

INTERAGENCY COUNCIL FOR ENDING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

December 15, 2021
Meeting Minutes
(DRAFT)



OPENING REMARKS & ROLL CALL

The Honorable Susan Bysiewicz, Lieutenant Governor
State of Connecticut

Opening Remarks

Lieutenant Governor Bysiewicz opens the meeting with remarks:

- Acknowledges last quarterly meeting of the calendar year
- Thanks each of the members for their contributions to the review of the Achievement Gap Task Force Master Plan.
- Notes that this meeting will cover the three remaining Results Statements which will complete the initial comprehensive review of the report.
- Thanks State Department of Education for their leadership and administrative support

Member Agencies

Lt. Governor asks Kari Sullivan Custer, State Department of Education (SDE) to conduct the roll call.

- Office of the Lieutenant Governor:
The Honorable Susan Bysiewicz, Lieutenant Governor, Chair; and Cherie Phoenix-Sharpe, General Counsel
- Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU): Dr. Stephen Hegedus, Dean of Education, Southern Connecticut State University
- Department of Administrative Services (DAS): (Not present)
- Department of Children and Families (DCF): Matt Folan, Superintendent, Unified School District #2
- Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD): (Not present)
- Department of Housing (DOH): (Not present)
- Department of Public Health (DPH): Mario Garcia, Public Health Improvement Manager
- Department of Social Services (DSS): (Not present)
- Judicial Branch: Patricia Nunez, Program Manager
- Office of Early Childhood (OEC): (Not present)
- Office of Policy and Management (OPM): Holly Williams, Director, Fiscal and Program Policy Section
- State Department of Education (SDE): Charlene Russell-Tucker, Commissioner-Designate; John Frassinelli, Division Director; Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer; Dr. Melissa Hickey, Reading Literacy Director, Megan Alubicki Flick, Education Consultant; Kari Sullivan-Custer, Education Consultant; and Matthew Falconer, Education Consultant

Agenda

Lt. Governor Bysiewicz reviews the agenda noting that topic lead will introduce Results Statements and Policy Recommendations and that other agencies with comments should participate as applicable. Lt. Governor asks if there are any questions about the agenda.

- I. **Opening Remarks & Roll Call**
The Honorable Susan Bysiewicz
Lieutenant Governor, State of Connecticut
- II. **Acceptance of Minutes and Follow-up from Last Meeting Discussion**
- III. **Guest Speaker: Hedy Chang, Attendance Works**
- IV. **Agencies' Response to Achievement Gap Task Force (AGTF) Master Plan**
 - Inside the Schoolhouse
 - Chronic Absence
 - Reading
 - English Language Learners
- V. **Next Steps**
- VI. **Closing/Meeting Adjourned**

Acceptance of Minutes and Follow Up from Last Meeting

Topic	Notes
September 22, 2021 Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lt. Governor notes the following topics covered during the September meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of Time in Closing the Achievement Gap Narrow the High-End Opportunity Gap – Find the Missing Advanced Placement Students Students in State Care Lt. Governor notes that Meeting Minutes were circulated in draft to Council for review and no edits were received Lt. Governor notes that if anyone has corrections at this time to let her know and, seeing none, asks if there are objections to accepting minutes as final. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No objections; minutes accepted as final.
Follow-up items from September 22 nd Council Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lt. Governor notes higher education programs consistent with work of SDE to facilitate student growth Lt. Governor notes the Juvenile Justice Policy & Oversight Committee’s (JJPOC) implementation plan for students in congregate care settings and C. Phoenix-Sharpe notes that it has been circulated to Council members. Dr. Hegedus remarks that he just sent a report to K. Sullivan-Custer and C. Phoenix-Sharpe with the number of higher education programs approved around education, mental health and counseling (there are five) and that he will get back to C. Phoenix-Sharpe regarding the information related to the use of time.

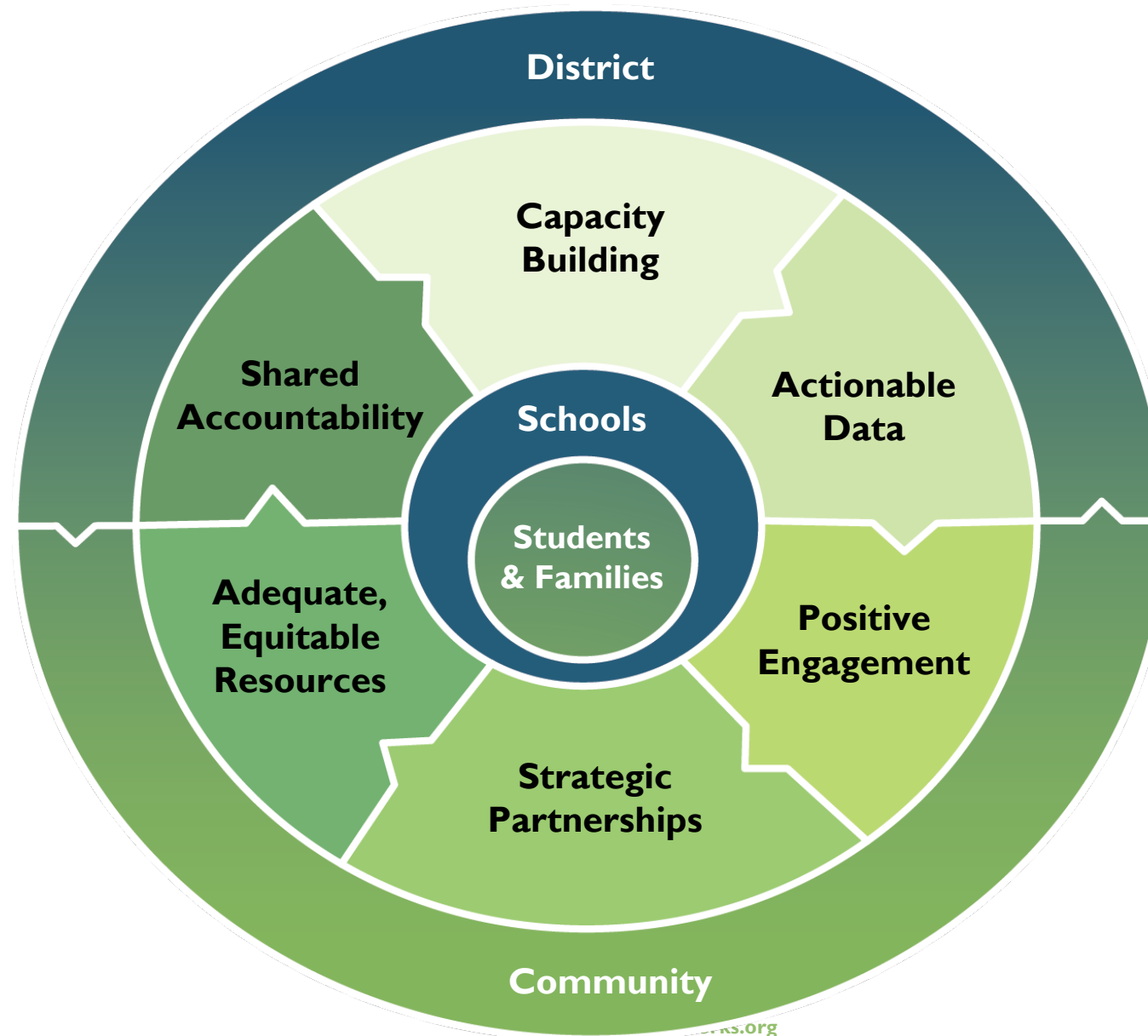
Lt. Governor introduces Commissioner Russell-Tucker who introduces guest speaker, Hedy Chang, Executive Director of Attendance Works.



Commissioner Russell-Tucker introduces Hedy Chang, Executive Director of Attendance Works, as the meeting's guest speaker on the topic of chronic absence.

The Alarming Increase in Chronic Absence: Implications for Action

Key Ingredients of Systemic Change to Reducing Absenteeism



CSDE's Exemplary Responses to Covid-19

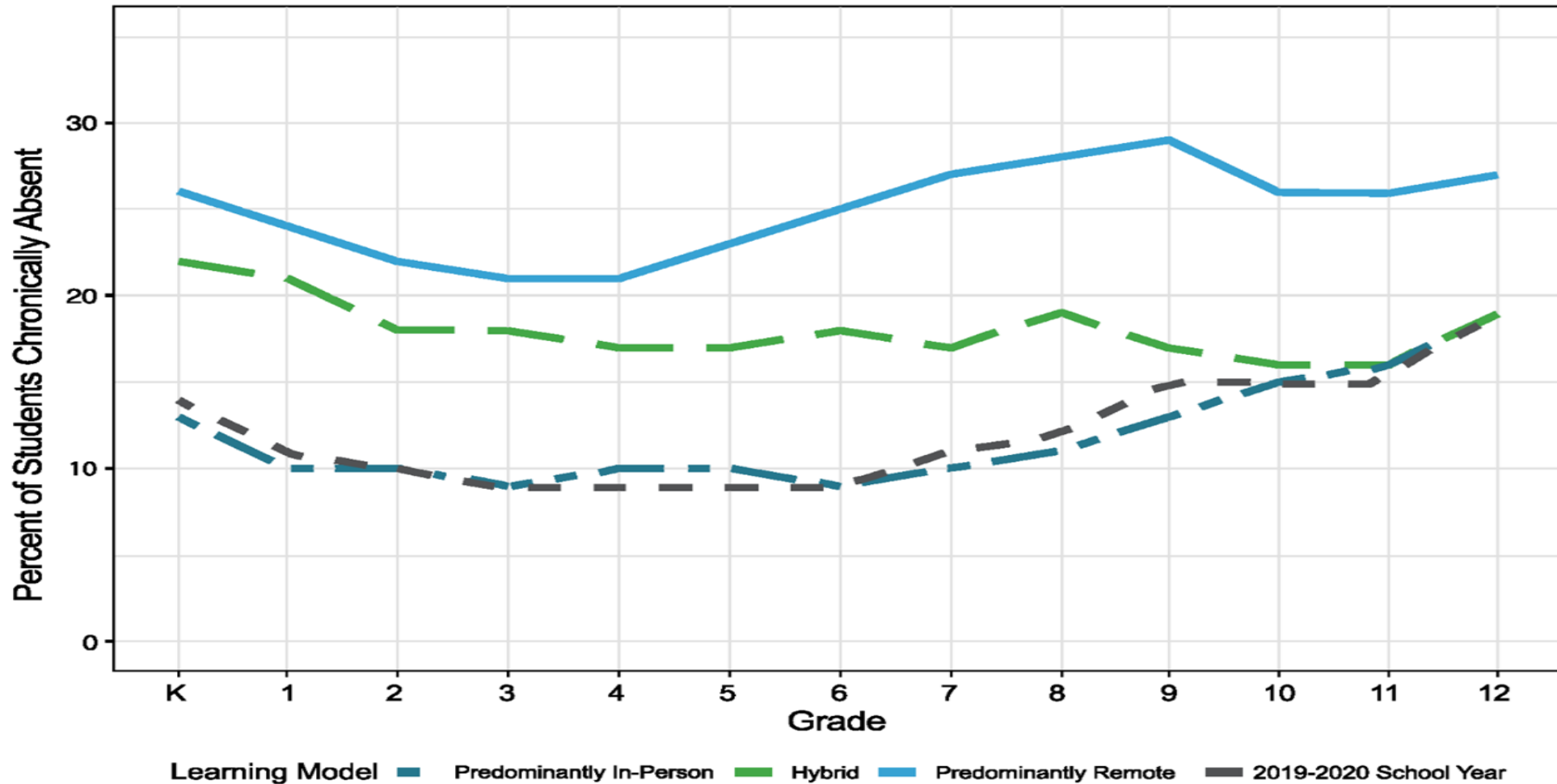
- ✓ Maintained a standard definition of attendance (i.e., show up to school for half of a day)
- ✓ Published state [guidance](#) on hybrid and remote learning which included the state's definition of attendance.
- ✓ Collected attendance data monthly (vs annually) with data for in-person and remote learning.
- ✓ Released [monthly data reports](#) with comparisons to prior year data.
- ✓ Reviewed district data submissions regularly and supported submission of corrected data.
- ✓ Created recurring virtual learning communities.
- ✓ Established state team to review the data, research best practices and coordinate the work across departments.

