

Consider involving support staff in the family meeting.

Be supportive and ready to connect the family to community resources.

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# Reflection

We've all had the experience of conversations going poorly when trying to broach a sensitive subject. Take a moment and reflect about an instance when this happened.

➢ Why the conversation went badly

➢ What could have helped

**Please share your thoughts in chat.**

# Sample Scenario:
## *Modeling Caring Conversations*

- **You are Alyssa's 3rd grade teacher.** You have noticed that Alyssa seems more reserved and less attentive than normal in class. She has missed 8 days of school in the two and a half months of school and is frequently tardy. Alyssa sometimes says she does not feel well but you aren't sure she is seriously ill. You have not been able to contact Alyssa's parent since the beginning of the school year despite multiple attempts.

- **You are Alyssa's parent.** Alyssa has asthma and you're scared that it's been getting worse. Sometimes her wheezing keeps her up at night so it's hard to get her to school on time. You are still worried that Covid could be a problem. She's started to ask if she can stay home sometimes because she feels lost in class and doesn't want to look dumb in front of the other kids. You have not found that teachers at Alyssa's school know what it's like for you to try to manage Alyssa's asthma and make sure that she's alright.

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# The "Caring Conversations for Attendance" Process

**01 Learn** — Learn about the student's family.

**02 Share** — Share positive things you've observed about the student.

**03 Inform** — Review attendance with parents.

**04 Discuss** — Discuss what works to get their student to school as well as challenges.

**05 Arrive at a Plan** — Agree upon strategies for addressing absences.
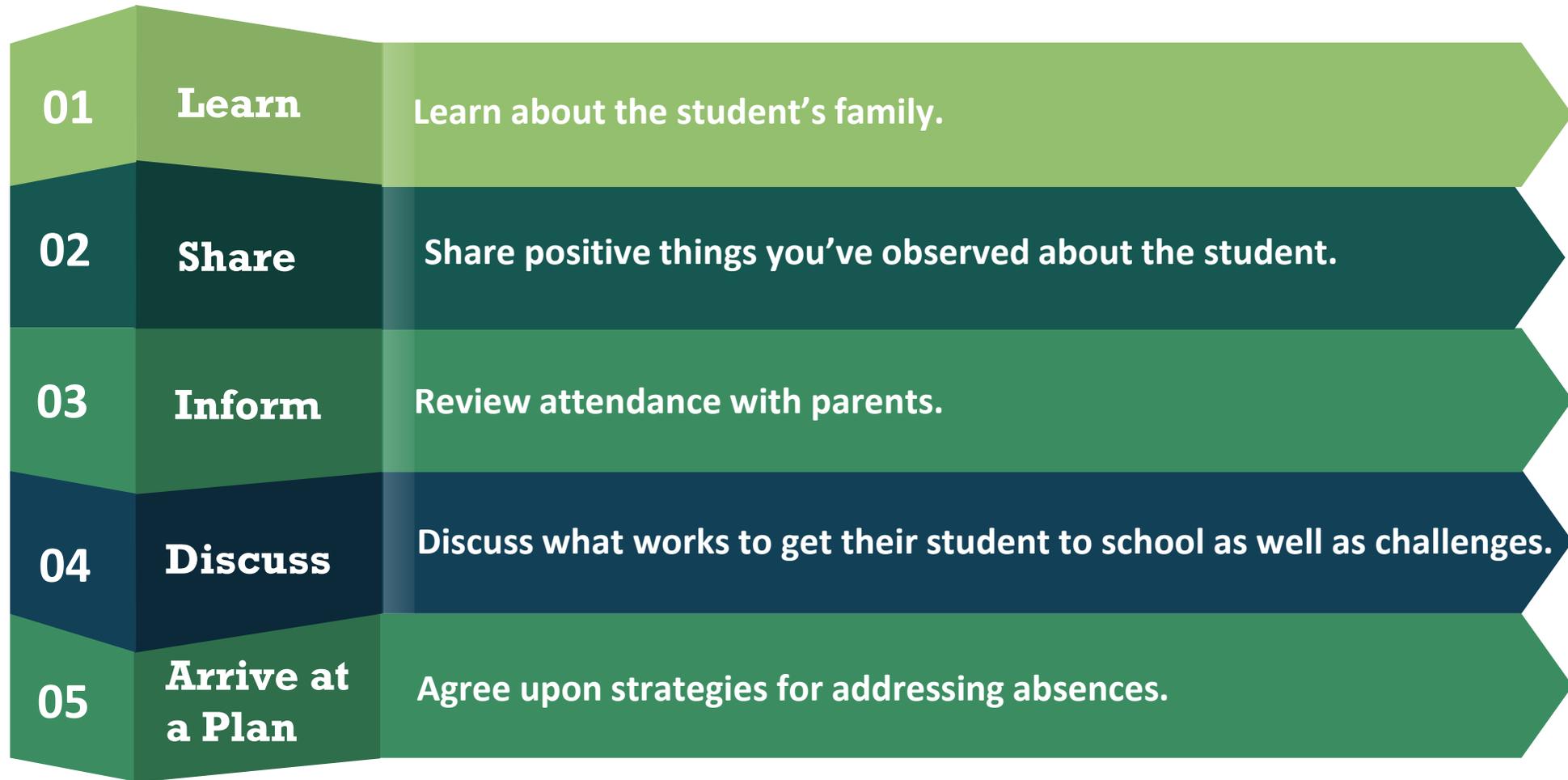
Adapted with permission from materials created by © High Expectations Parental Service, 2011