Governor's Cutting Edge Response: Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP) Home Visiting Program

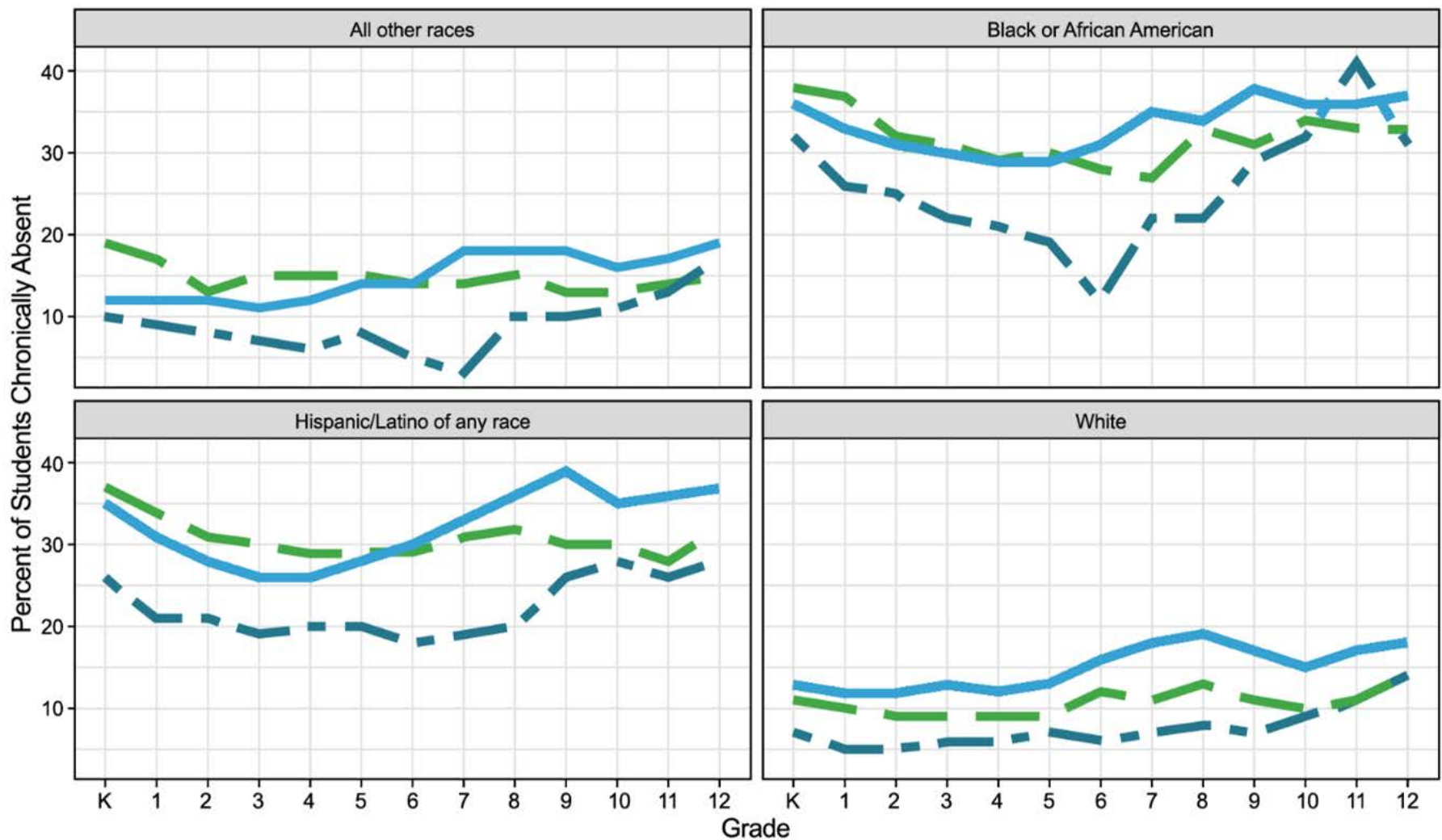
- **Contracted partnership:** between CSDE and the RESC Alliance to support 15 districts.
- **Funding:** Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund - \$10 million through OPM.
- **Individual RESCs work with LEAP districts** in their region to conduct a self-assessment, engage community providers, agree upon a plan to engage families through positive, relational home or community visits to: 1) connect to summer programs and 2) provide supports needed to ensure a successful re-entry to school in the fall, and 3) ensure good attendance through the fall.
- **Local district LEAP plans build on home visiting** already happening in the district and expand to more challenged populations (e.g., homeless, students with disabilities, grade level.)
- **Components of LEAP:** 1) home visitor training and supports; 2) attendance awareness campaign; 3) contracted support from Attendance Works; 4) performance management system and 5) evaluation.
- **Timing:** Program established in Spring with summer launch to support outreach and engagement of students and families prior to the school year. It established trust before reopening with the surge in the Delta variant.

Data from Connecticut reveals the size and scope of the challenge last year

Chronic absence by learning mode across grades in Connecticut for SY 2020-21



Data shows significantly different patterns by racial group



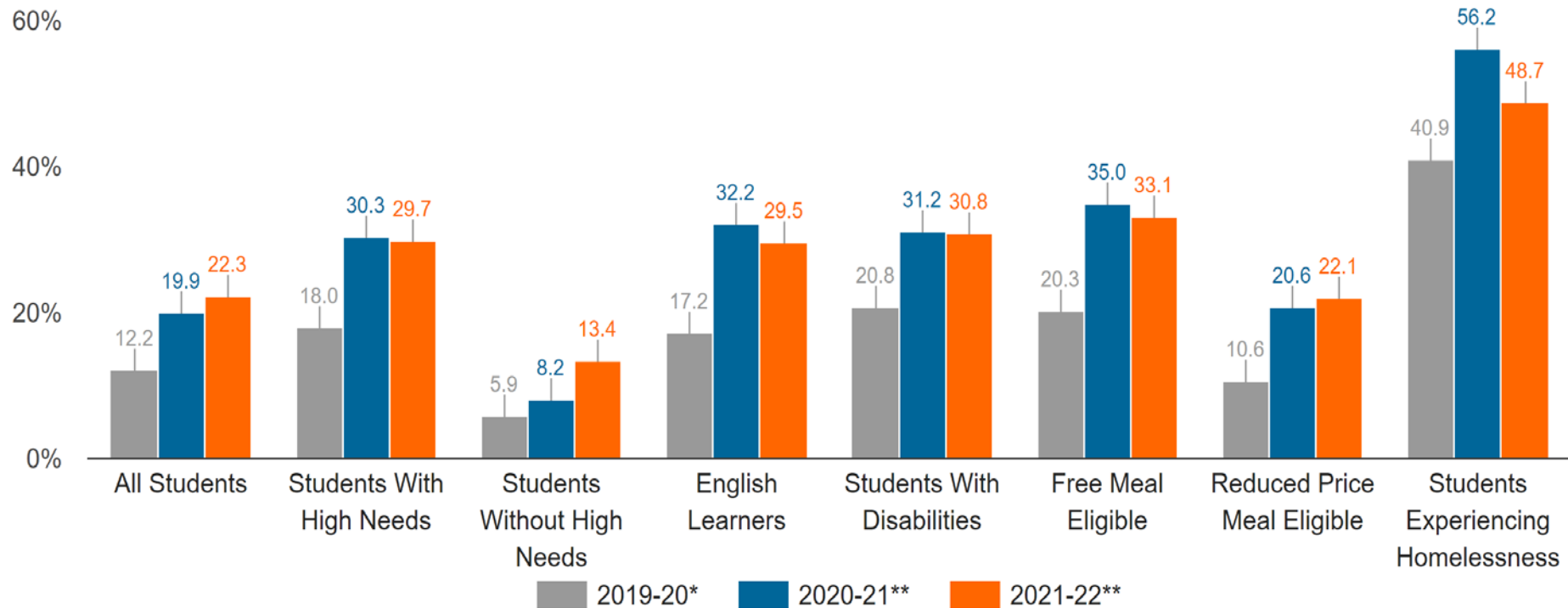
Learning Model — Predominantly In-Person — Hybrid — Predominantly Remote

Attendance is Even More Challenging in Fall 2021-22

- ✓ **The surge in Covid-19 cases is increasing the number of students who are absent.**
- ✓ **Returning to in-person school is difficult after so many months of remote learning.**
- ✓ **Many older students are struggling to balance school with family and work responsibilities especially in communities hard hit by the pandemic.**
- ✓ **Chronic absence in the first months of school is especially problematic for learning, relationships and routines.**

October 2021 Data from Connecticut

Percentage of Students Chronically Absent by Student Group (YTD as of October 2021 compared to 2020-2021 and 2019-20)



*Calculations are based only on in-person school days until mid-March 2020. **Calculations include both in-person and remote days.