## Steps 1 & 2: Learn and Share

1. What excellent questions can you ask to learn about a student's family?

2. What are some positive observations about a student you might share with the student or family?

| 01 | Learn | **Learn about the student's family.** What are their hopes and dreams for their student? What does the student enjoy about school this year? What has been interesting or challenging about learning? |
|----|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 02 | Share | **Share positive things you've observed about the student.** Share your own vision for student learning & development. |

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# Step 3: Inform

**03 Inform**

**Review attendance with parents**. Tailor conversation to student's level of absenteeism & inform them of possible impacts of missing school. How might poor attendance affect their hopes and dreams for their student?

1. Show absences marked on a school calendar

2. Identify patterns

3. Share what a student missed relating back to the hopes and dreams that the student or parents shared



2021-2022 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

## Step 4: Discuss

**04  Discuss**

**Discuss what works to get their student to school as well as challenges.** Explore options for making up for lost learning time in the classroom.

1. Learn about student motivations.
2. Discuss reasons for absenteeism.
3. Explore what would help reduce absences and increase engagement.
4. Identify opportunities to make up for lost learning in the classroom.
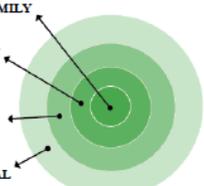5. Use help bank to identify support systems.



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# Step 5: Arrive at a Plan

| 05 | Arrive at a Plan | **Agree upon strategies for addressing absences.** Help students and families develop an attendance and learning plan. Offer referrals to services as needed and ask if there are other ways you can help. |

1. Work with the family to identify specific steps that will help to prevent absenteeism in the future.

2. Develop and complete a plan for attendance and learning

3. Ensure that the plan includes any support that the school will offer as well

4. Provide a copy of the plan to the student/parent

5. Agree on a timeline to check in and see how things are progressing

# Caring Conversations Professional Development Resources

| | Key Points | Questions and Messages |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Learn** | • Gather information<br>• Ask open-ended, supportive questions | *What is your vision for <u>student's</u> future? (ask parent and student)* |
| **2. Share** | • Positive observations about student so far<br>• What you want students to accomplish this year<br>• One goal is helping students acquire good habit of attendance | *_____ is such a good listener. We love having her (you) in our class.* |
| **3. Inform** | • Progress you've seen (start positive)<br>• Areas where child is struggling<br>• Review report card & update parents on child's attendance<br>• Deliver appropriate attendance messages | *_____ is excelling at math! and is making progress with reading. Reading remains the area that needs work.*<br><br>*_____ has been late five times and has missed two days during this first month of school. Absences impede reading and overall learning progress.* |
| **4. Discuss** | • Challenges, attendance barriers<br>• Learning at home activities<br>• How to stay connected | *What makes it hard for _____ to get to school?*<br><br>*What helps _____ catch up on learning given their absences?* |
| **5. Ask & Arrive at a Plan** | • Are there any questions?<br>• Is there anything you can do to support a partnership between home and school?<br>• Make referrals to community resources | *What questions do you have?*<br>*How can I help you?*<br>*Would it help you to work with…?* |

https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Caring-Conversation-Worksheet-2-16-22.docx

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**At your school:**

- Who in your school community could benefit from learning about Caring Conversations?

- How and when can you introduce them to Caring Conversations?

15 minutes

*Ground Rules*

- Turn on your video camera
- Briefly introduce yourself
- Raise your hand to speak
- Ask clarifying questions
- Explore differences of opinion
- Create space for everyone to speak *(and use the chat to express ideas)*
- The person whose first name is closest to the letter "Z" should facilitate.

**How and when can you equip others in your school community to have Caring Conversations?**
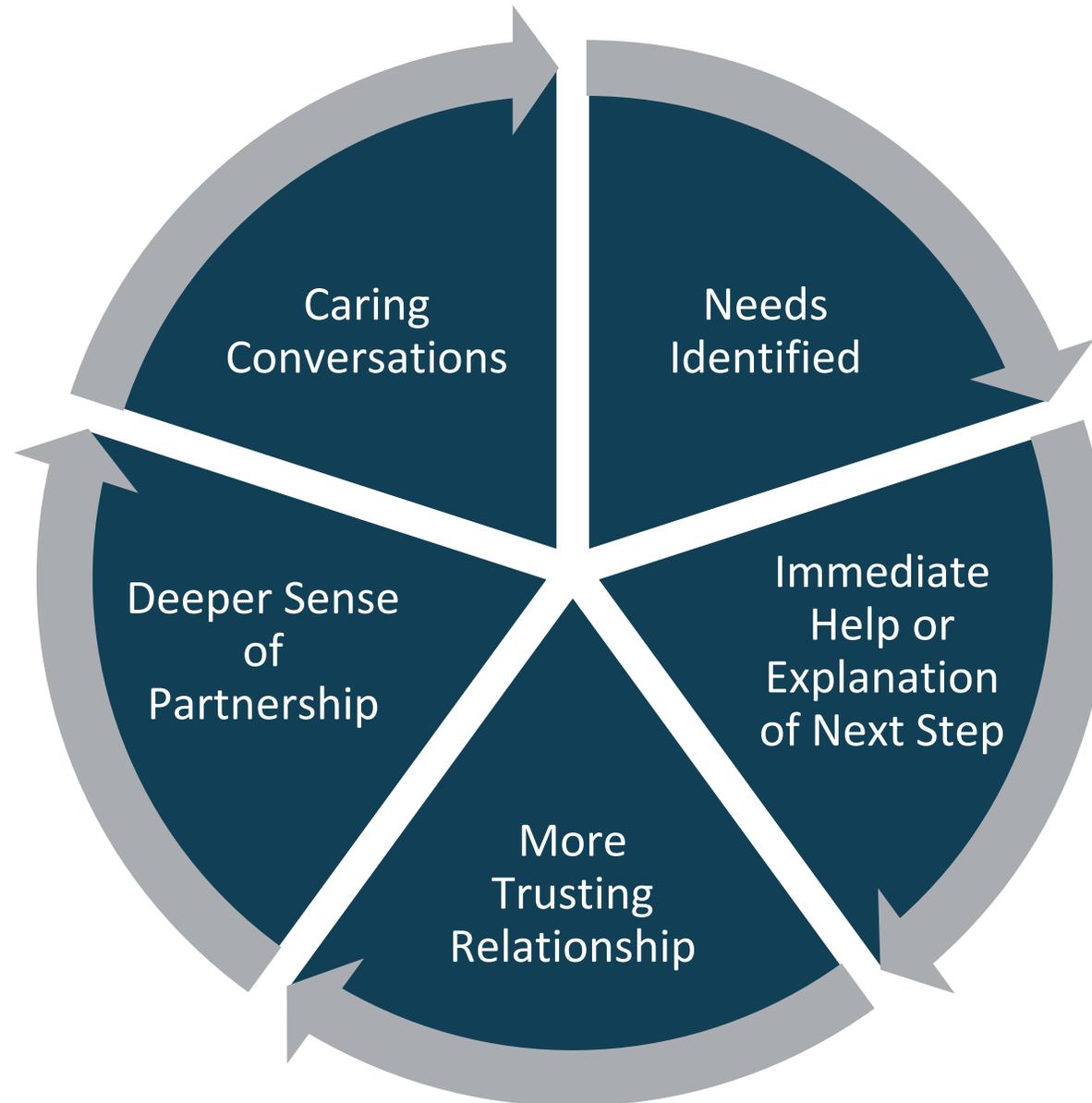
**Lorri Hobson, Director of Attendance**
Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) in Cleveland, Ohio
https://youtu.be/f93RjyYvHb0