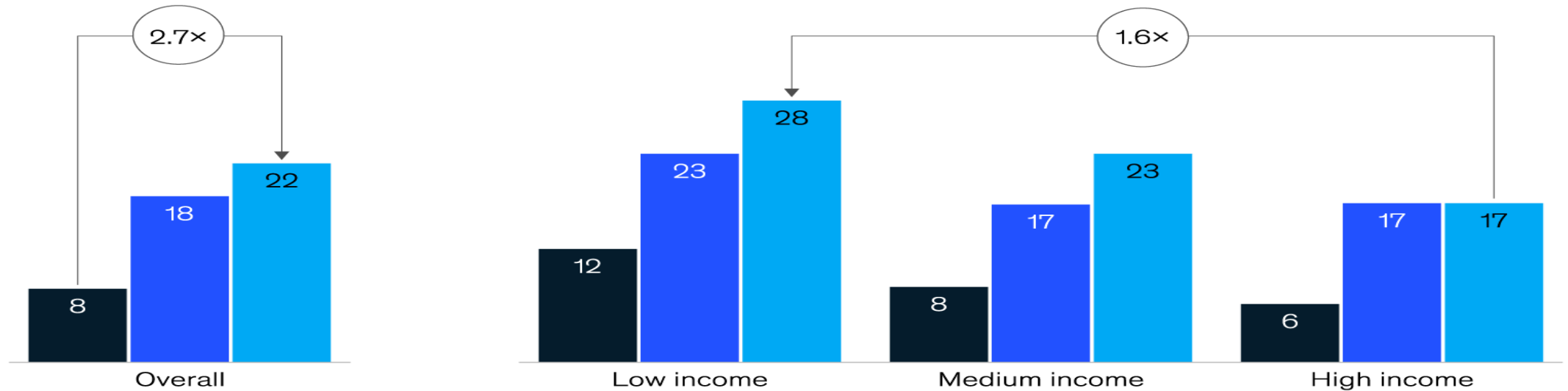
Map of Attendance Rates for Students with High Needs, Year-to-Date (YTD) 2021-22

What do we know about national trends?

Parent reports of chronic absenteeism have increased by a factor of 2.7 since before the pandemic.

% of parents with children in grades K-12 indicating their child was chronically absent

- Prepandemic (% of parents reporting their student used to miss 15+ days in a full year)
 - Spring 2021 (% of parents reporting their student missed 15+ days in 2020–21 school year)
 - Fall 2021 (% of parents reporting their student has missed 4+ days in 2021–22 school year so far)
- (x) Difference

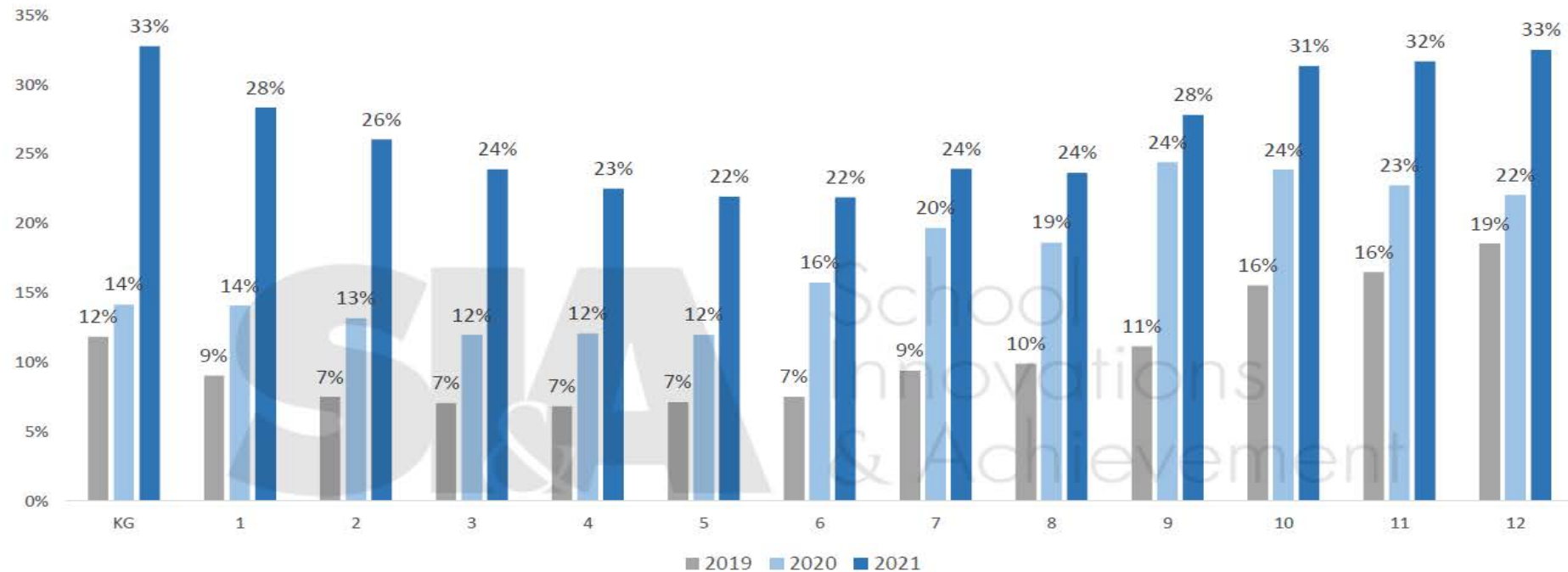


Source: McKinsey Parent Survey, June 2021 (n = 16,370) and November 2021 (n = 14,498)

McKinsey
& Company

Early SY 21-22 data from subset of districts in California shows dramatic rise

Chronic Rate Comparison By Grade



© 2020 School Innovations & Achievement. All rights reserved. Proprietary and confidential information not for copy or distribution.

Source: School Innovations and Achievement (SI&A) California Chronic Absenteeism Analysis

<https://www.sia-us.com/resources>



Solutions Require Understanding What Factors Contribute to Chronic Absence

Barriers

- Chronic and acute illness
- Family responsibilities or home situation
- Trauma
- Poor transportation
- Housing and food insecurity
- Inequitable access to needed services
- System involvement
- Etc. and many more!

Aversion

- Struggling academically and/or behaviorally
- Unwelcoming school climate
- Social and peer challenges
- Biased disciplinary and suspension practices
- Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations
- Parents had negative educational experiences

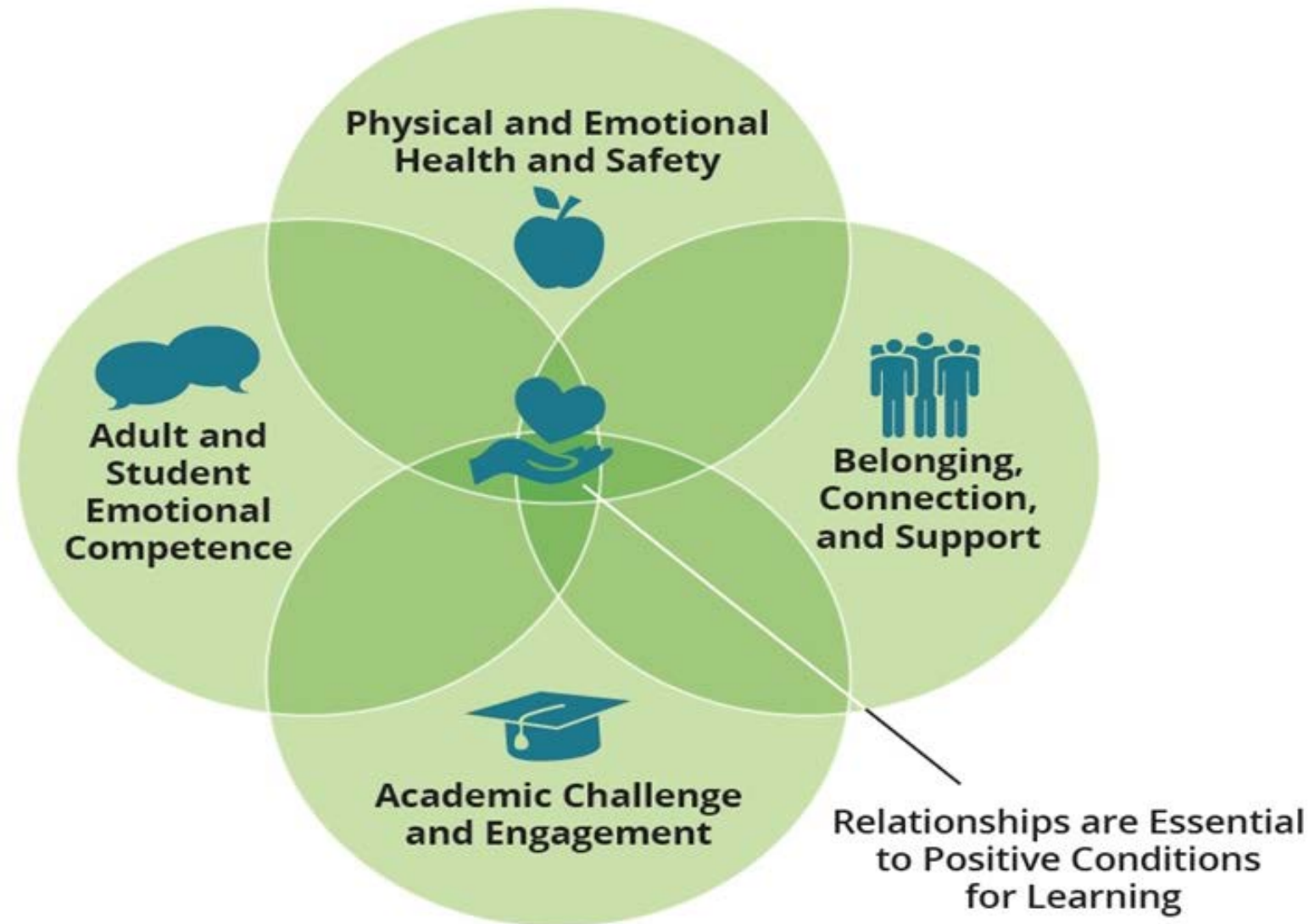
Disengagement

- Lack of challenging, culturally responsive instruction
- Bored
- No meaningful relationships to adults in the school
- Lack of enrichment opportunities
- Lack of academic and behavioral support
- Failure to earn credits