# Let's Chat
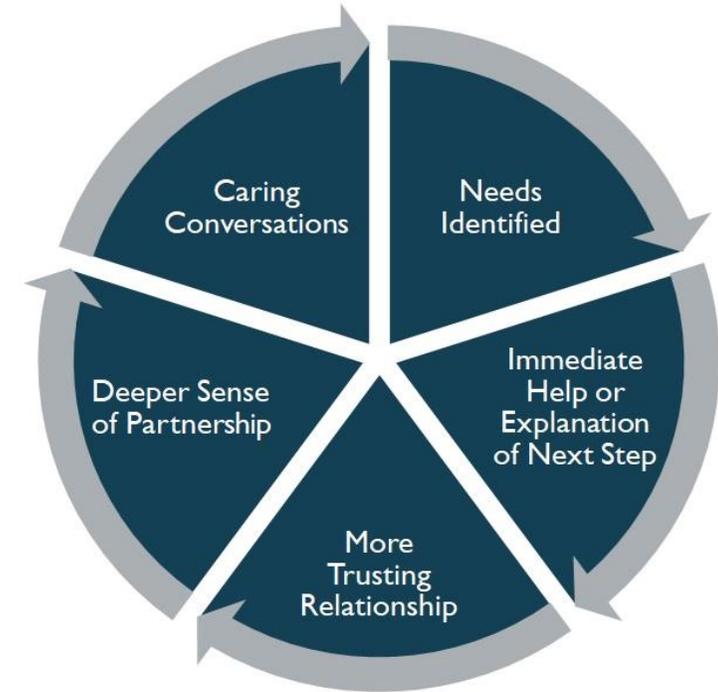


**Type in chat:**

- What might cause the cycle to break down?

- What can school teams do to keep it going?

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# Mobilize the Community:
# Engage Partners

# School Self-Assessment
*Poll: Sample Question #2*

**Community partners and public agencies are partners in providing support to students and families in my school.**

❏ Strongly in Place

❏ Measurable Progress

❏ Needs Improvement

❏ Urgent Gap

School Team Self-Assessment tool:    https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/self-assessment/

# Community Schools Strategy



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oc64K3obVqE

To learn more about community schools, contact the Coalition of Community Schools
Or find a local Communities In Schools affiliate

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# Partners for Change

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. Tap into existing initiatives and coalitions to engage potential partners.

- Businesses
- Community Schools Initiatives
- Family Support Organizations
- Early Childhood Providers
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Family Resource Centers
- Health / Mental Health Providers
- Housing Agencies
- Hunger Relief Organizations
- Institutes of Higher Education
- Local / Tribal Governments

- 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)
- Youth Services Bureaus