Misconceptions

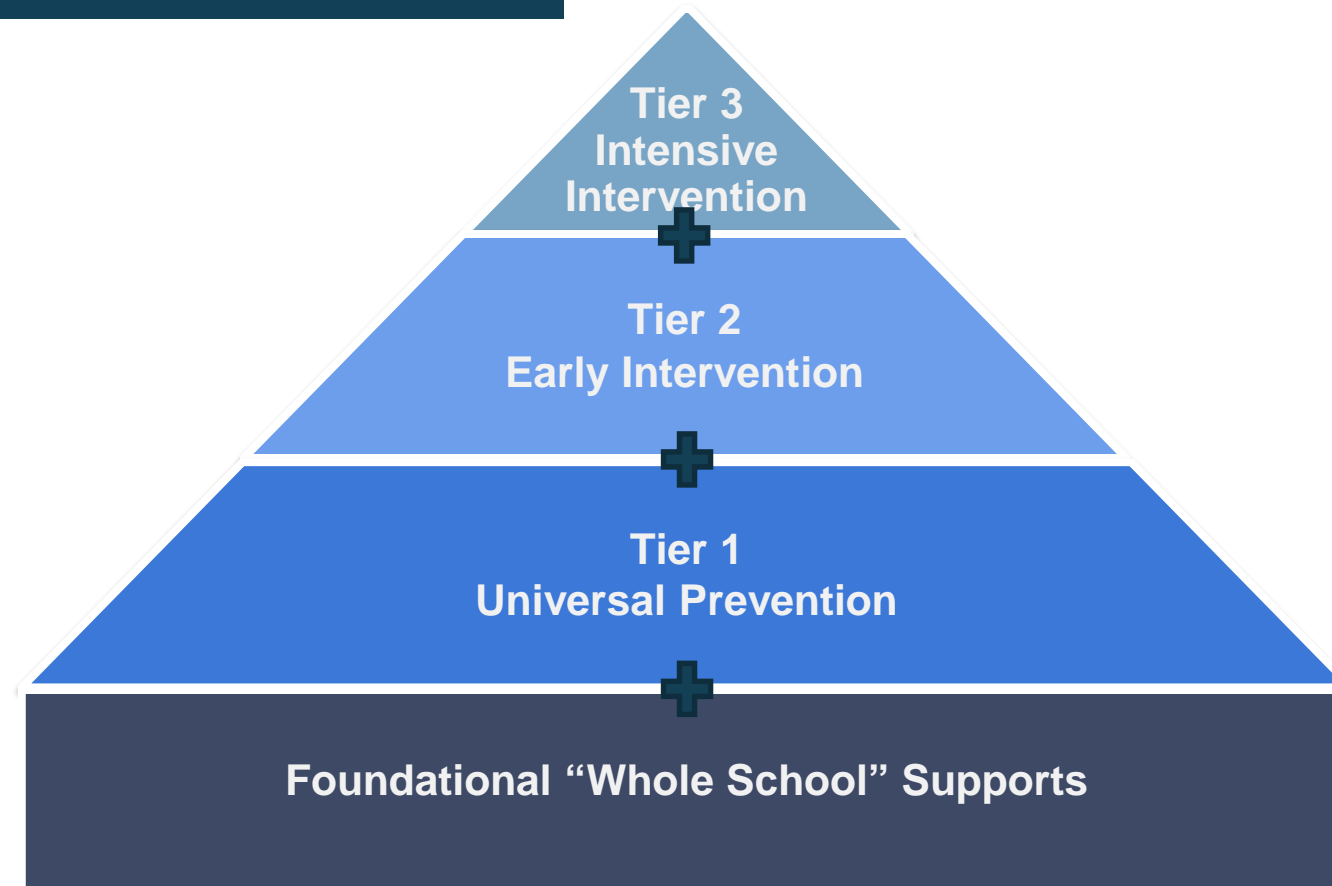
- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Missing 2 days per month doesn't affect learning
- Sporadic absences aren't a problem
- Attendance only matters in the older grades
- Suspensions don't count as absence

Absenteeism is a Sign that Positive Conditions for Learning are Missing, Whether Classes are In Person, Distance or Blended





When Tackling Absenteeism, Take a Multi-Tiered Approach Beginning with Prevention





Invest in Foundational Supports: Building Blocks of Schools that Promote Engagement

Many of these building blocks have been eroded or weakened during the pandemic.

Healthy learning environments	Enrichment activities and clubs	Positive relationships	Active family and student engagement
Access to tech equipment and connectivity	Challenging and Engaging Curriculum	Traditions and celebrations	Support for families to facilitate learning at home
Welcoming, safe school climate	Advisories or Morning Meetings to Build Community	Learning Supports	Access to Food and Other Basic Needs

Foundational “Whole School” Supports

School connectedness is more essential than ever

When students are connected to school, they do better in school, have better mental and physical health, recover better from trauma, and engage in fewer risky behaviors

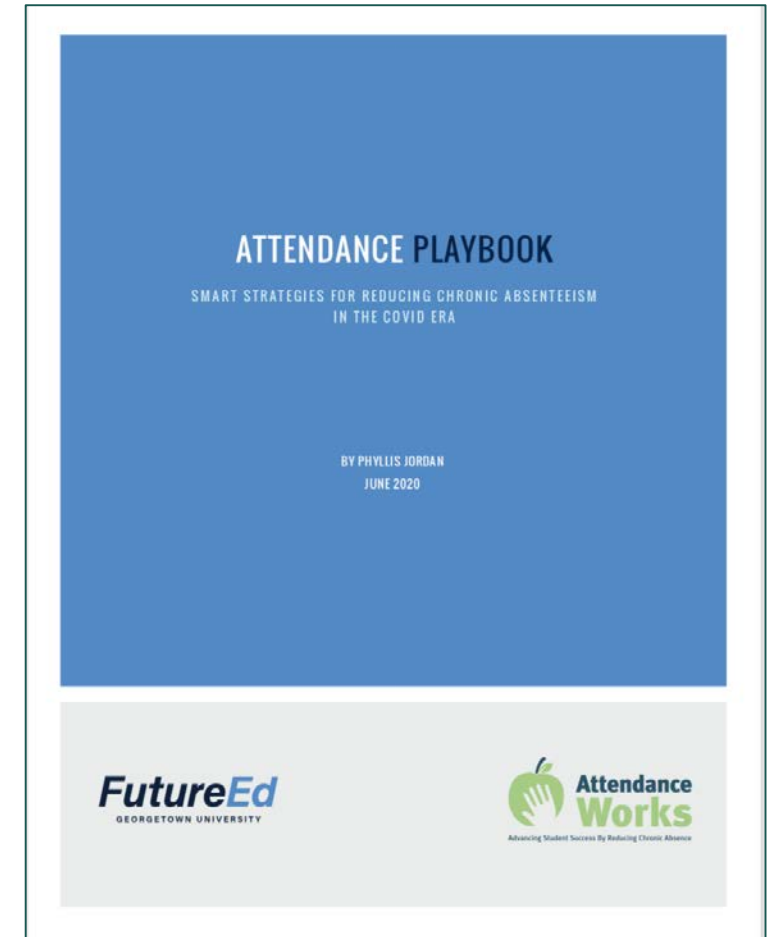
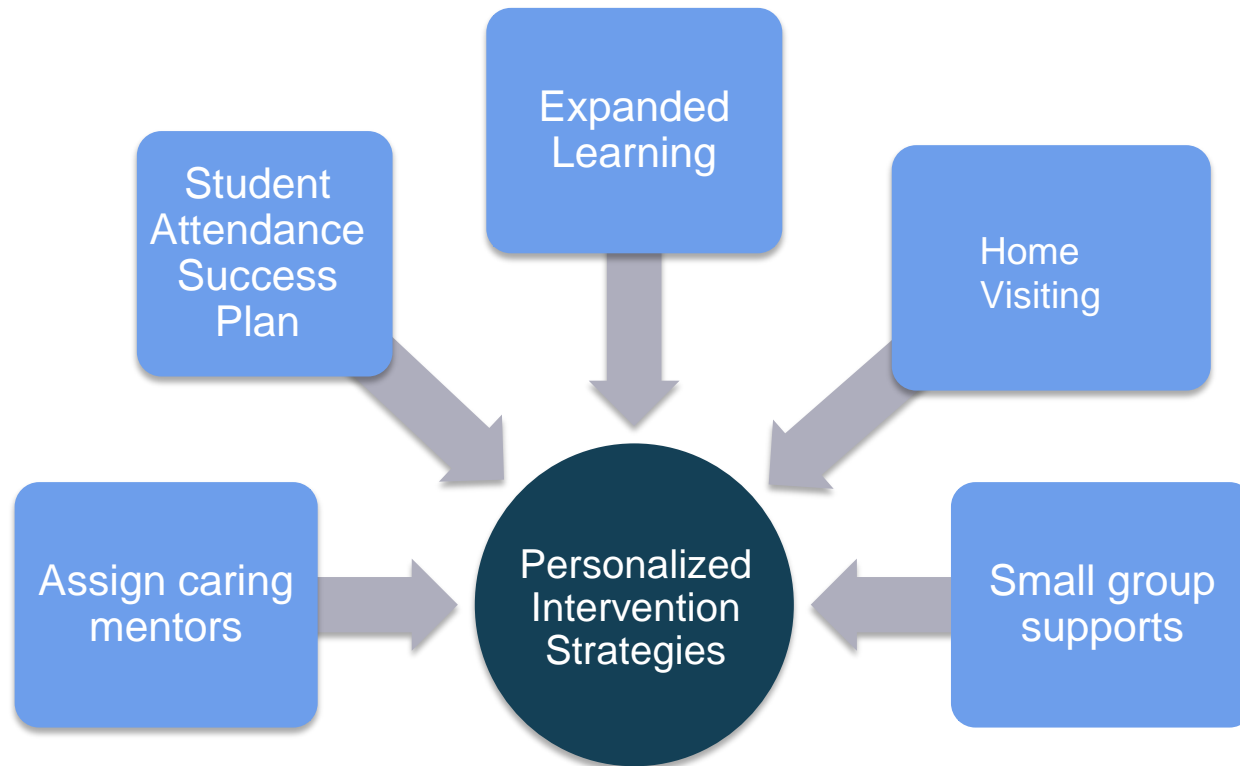
Students are connected to school when they:

- believe there is an adult(s) in school who knows and cares about them as person,
- when they have a supportive peer group,
- are engaged in pro-social activities, and
- feel welcome in school for who they are (sense of belonging)

(SOURCE: Robert Balfanz, Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University)



Expand Evidence-Based Tier 2 Strategies



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

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



Scale, Adapt and Tailor Tier 2 Supports

Scale: *(Potential Approaches)*

- ✓ More people in schools and through community partnerships
- ✓ Add virtual options
- ✓ Group students

Adapt:

- ✓ Identify and address common barriers e.g. lack of access to health care, poor transportation, housing instability, etc. for groups of students with disproportionately high levels of chronic absence.

Support:

- ✓ Allocate more funding
- ✓ Add training



Mobilize the School Community to Address Attendance

Involve the Whole School Staff

Engage External Partners

Organize Work into Manageable Phases



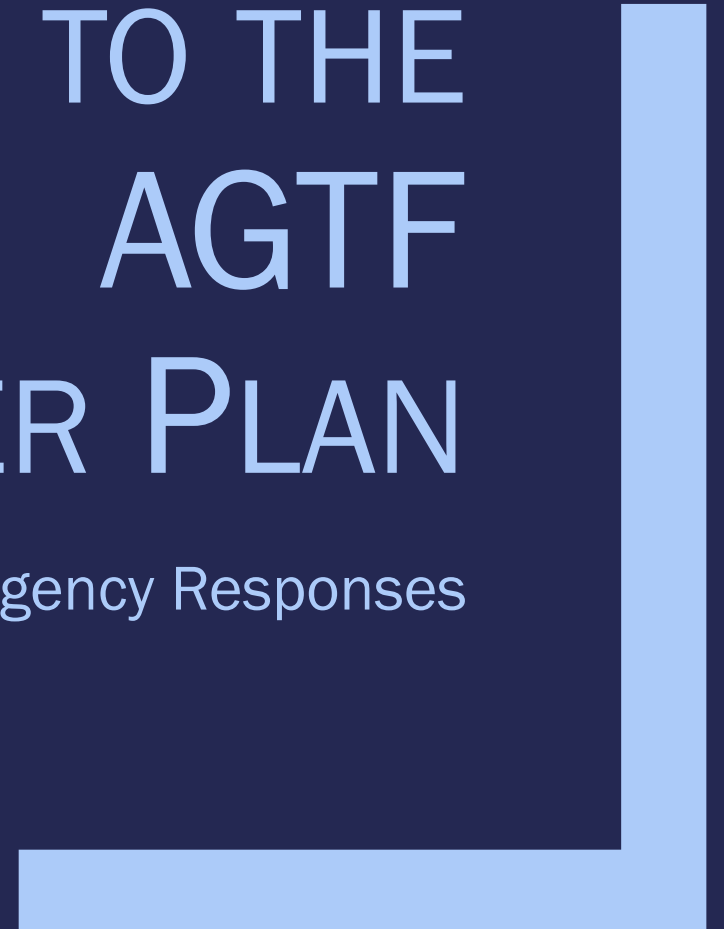
Remarks in response to Guest Presentation

Commissioner Russell-Tucker thanks Ms. Chang and invites the Lt. Governor to make remarks.

Remarks	Remarks continued
<p>Lt. Governor responds to presentation slide #14 (slide #15 of minutes) after Ms. Chang noted that Connecticut's attendance data seems to hold steady among its higher needs' kids and that, while it is early, she finds this to be promising and suggests that the administration's targeting of resources may be having some benefits in Connecticut.</p> <p>Lt. Governor remarks that Connecticut's leadership, including former Commissioner and current U.S. Secretary of Education Dr. Miguel Cardona, focus has been on keeping kids in school and engaged and having a focus on equity. She highlights reasons that kids in socially vulnerable communities and communities of color were participating at the rates they were participating at because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governor got funding from the Dalio Foundation to make sure the kids in needy school districts got laptops to use at home.• Internet access was provided where there were broadband gaps.• Constant communication with mayors, first selectmen, boards of education, and school superintendents to make sure that kids were engaged, including making sure that superintendent had people knocking on doors of families whose kids weren't participating.• The Governor and leadership at SDE made sure that kids had what they needed and families were supported so that kids could be learning. <p>Lt. Governor concludes her remarks noting that while it's not perfect it's nice to know that what we were doing was targeted and we were doing the right thing and leading our country in keeping our kids in school.</p>	<p>Ms. Chang emphasizes that these investments and the strategic thinking about which school districts and which kids to target speaks volumes.</p> <p>Lt. Governor adds that Connecticut was also very intentional about targeting federal dollars for summer enrichment and catch-up in education programs particularly for the neediest school districts - kids were going to school through the summer, very early in the morning to dinner time, have meals, academic, enrichment. She further notes that most of our museums and cultural attractions were open for free so CT kids could go with adults.</p> <p>After the presentation, Lt. Governor thanks Ms. Chang and CSDE noting that in one of the first Council meetings, pre-COVID, Commissioner Russell-Tucker shared information on our progress in addressing chronic absenteeism and that she appreciated the Commissioner circling back on the subject today.</p> <p>Lt. Governor introduces Commissioner Russell-Tucker, noting that in addition to Chronic Absenteeism the Commissioner will also cover the subjects of Reading and English Language Learners</p> <p>Commissioner Russell-Tucker expresses gratitude to Ms. Chang and shares that we have been working with her for over a decade, which gave us the foundation from which to build and further notes an article written with Kari Sullivan and Hedy Chang (Chronic Early Absence: What States Can Do, (2016)) where we talked about Connecticut's six high impact strategies to improve attendance. She further notes that one of the strategies was <i>Cultivate Champions to Build a State-level Infrastructure</i> and that the article mentions this Council and how it works to align efforts across education, early education, health, housing, child welfare, juvenile justice, social services and other state agencies.</p>

AGENCIES' RESPONSE TO THE AGTF MASTER PLAN

Review of Agency Responses



Inside the Schoolhouse

Chronic Absence

Results Statement –All students will attend school at least 90% of the school year.
 Commissioner Russell-Tucker introduces Results Statement and begins discussion.

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Public awareness: Build public awareness of chronic absence and why it matters across schools and communities.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Targeted Back-to-School and Attendance Campaigns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Campaigns aimed at families ● Continued use of data to geographically target promotions ● Multilingual ● Social media, radio, and TV ● BackToSchoolCT.org features resources for families on the safe return to in-person learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commissioner Russel-Tucker introduces Kari Sullivan and John Frassinelli to help with the review of the policy statements. ● Kari Sullivan reviews the agency notes on the public awareness campaign and added that a multitude of peer networking and learning opportunities are offered to increase awareness and build capacity on addressing chronic absence.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Chronic Absence

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Attendance Tracking: Track individual student attendance and absences in state longitudinal student databases, ensuring that data are entered accurately and consistently.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next Generation Accountability System, Indicator #4 • EdSight • Early Indication Tool • Monthly Attendance Data Collection (COVID) • School Improvement Plans • 2021-22 PSIS Reference Guide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix F – Guidelines for Reporting Student Attendance in the Public School Information System (PSIS), page 50 • Appendix L – Reporting Information about Students who are Disengaged, page 59 • Truancy Referral System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Sullivan reviews the notes provided by the agency and adds that Connecticut tracks individual student attendance and absences in state longitudinal student databases and ensures that data are entered accurately and consistently. • She remarks that training and guidance is provided to ensure the quality of the data collected.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Chronic Absence

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Standard Definition: Adopt a standard definition of chronic absence (missing 10% of the school year) to be used statewide and by each school district. The definition should clarify how chronic absence is different from unexcused absences (truancy) and ensure the inclusion of absences due to suspensions, as well as absences that come when children switch schools and do not immediately start at a new school.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C.G.S. Sec. 10-198c, Chronic Absence, definitions and attendance review teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Act 15-225, An Act Concerning Chronic Absenteeism <p>“Chronically absent child” means a child who is enrolled in a school under the jurisdiction of a local or regional board of education and whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than ten per cent of the total number of days that such student has been enrolled at such school during such school year;</p> <p>(2) “Absence” means an excused absence, unexcused absence or disciplinary absence, as those terms are defined by the State Board of Education pursuant to section 10-198b;</p> <p>(3) “District chronic absenteeism rate” means the total number of chronically absent children under the jurisdiction of a local or regional board of education in the previous school year divided by the total number of children under the jurisdiction of such board for such school year; and</p> <p>(4) “School chronic absenteeism rate” means the total number of chronically absent children for a school in the previous school year divided by the total number of children enrolled in such school for such school year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the fall of 2020, maintained a standard definition during remote learning (i.e., showing up to school for half of a school day) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Sullivan reviews Public Act 15-225 and the definition of chronic absence. • She adds that Connecticut maintained the standard definition of “in attendance” for students in remote learning beginning in the Fall of 2020.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Chronic Absence

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Chronic Absence Reports: Regularly calculate and share chronic absence data statewide, providing information by district, school, grade and subgroup. Make the information publicly available through school and district report cards.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning in fall of 2020, began collecting attendance data monthly versus at the end of the year with data reported separately for in-person and remote learning. Chronic Absence Patterns and Prediction During COVID-19: Insights from Connecticut brief Next Generation Accountability System, Indicator #4 EdSight Profile and Performance Reports – annual reports developed in accordance with C.G.S.10-220 (c). Reports are available for each district and school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Sullivan Custer reviews the notes. Mr. Frassinelli underscores the importance of this work - that we started collecting this data during the beginning of the school year – CSDE collected real time data so that districts could take action to support students. CT was one of the first in the nation to do this – to collect and analyze student attendance and engagement data in real time.
<p>Reports to Families: Encourage districts to provide families with real-time data on their child’s attendance, as well as an alert if their child may be accruing too many absences.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting in the fall of 2020, released monthly data reports comparing current and prior year attendance and chronic absence Through professional development and peer networking opportunities, CSDE has engaged districts to notify and communicate parents of their child’s attendance records. Presenters, such as Dr. Todd Rogers, Harvard Kennedy School, and Hedy Chang of Attendance Works have engaged with CT schools on the best way to communicate with families regarding student attendance. Presentations have included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Webinar series for families Keynote presentations Reducing Chronic Absence in Connecticut's Schools: A Prevention and Intervention Guide for Schools and Districts Guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Sullivan shares that the CSDE has engaged with national leaders on messaging with families to support districts in the development of “nudge letters” and other strategies to communicate effectively with parents. Ms. Sullivan introduces the guidance document that CSDE developed in collaboration with Attendance Works. Commissioner Russell-Tucker adds that the Council was part of this work and made sure that the Prevention and Intervention Guide was prepared and ready for schools

Inside the Schoolhouse

Chronic Absence

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
School Improvement: Require school improvement plans to include chronic absence data, strategies that will be used to identify causes for such absence, build a culture of attendance, and fashion effective interventions for chronically absent students.	SDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requirement of funding applications including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alliance District applications and plans• Title I Applications• Commissioner's Network School Applications and plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms. Sullivan reviews that funding applications and school plans consider attendance and discipline data

Inside the Schoolhouse

Chronic Absence

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Capacity Building: Promote dissemination and learning to educators and parents about evidence-based and promising practices for reducing chronic absence including strategies that engage community organizations as partners in the work.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Since 2012, CSDE has provided multiple opportunities to promote and disseminate evidence-based and promising practices including: Alliance District and NetSTAT forums. ● Statewide conferences, (e.g., Attendance Symposiums (2), Performance Matters Forums) ● ESSA Evidence-Based Practice Guide on Climate and Culture includes various effective strategies that are research-based and effective including strategies in the areas of Systems, Instructional Practice, Professional Learning, and Extended Learning. ● 2020 launched Peer Learning Networks with SERC and Attendance Works <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Talk Tuesdays for Alliance and LEAP districts (bi-weekly peer-to-peer learning and networking opportunities) ● Attendance and Engagement Community of Practice (monthly) for district-level attendance leads ● Attendance and Alternative Education Programs CoP ● In the spring of 2020, Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP) was launched by Governor Lamont. LEAP is a home visiting program in 15 targeted districts to support families at risk from the pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ms. Sullivan reviews notes and highlights opportunities provided to support districts and schools,