# Ways to Identify External Partners and Resources

✓ United Way 211

✓ Online Search – e.g. Findhelp.org

✓ CT Educational, Safety, Mental Health and Food Insecurity Resources

✓ Any other examples? *(type in chat)*

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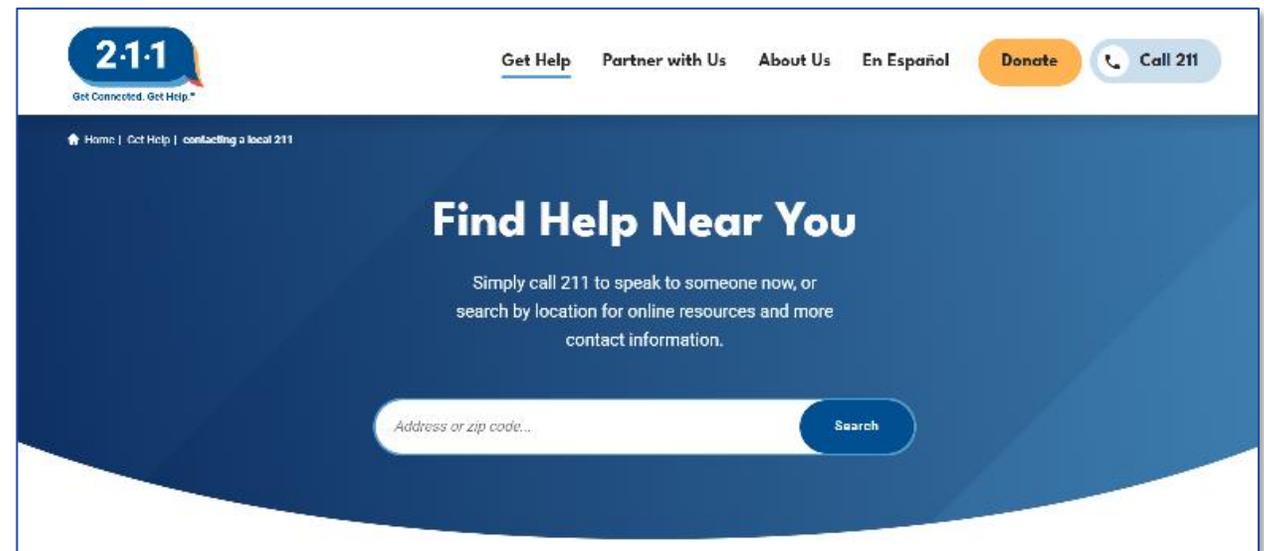
# Align Partners and Interventions to Reasons for Absences

| Reason for Absence | Possible Interventions | Potential Partner |
|---|---|---|
| Anxiety | • Enlist trusted messengers to talk with families about health and safety<br>• Meet with school counselor<br>• Offer small groups to teach calming skills | Local pediatricians<br>Promotoras *(community health workers)*<br>NAMI – online courses |
| Disengaged | • Assign a peer group mentor<br>• Create an individualized learning plan<br>• Explore afterschool options (art, music, STEM, etc.)<br>• Offer alternatives for credit recovery | MENTOR<br>Parks & Rec program<br>Boys & Girls Club |
| Family/Work Responsibilities | • Identify alternate caregivers for elderly or for children<br>• Provide a modified schedule<br>• Negotiate work schedules with local employers | Adult Day Care<br>Child Care Referral Networks |
| Transportation Barriers | • Walking School Bus<br>• Free municipal bus passes<br>• Carpools | Parents<br>AmeriCorps program   City government |

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❖ Use this worksheet to help keep track of your partners

❖ Be sure to update the list on a regular basis

https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/List-of-Partners-2.16-22.docx

## Partners

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School _____     District _____

**Primary School / District Contact**

Name _____     Title/Position: _____

Email: _____     Phone _____

| Name of Partner | Contact Info. (name, email, phone) | What is being provided? | Who is being served? | Time Period of Partnership | Who established this partnership? (name, email, phone) | Last updated on (mm/dd/yy)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EXAMPLE: Springfield County Food Bank | name, email, phone# | food | all students | SY 2021-2022 | name, email, phone# | 8/1/21 |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

*Update the information for each partner at least annually.

# Team Function #5:
*Determine if you are making a difference*

## Measuring Progress

**Answer these four key questions:**

1. How much did we do? *(quantity)*

2. How well did we do it? *(quality)*

3. What difference did we make for the students who received support?

4. What was the impact on the school as a whole?

Assess the Current System

Analyze Causes

Revise and Refine

Analyze Results

Measure Outcomes

Choose an Attendance Improvement Strategy

Implement the Attendance Strategy

Act · Plan · Do · Study

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# PDSA Example: Lunch Buddies
## *Goal: Improve attendance for disconnected students*

| Plan → Do → Study → Act (PDSA) Plan | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Testers:** Counselors | **Test Title:** Lunch Buddies | **Cycle #:** 1 |

| | |
|---|---|
| **What change idea is being tested?**<br>Lunch Buddies is the change idea. Counselors will invite students who seem disconnected to eat lunch and meet with peers in small groups every Friday. | **Date of test:** *February 25, 2022*<br>*(After the first attempt, review the data, discuss and make modifications to increase outcomes for the next week. Use a new form every week to record results.)* |
| **What is the overall goal of this test?**<br>*Improve attendance for students who seem to be disconnected and who have missed between 10-19% of the school year. Students who feel more connected to their peers will have better attendance. Selected students will have fewer total absences on the day of the test than on the previous Friday as a result of feeling more connected to peers.* | **Driver:**<br>*Positive Peer Relationships* |

**Learning Questions: What do you hope to learn from this test?**

Q1 - Are counselors willing to support this intervention?
Q2 - Which students will show up?
Q3 - Does attendance improve on Fridays?
Q4 - Are there any spillover effects, i.e. does attendance improve the other days of the week?

# PDSA Example:  Lunch Buddies
*Goal:  Improve attendance for disconnected students*

## Plan → Do → Study → Act (PDSA) Plan

| Plan | | | Do | Study |
|------|------|------|-----|-------|
| **Details:**<br>What are the steps in the test? Who will implement it? | **Predictions:**<br>Make a prediction for each question. Not optional. | **Data you will collect** | **Briefly describe:**<br>what happened during the test, surprises, difficulty getting data, obstacles, successes, etc. | **What were the results?**<br>Comment on your predictions in the rows below. Were they correct? Record any data summaries as well. |
| 1. Recruit counselors<br><br>2. Select outdoor or well-ventilated location where groups can sit in a circle<br><br>3. Agree on conversation starters<br><br>4. Invite all students<br><br>5. Special outreach to students who are chronically absent<br><br>6. Note which students attended after each session | Q1 - Prediction - All counselors are willing to help | Attendance of counselors | We had four counselors and 24 students. The students were split into groups of six. There was a miscommunication and the special outreach to chronically absent students did not happen. | All but one of the counselors showed up. She was out sick. |
| | Q2 - Prediction - Students who have satisfactory attendance and at-risk attendance will show up. Some students who are chronically absent will show up. | List of students who participate each Friday sorted into attendance categories. | | Of the students who were invited, half showed up. Only about a quarter of the chronically absent students made it |
| | Q3 - Does attendance improve on Fridays? | Compare the total number of absences for targeted students on this Friday with the total number of absences for targeted students on previous Friday. | | Yes, several of the chronically absent students who attended the lunch had been absent the previous Friday. |
| | Q4 - Are there any spillover effects? | Compare the total number of absences on the following Monday with previous Mondays. | | The Monday absences were the same as the previous week. |

# PDSA Example: Lunch Buddies
## *Goal: Improve attendance for disconnected students*

| Plan → Do → Study → Act (PDSA) Plan |
|---|

| **Act:** *Describe modifications and/or decisions for the next PDSA cycle. What will you do next?* | |
|---|---|
| __X_ **Adapt** *(tweak the process and try again)*<br><br>____ **Adopt** *(make this my standard process)*<br><br>__X_ **Expand** *(try this for a longer period of time)*<br><br>____ **Abandon** *(go to a new change idea)* | • Ask our community school coordinator to be the backup in case anyone is out<br>• Ask students who attended to invite one friend to join next time.<br>• We will text every student with a reminder to attend<br>• Expand and repeat for the next two weeks. |

- Download the example: https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/PDSA-Plan-Do-Study-Act-worksheet-EXAMPLE-v2.pdf

- Download the blank worksheet: https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/PDSA-Plan-Do-Study-Act-worksheet-BLANK-v1.pdf

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# Questions from the Audience

**Review:**
*Learning Goals for Session 3*

## Participants will:

- Learn strategies for mobilizing school staff and community agencies to partner with families to improve attendance and engagement.

- Find out about how to determine if your efforts are making a difference.