Inside the Schoolhouse

Chronic Absence

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Interagency Resource Allocation and Coordination: Schools shouldn't have to solve chronic absence alone. State policymakers and advocates should encourage schools, public agencies, civic organizations, businesses and non-profits to jointly review data on chronic absence and discuss the implications for action, policy and allocation of resources that can improve school attendance such as health supports, early education programs, afterschool programs and mentoring efforts.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSDE provides guidance and support to districts on the establishment of District Attendance Teams that include community and family voices through written guidance, presentations and technical assistance. An example of this type of partnership is the Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP) – districts are using district, school, and community organizations to provide home visitors to support families who are at risk from the pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Sullivan reviews the notes provided by CSDE for the policy recommendation. Commissioner Russell-Tucker remarks that “attendance is a precursor to engagement and engagement is a precursor to learning.” Lt. Governor recalls a Hartford high school principal that door knocked on the doors of every family that had kids at his high school and notes that in Middletown the McDonough School Principal sends out a team to door knock at the homes of every family before school starts. She notes that there is no substitution for building relationships with families because it goes to every point that Ms. Chang was talking about – community engagement and families feeling supported. She further notes that Connecticut tends to be ultra-family focused, which is one of the reasons why we have been successful, and that to avoid chronic absence we need more of that hands-on engagement with families. Commissioner Russell-Tucker mentions that when K. Sullivan-Custer holds Talk Tuesdays, she brings together different leaders from different districts to learn about what's working and walk away with great ideas of what they can do. She further notes the importance of staying connected with national contacts like Ms. Chang and Dr. Rogers for the best research-based practices. Commissioner Russell-Tucker adds that when we talk about relationships and the traumas, social emotional well-being is critically important and that is why we constantly talk about the well-being of our students and our staff. She further notes that Social emotional, mental health support is one of the priorities for investing our federal funds and that our districts have responded by applying \$183 million of the federal relief towards programming for social emotional and mental health supports for students and staff.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Results Statement – Every child will read at goal by the end of third grade.
 Commissioner Russell-Tucker introduces Results Statement and begins discussion

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Grow a tier one, embedded reading coach model of teacher training in the classroom that prepares all teachers, PreK-3, in early literacy assessment, intervention and practice. This model, which is based on proven research in our state and nationally, has led to the greatest number of children moving forward, not entering special education and successfully mastering the skills necessary to become proficient in reading.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ C.G.S. Sec. 10-14u. Intensive reading instruction program for students in kindergarten to grade three. Intensive reading intervention strategy. Supplemental reading instruction. Reading remediation plan. Intensive summer school reading instruction program. ○ Senate Bill No. 1202: June Special Session, Public Act 21-2. Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success • Since 2012, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) along with literacy initiative partners (UConn, Hill for Literacy, and Literacy How) have worked to implement and refine an intensive reading intervention strategy to serve as a model for use by schools. • The intensive reading strategy, known as the CT K-3 Intensive Reading Strategy (CK3LI), included priority goals and actions that reading research has identified as effective for improving reading outcomes for kindergarten through Grade 3 (K-3) students, including special education students and Multilingual Learners/English learners MLs/(ELs). External literacy coaches were provided, and school reading coaches were supported. (continued on next slide) 	<p>Commissioner Russell-Tucker introduces Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer. Ms. Parisi shares that Dr. Melissa Hickey is also with her today.</p> <p>Ms. Parisi begins by stating that this slide and the next two slides review where we have been since 2012 with the Connecticut Literacy Model and the CK3LI implementation to grow that tier one system of supports for districts and pre-K through Grade 3.</p>

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Grow a tier one, embedded reading coach model of teacher training in the classroom that prepares all teachers, PreK-3, in early literacy assessment, intervention and practice. This model, which is based on proven research in our state and nationally, has led to the greatest number of children moving forward, not entering special education and successfully mastering the skills necessary to become proficient in reading.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2012-2014, CK3LI was implemented in five pilot schools with the overall goals of implementing a fully specified school-wide multi-tiered K-3 reading school improvement model and establishing a strong demonstration of a fully specified K-3 reading school improvement model that could be expanded to other schools and districts in Connecticut. External literacy coaches were provided, and school reading coaches were supported. Research was conducted and the impacts included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students experienced greater growth in early literacy skills across grade levels and across literacy measures when their school fully implemented CT's K-3 Intensive Reading Strategy. There was a positive impact of implementing CT's K-3 Intensive Reading Strategy with increasing effects across years of implementation. 	<p>Ms. Parisi shares that they have outlined the work that has been present and ongoing.</p> <p>Also included is what the legislation has stated to show a progression of where we are now and what was mandated.</p>

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Grow a tier two and tier three model of reading intervention for every student not reading at proficiency, in k-3rd grade. Assure each student has an individualized reading plan and that each school has the professional capacity and literacy team to assess, intervene and continuously monitor for on-going literacy gains of each student.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ C.G.S. Sec. 10-14u(c)(2): Intensive reading instruction program for students in kindergarten to grade three. Intensive reading intervention strategy. Supplemental reading instruction. Reading remediation plan. Intensive summer school reading instruction program. ○ C.G.S. Sec. 10-265g. Summer reading programs required for priority school districts. Evaluation of student reading level. Individual reading plan. ○ Senate Bill No. 1202: June Special Session, Public Act 21-2. Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success ● Mandated schools and districts develop a reading remediation plan for each student in kindergarten to grade three, inclusive, identified as reading below proficiency to address and correct the reading deficiency of such student. Such remediation plan must include instructional strategies utilizing research-based reading instruction materials and teachers trained in reading instruction, parental involvement in the implementation of the plan and regular progress reports on such student. (continued on next slide) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ms. Parisi points out that the second bullet has outlined that the Connecticut CK3LI, now called the Connecticut Literacy Model, that was implemented and piloted in the Alliance Districts. ● She reports that there was a lot of growth made by students and it has been a proven proof of concept and that we are continuing to do this work through the Connecticut Literacy Model.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Grow a tier two and tier three model of reading intervention for every student not reading at proficiency, in k-3rd grade. Assure each student has an individualized reading plan and that each school has the professional capacity and literacy team to assess, intervene and continuously monitor for on-going literacy gains of each student.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sec. 10-265g further states that educational and instructional decisions for K-3 students with individual reading plans shall be based on documented progress in achieving the goals of the individual reading plan or demonstrated reading proficiency. If a decision is made to promote a student who is substantially deficient in reading from kindergarten, first, second or third grade, the school principal shall provide written justification for such promotion to the superintendent of schools. • As outlined on slide 21, CK3LI was first implemented in five chronically underperforming Alliance District schools with the overall goals of implementing a fully specified school-wide, multi-tiered K-3 reading school improvement model, and establishing a strong demonstration of a fully specified K-3 reading school improvement model that could be expanded to other schools and districts in Connecticut. Since its inception, CK3LI has been expanded to a districtwide model, and now serves to support K-3 reading improvement in additional schools. The term CK3LI was rebranded to be the CT Literacy Model and 76 schools were supported during the 2018-2020 school years impacting approximately 9,600 students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Parisi references the Senate bill No. 1202 that was passed in 2021 that will help CT establish the Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success where this work will be present and ongoing.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Develop a Reading Director for SDE in charge of literacy across all divisions, policies and programs to review data, implement policies, support schools and assure professional development and fidelity to best practices. This position will report directly to the Commissioner and will work in collaboration with the State Turnaround Officer, Chief Academic Officer.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ C.G.S. Sec. 10-3(c) Director of reading initiatives. ○ Per Senate Bill No. 1202: June Special Session, Public Act 21-2. Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success there shall be a director of the Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success. • Dr. Melissa Wlodarczyk Hickey has held the position of Reading/Literacy Director since January 8, 2016. • CSDE in process of hiring Director of the Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Parisi shares that as Commissioner Russell-Tucker has stated, we are committed to this work and are in the process of hiring a director to oversee the center and continue to develop a tiered system of support for all of our district so they can achieve this result statement.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Utilize the document “Connecticut’s Blueprint for Reading Achievement: The Report of the Early Reading Success Panel” as the focal point for student and teacher competencies and update the research behind it.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ C.G.S. Sec. 10-145r. Survey on reading instruction. ○ C.G.S. Sec. 10-148b. Professional development program re scientifically-based reading research and instruction. • The Blueprint was utilized by most schools and districts prior to the adoption of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects in 2010. • Although the research that drove the creation of the Blueprint document remains relevant, the practices and strategies found in this document need to be reviewed, refreshed, and revised to align to the updated, approved Connecticut Board of Education (Board) standards and the CSDE's focus on the science of reading. Currently the CSDE is creating a position statement about the science of reading to be brought to the Board for consideration of approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Parisi shares that the CSDE has been utilizing the Connecticut Blueprint and it has provided a great framework. • She points out that the third bullet acknowledges that there is a lot of research embedded in the Blueprint and that has helped CSDE revise many standards, work, and position statements moving forward. • Ms. Parisi shares that CSDE is creating a position statement that will align with the science of reading that is in Senate Bill No. 1202. • She notes that as CSDE continues the work with the Center of Literacy Research and Reading Success, we will continue to bring the Blueprint research forward and make updates as needed. • Commissioner Russell-Tucker notes that based on this past legislative session, CSDE is standing up two new offices addressing literacy in the agency – one for dyslexia and the other for reading.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Increase Pool of Literacy Specialists: Authorize Literacy/How as an Alternative Route to Certification (ARC) institution to increase the supply of well-trained, embedded literacy specialists utilizing research based practice.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<p>The CSDE developed partnerships to increase the supply of well-trained literacy specialists including: Albertus Magnus' AAP alternative route program #102 Remedial Reading and Remedial Language Arts, 1-12 certification.</p> <p>The following have approved Educator Preparation graduate programs leading to certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCSU • Fairfield University • Sacred Heart University • SCSU • University of Bridgeport • UCONN • WCSU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Parisi notes that this work has been present and ongoing, including developing partnerships with university partners and ensuring that we are providing alternative routes to accessing certification so that we have highly qualified and impactful relationships to support students and their ability to read to learn and learn to read.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Address time and content quality together in reading—students who are behind do not learn more in the same amount of time as students who are on track or ahead. Catch-up growth is driven by proportional increases in direct instructional time. Quality instruction, assessment and intervention, coupled with increased time, ensures sufficient daily instructional minutes to achieve additional annual growth at the appropriate grade level.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ C.G.S. Sec. 10-14u. Intensive reading instruction program for students in kindergarten to grade three. Intensive reading intervention strategy. Supplemental reading instruction. Reading remediation plan. Intensive summer school reading instruction program. ○ C.G.S. Sec. 10-14y. Reading readiness program; tiered supports in early literacy ○ Senate Bill No. 1202: June Special Session, Public Act 21-2. Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Parisi notes that part of the ongoing work through the center is ensuring that all students have access to an intensive reading instruction program with highly qualified individuals. We will work in partnership with the Connecticut Literacy Model.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Work with Institutes of Higher Education to ensure that new and current faculty members have expertise in the science of reading and research-based practices (as recommended by Connecticut's Blueprint and codified in statute).</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislation:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Senate Bill No. 1202: June Special Session, Public Act 21-2. Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms. Parisi revisits Senate Bill No. 1202 as it contains language to ensure that these policy recommendations or the work of each policy recommendation will continue.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Allocate sufficient instructional time for language arts (a minimum 2 hour block for language arts/reading).</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<p>Instructional minutes continues to be a local-control issue that is decided by the local board of education. However, the Board has approved guidance to assist districts make these determinations. The Position Statement on English Language Arts Education that was adopted by the State Board of states for the Elementary level, "Ensure instructional time for English language arts is at least 120 minutes daily as recommended by the Report of the National Reading Panel (2000)." For the Secondary level it says, "Ensure instructional time for literacy (reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, presenting) across content areas (e.g., science, mathematics, social studies, career and technical education, world languages, health, arts) is at least 90-120 minutes daily as recommended in Beyond the Blueprint (2007)."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Parisi notes that many districts have recognized the need for increased instructional minutes to support their learners - again so they are learning to read or reading to learn She further notes that districts have learned what is grade and age appropriate as to ensure that students have the maximum instructional time in their reading block. She reviews from the notes that at least 90 to 120 minutes is recommended daily, beyond the Blueprint..