**Evaluation Survey**

Please let us know how we can improve:

https://app.upmetrics.com/data_collector/ckf2oltbqlt8k0759tfdbfybj

**Thank you!**

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# About Us

**Attendance Works** advances student success and closes equity gaps by reducing chronic absence.  Operating at the local, state, and national level, Attendance Works:

- ✓  Advances better **policy**
- ✓  Nurtures proven and promising **practice**
- ✓  Promotes meaningful and effective **communication**
- ✓  Catalyzes needed **research**

Since our launch in 2010, we have become the nation's "go-to" resource for improving student attendance.  To learn more, visit our website:  www.attendanceworks.org

Attendance **Works** ©
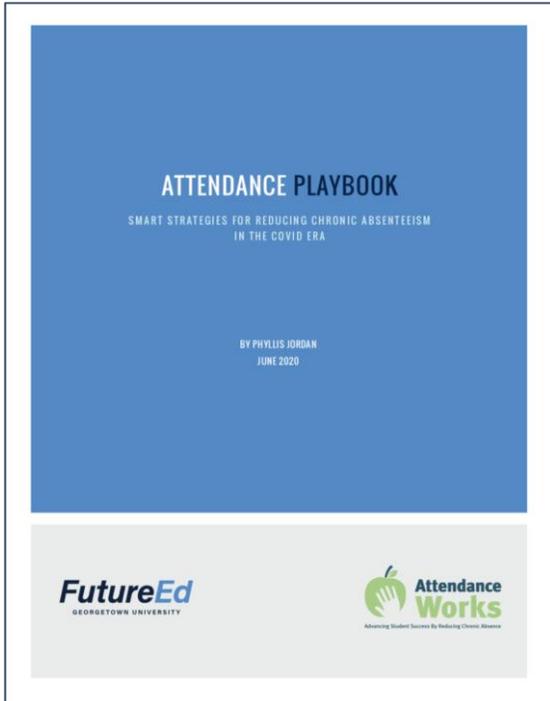
## Tips for Finding and Re-Engaging Students

❑ Update contact information multiple times a year

❑ Use multiple modes of outreach (text, US mail, calls)

❑ Try various media (social, radio, multiple languages, trusted messengers)

❑ Leverage personal and social networks

❑ School marquees and sign boards

❑ Engage public and private partners

❑ Relational Home visits

**Strategies for Connecting with Students & Families:**
https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Strategies-for-Connecting-with-Students-and-Families-rev-8-27-20.pdf

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# Interventions that can be found in the Attendance Playbook

ATTENDANCE PLAYBOOK

SMART STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM
IN THE COVID ERA

BY PHYLLIS JORDAN
JUNE 2020

FutureEd
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Attendance Works
Advancing Student Success By Reducing Chronic Absence

**TIER I Interventions**
- Nudging Parents and Students
- Home Visits
- Positive Messaging
- Incentives
- Healthy School Buildings
- School-based Health Services
- Telehealth
- School Buses and Public Transit
- A Safer Walk to School
- Breakfast for All
- Laundry at School
- Relevant—and Culturally Relevant—Curriculum
- Threshold Greetings
- Rethinking Recess
- Restorative Discipline Practices

**TIER II Interventions**
- Early Warning Systems
- Mentors
- Youth Engagement
- Addressing Asthma
- Targeted Transportation
- Students with Disabilities
- School Refusal
- Immigration Enforcement

**TIER III Interventions**
- Truancy Courts
- Interagency Case Management
- Housing Challenges

Attendance Playbook: https://www.future-ed.org/attendance-playbook/

Implementation Guide: https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/attendance-playbook/

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GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

# How to Use the Attendance Playbook

**The Guide to the Attendance Playbook offers practical tips for:**

- ➢ Forming a team

- ➢ Using attendance data to determine the number of strategies

- ➢ Analyzing why students are absent and selecting strategies that address those reasons

- ➢ Realistically assessing your team's capacity to implement each strategy

- ➢ Selecting strategies that are likely to have the greatest impact for the lowest effort

- ➢ Making an implementation plan

- ➢ Assessing how well the strategies worked

https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/attendance-playbook/