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Require routine formative assessments in reading for all students in K-3 to inform and ensure differentiated instruction, using research-based assessment tools that are teacher friendly, electronic, less costly and that offer more information to teachers on intervention.</p>		<p>Legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o C.G.S. Sec. 10-14t. Reading assessments for students in Kindergarten to Grade 3. o Senate Bill No. 1202: June Special Session, Public Act 21-2. Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success <p>On July 9, 2014, the Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) approved a menu of research-based K-3 reading assessments for Grades K-3. The menu of research-based reading assessments must be used by districts for the purpose of Universal Screening for Reading of the entire K-3 student population. Commencing July 1, 2016, these reading assessments have been approved for use by districts to assist in identifying, in whole or in part, students at risk for Dyslexia or other reading-related learning disabilities. The menu of research-based K-3 reading assessments is a model for all Connecticut school districts to follow.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Parisi notes that this work is present and ongoing and also part of the Senate bill and introduces Dr. Melissa Hickey who is leading this work. • Dr. Hickey shares that each year CSDE collects suggestions from districts as to what assessments should be examined and researched and we have an internal team that looks at that and ensures that the assessments align to the science of reading. In addition, CSDE ensures alignment with dyslexia piece and then brings the work to the SBE to review and adopt. These are then posted for the districts. • This process will continue under the new legislation, that Ms. Parisi mentioned earlier, Senate Bill 1202. • Dr. Hickey notes that CSDE does not take recommendations from publishing companies.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Collect statewide longitudinal data on universal screening and progress monitoring assessments that inform instruction and can be analyzed to highlight schools that are “beating the odds.”</p>		<p>On July 9, 2014, the Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) approved a menu of research-based K-3 reading assessments for Grades K-3. The menu of research-based reading assessments must be used by districts for the purpose of Universal Screening for Reading of the entire K-3 student population. Commencing July 1, 2016, these reading assessments have been approved for use by districts to assist in identifying, in whole or in part, students at risk for Dyslexia or other reading-related learning disabilities. The menu of research-based K-3 reading assessments is a model for all Connecticut school districts to follow. Connecticut Priority School Districts are required by statute to submit K-3 reading assessment results multiple times per year.</p>	<p>Dr. Hickey reports that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts that are in most need, which are the Opportunity Districts, are required to submit their data from the assessments. • The assessments happen in the fall, winter, and spring. • The districts input the data and provide to the state. • CSDE then uses those data to provide the supports that Ms. Parisi mentioned previously – through the Connecticut Literacy Model and CK3LI. <p>Ms. Parisi states that as CSDE continues to establish the work of the center, there may be a broader vision for this work.</p>

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Build strong, committed school leadership, knowledgeable in K-3 literacy, on the administrative level to make reading a school priority. Link reading assessments to state's leadership strategy so that school superintendents and principals fully know how to assess the gains in their schools and how to intervene where gains are not evident.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2012, CK3LI/CT Literacy Model have supported district and school leaders in creating strategic structures that support leadership in making literacy a priority. • June Special Session, Public Act No. 21-2 Sec. 402. (Effective July 1, 2021) (a) The Department of Education shall establish a Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success within the department. The center shall be responsible for the implementation of the coordinated state-wide reading plan; researching and developing a birth to grade twelve reading success strategy; providing direct support to schools and boards of education to improve reading outcomes for K-3 students; supporting teachers, schools and boards of education engaged in improving through coaching, leadership training, professional development, parental engagement; and providing independent, random reviews of how a local or regional board of education is implementing a reading curriculum model or program, an approved reading assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Parisi addresses this policy recommendation and shares the commitment to school leadership and their knowledge. As stated in the second bullet, it is present and ongoing. • It is elevated so that the center can be responsible for implementing professional learning and other resources and support systems to our superintendents so that they can be the literacy leaders of this work and that it is systemic throughout the district.. • She reviews that Public Act 21-2 has a particular section that provides additional guidance on ensuring that CT is building those strong committed school leaders and their knowledge on K-3 literacy and the science of reading – this speaks to our future. • The legislation requires the appointment of members to the Reading Implementation Council. That membership will provide guidance and work in an advisory capacity under the leadership of the director of the center. She directed council members to pages 631-2 to learn more about the council membership.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
Hold each district and school accountable for reading achievement.	SDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">English Language Arts (ELA) achievement is the first indicator of Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System for all schools and districts. This is based on the state summative assessments which are administered in Grades 3-8 and 11. It is important to note that in the system, the ELA achievement of the High Needs student group (i.e., those who are English learners, students with disabilities, and/or from low income families) within a school or district receives the same weight as the All Students group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ms. Parisi reviews the notes provided by the agency.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Create incentives for teachers who consistently improve reading outcomes for students in kindergarten through grades three. For example, create a master teacher designation for those teachers who show that they have turned the curve in reading within their classroom.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<p>Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sec. 10-14w. Incentive program for schools. On or before July 1, 2014, the Commissioner of Education shall establish, within available appropriations, an incentive program for schools that (1) increase by ten per cent the number of students who meet or exceed the state-wide goal level in reading on the state-wide examination under section 10-14n, and (2) demonstrate the methodology and instruction used by the school to improve student reading skills and scores on such state-wide examination. Such incentive program may, at the commissioner's discretion, include public recognition, financial awards, and enhanced autonomy or operational flexibility. The Department of Education may accept private donations for the purpose of this section. • Despite lack of appropriations to fund an incentive program, schools/districts/individuals have been identified by the CSDE as models and been publicly recognized for their literacy efforts, awarded certificates, and asked to present at various conferences and legislative events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Parisi reviews what is provided in the notes. • CSDE has done a series of different events to award certificates and ask them to present at at different conferences as well as to different committees of the SBE. • Dr. Hickey leads this work and adds that we have found ways to recognize those strategies, practices, and individuals who were incorporating things that aligned to the science of reading and, in this way, we could elevate those practices and share with other districts.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Provide performance bonuses for teachers who produce improvement in reading scores and award a ten-year recertification, rather than a five-year recertification, for teachers with the master teacher designation.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<p>Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Sec. 10-14w. Incentive program for schools. On or before July 1, 2014, the Commissioner of Education shall establish, within available appropriations, an incentive program for schools that (1) increase by ten per cent the number of students who meet or exceed the state-wide goal level in reading on the state-wide examination under section 10-14n, and (2) demonstrate the methodology and instruction used by the school to improve student reading skills and scores on such state-wide examination. Such incentive program may, at the commissioner's discretion, include public recognition, financial awards, and enhanced autonomy or operational flexibility. The Department of Education may accept private donations for the purpose of this section (see slide 39) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Parisi reviews the notes provided noting that this is work that we still discuss with our Talent Office and how we can provide other avenues for teachers to be recognized for their performance.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>For teachers who do not show improvement in the reading outcomes of their students, ensure that teachers in K-3rd grade receive appropriate professional development in reading based on the results of reading surveys designed to identify teaching gaps in the science of teaching reading.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<p>Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ C.G.S. Sec. 10-145r. Survey on reading instruction. ○ C.G.S. Sec. 10-148b. Professional development program re scientifically-based reading research and instruction. <p>The CSDE continues to support K-3 teachers by providing “ReadConn,” a statewide professional learning series based on the teacher reading survey sub areas and objectives of the Connecticut Core Standards in English Language Arts: Foundational Skills, and evidence-based teaching practices. The purpose of ReadConn is to increase teachers’ expertise in identifying and providing instruction in the necessary foundational reading skills, spotting student skills gaps, and monitoring students’ progress to create a solid foundation in early literacy skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ms. Parisi recognizes Dr. Hickey and her work on ReadConn and the professional learning series based on the teachers learning survey. ● She further notes that the Foundations of Reading Survey is administered through a partner so we can understand where teachers are with their ability and their knowledge and skill set in the implementation of literacy instruction. ● She also notes that this is an excellent opportunity for teachers to personalize their professional learning and access these resources that we have provided, in partnership with UCONN and others.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>For teachers who do not show improvement in the reading outcomes of their students, ensure that teachers in K-3rd grade receive appropriate professional development in reading based on the results of reading surveys designed to identify teaching gaps in the science of teaching reading.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<p>Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ C.G.S. Sec. 10-145r. Survey on reading instruction. ○ C.G.S. Sec. 10-148b. Professional development program re scientifically-based reading research and instruction. <p>During the 2020-21 school year, ReadConn was revised and rebranded as a virtual statewide professional learning series. For 2021-22 school year, 475 teachers and literacy leaders registered for summer of 2021 to participate in the virtual professional learning series. The ReadConn statewide professional learning series continues to maximize enrollment of special education and MLs/ELs teachers. Future ReadConn professional learning series is pending available funds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ms. Parisi shares that this policy recommendation response is a continuation of her response in the previous slide. ● She notes the numbers of teachers that have participated in ReadConn and that we had to make a pivot to a more virtual approach. The feedback has been phenomenal as teachers can access the resources anytime and anywhere.

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Create a partnership with parents on literacy in low performing schools so that parents know how and what to do at home and at school to facilitate literacy gains.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ C.G.S. Sec. 10-14u(c)(2): Intensive reading instruction program for students in kindergarten to grade three. Intensive reading intervention strategy. Supplemental reading instruction. Reading remediation plan. Intensive summer school reading instruction program. ○ Senate Bill No. 1202: June Special Session, Public Act 21-2. Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ms. Parisi notes that a component of the work of the center is to provide family engagement.
<p>Develop two generational strategies where parents and children are supported in ELL and in overall literacy gains.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sec. 17b-112l. Initiative for two-generational service delivery to encourage educational, health and workforce readiness and self-sufficiency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ms. Parisi notes that this work is present and ongoing

Inside the Schoolhouse

Reading

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
Additional comments and responses to the Reading Results Statement	SDE		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Hegedus shares that the Board of Regents approved, about a month ago, SCSU to have a Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and that within that center there will be a literacy clinic. He further notes that he would welcome partnerships to sustain some of the work related to in-service training or local community work with families.• Commissioner Russell-Tucker shares that CSDE has a dedicated CSDE webpage for the Reading Implementation Council, with membership and minutes.

Inside the Schoolhouse

English Language Learners

Results Statement – English language learners will become fully proficient in English.
 Commissioner Russell-Tucker introduces Results Statement and begins discussion

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>General Remarks</p> <p>Establish a center to develop (a) educational methods that are culturally relevant to English language learners; (b) effective learning strategies to help students with low achievement make up lost ground; and (c) a leadership program and teacher preparation programs that incorporate effective, research-based child development and reading instruction tools and practices.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terminology to describe these students has been updated to reflect more assets-based terms that acknowledge the strengths that these students bring rather than calling out the language skills they do not yet possess. These terms include Multilingual Learners (MLs) (used synonymously with ELL and EL) and culturally-sustaining pedagogy that builds knowledge on diverse cultures and cultural practices. The ESSA Evidence-Based Practice Guide on Multilingual Learners includes various effective strategies that are research-based and effective for MLs, including strategies in the areas of Systems, Instructional Practice, Professional Learning, and Extended Learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioner Russell-Tucker introduces Ms. Megan Alubicki Flick. Ms. Flick begins by explaining that acronyms shift and notes that while we previously referred to "English language learners" and most recently, "English learners" in the federal law, CSDE is choosing to move towards a more assets-based term of "multilingual learners." This new term acknowledges the strengths of the students and assets that they bring. Ms. Flick reviews that the ESSA Evidence- based guides are a one stop shop where research-based strategies are available.

Inside the Schoolhouse

English Language Learners

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Engage in an audit of the services for Bilingual and ELL programs in the State of CT. Audit should be performed by independent third party whose background includes an understanding of the research and best practices for instructing ELLs and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources have been developed to assist in such an audit. For instance, the ESSA Evidence-Based Practice Guide on Multilingual Learners includes various effective strategies that are research-based and effective for MLs, including strategies in the areas of Systems, Instructional Practice, Professional Learning, and Extended Learning. The English Learner Checklists provide tools with which individuals, districts or external evaluators can assess programs and practices for MLs in classrooms, schools and districts. The checklists focus on programs specifically designed to support the language instruction of MLs (i.e. bilingual education, English as a Second Language) as well as broader topics that impact MLs, such as school climate and academic achievement. The multiple focuses of the checklists enable the self-assessment or external evaluation to be dynamic and to review various domains and contexts that impact and are impacted by MLs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Flick acknowledges that these language instruction programs are in the vast majority of CT school districts. They look very differently across contexts. She notes that the ESSA Evidence-based practice guide as mentioned on the previous slide has high-level practices that focus on systems, instructional practice, professional learning, and extended learning. In each of the four areas, the document highlights research-based practices that have proven particularly effective to our multilingual learners. She adds that an additional tool, the English learning checklists, have been developed as internal self-assessment tools for districts and schools. It also has the potential to be used as an external evaluation tool by evaluators. The checklist is a guidepost to ensure that we know what we're doing well and what can be done better going forward

Inside the Schoolhouse

English Language Learners

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Require the State Department of Education to develop high-quality model K-5 curricula in reading and math with considerations for students learning English as a Second Language. The curriculum will be evidence based with language, literacy, content instruction strategies and relevant curriculum materials, aligned with state standards. These curricula should reflect the best practices and most up-to-date research and methods, and should be ready for teachers to use in classrooms. The curricula should include authentic CCSS aligned assessments and progress monitoring indicators that lend themselves to the data-driven decision-making process and SLO implementation. Curriculum will be recommended to districts with limited resources, high transiency, and large achievement gaps.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum development is underway across the content areas. The infusion of MLs in this curriculum development process is intentional, multifaceted and multitiered. The inclusion of MLs in the curriculum development process consists of ongoing engagement of ML/EL Consultant at the CSDE as well as the participation of SEA and LEA ML experts in the curriculum planning and development process. Additionally, MLs are elevated in the curriculum by including the Connecticut English Language Proficiency (CELP) Standards and the CELP Standards' correspondences to content areas in the curricular materials. Since it is imperative that MLs are provided meaningful, differentiated access to grade-level, content area instruction, the intentional infusion of these human and content resources in the curriculum planning and development process is essential and will result in more accessible curriculum that will help to promote the success of these students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Flick reviews the agency notes for this policy recommendation and comments that work is currently underway for the development of a model curriculum. She continues by stating that what is particularly impactful for our multilingual learners is that we have intentionally infused the topic of multilingual learners and how we can promote their success, across the curriculum development process. This was done through engagement of content experts and the infusion of the CT English language proficiency standards. This ensures that our multilingual learners are prioritized right at the outset rather than seen as an appendix or afterthought.

Inside the Schoolhouse

English Language Learners

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>School leaders should be trained in evidence based program models for English language learners and should assure their teachers receive professional development in educational methods that are culturally relevant to English language learners.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development opportunities have been developed to support the learning of building leaders, classroom teachers, and other generalist stakeholders that are critically important in promoting the success of MLs. The Pathways to Success for ELs/MLs modules have been developed through federal Title III statewide activities funds, and offer free, on-demand, self-paced online modules that address the unique considerations that are important to take into account when serving MLs as generalist stakeholders. New modules are developed annually and are also presented in person when possible. Additionally, free live sessions are currently underway via online conferencing, and recordings will be posted after they occur. These focus on "reimagining" various types of programming for MLs, such bilingual, dual language, push-in ESL and pull-out ESL. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Flick reviews the agency notes and further reports that CSDE's has an ongoing professional learning process in partnership with the Regional Education Service Centers and that Pathways to Success for Multilingual Learners is a collection of trainings that are web-based, on-demand, free and available to a range of professionals, including grade-level mainstream content area teachers.

Inside the Schoolhouse

English Language Learners

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Create and disseminate a robust menu of assessments aligned to model curricula. These assessments should include a variety of balanced formats including portfolios, performance tasks, oral presentations, art works, and other learning artifacts that encourage higher level thinking. (Darling-Hammond, 2014) Assessments should include scales and benchmarks to determine language proficiency development in addition to content mastery.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model curriculum development is underway, and MLs are robustly represented in its development (as described in slide 14). A Guidance Document on assessment for ELs has been developed and is available on the CSDE English Learners page. The document, Equitable Assessment Practices for English Learners in Connecticut, provides recommendations on how to choose equitable and relevant assessment for MLs and how to engage in assessment practices that are appropriate and yield accurate data for these students. All English learners are also assessed annually on the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing on the LAS Links. The LAS Links scales are used to monitor growth toward English language proficiency and for mastery of the language in order to exit the EL program status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Flick reviews agency notes in regards to assessment and highlights a guidance document, Equitable Assessment Practices for English Learners in Connecticut. This resource serves as a one-stop shop for understanding thoughtful and intentional supports for multilingual learners and our assessment of their academic development and language proficiency. It also measures all four domains of language..

Inside the Schoolhouse

English Language Learners

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Using info-finder, public health service providers, and Social Service Providers, create a campaign to increase the number of students with limited target language exposure access to early childcare services and language-developing family support. Monitor access until 2020 to assess impact of campaign.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood is working with WIDA Early Years to build capacity in our state related to supporting young multi-lingual learners and their families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the policy recommendation regarding our youngest multilingual learners, also referred to as “dual language Learners,” Ms. Flick points out that these young students are learning both English and another language. • Ms. Flick reviews the OEC partnership with WIDA Early Years for professional learning to ensure that both CSDE and OEC are effectively and intentionally serving our youngest multilingual learners and connecting with their families.

Inside the Schoolhouse

English Language Learners

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Allow Alliance Funding to be aimed at serving ELL students if districts are not able to secure funds from local municipalities. Require the inclusion and monitor the implementation of strategies aimed at supporting ELLs in Alliance Plans.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alliance funding can be aimed at serving ML students, and Alliance Districts are encouraged to allocate funds to promote the success of MLs. The ML/EL Consultant works very closely with the Turnaround Office staff to ensure that districts and schools that are supported through state turnaround efforts are considering MLs and engaging in activities that will support their growth and the advancement of their academic and linguistic skills. Some Alliance Districts have targeted efforts to promote the success of MLs as an explicit improvement strategy and address these efforts in all CSDE/district meetings .Alliance districts are encouraged to attend professional learning on MLs, and convenings offered by the Turnaround Office include sessions focused on MLs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Flick reviews agency notes and shares that internally at CSDE, staff collaborate closely with colleagues in the Turnaround Office, who serve as the point people with the Alliance Districts, to ensure that multilingual learners are considered and prioritized in the district improvement efforts.

Inside the Schoolhouse

English Language Learners

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>Incentivize dual certification in Bilingual Education/TESOL for pre-service teachers in the form of grants. Create subsidized accelerated certification route for Bilingual Education/TESOL advanced degrees for teachers in Alliance districts.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 2 of Public Act 21-144 amends the state's bilingual statute ((Section 10-145h of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.)) in ways that remove barriers to bilingual certification while maintaining rigorous expectations for teacher candidates. The revised bilingual legislation was signed into law by Governor Lamont in July of 2021 and are detailed in the CSDE's Certification Alert. • The Alternate Route to Certification for Teachers of English Learners (ARCTEL) program was developed through a CSDE/RESC partnership to address the pervasive shortage of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and Bilingual educators. The 10-month program is intended for individuals who currently hold teacher certification and are employed in a CT school or school district. ARCTEL uses a cohort, hybrid model, and provides a high-quality, low-cost option for current CT teachers to become cross-endorsed in TESOL or bilingual. • The CSDE remains committed to dual language models of bilingual education and is currently strategizing how to promote more dual language programming statewide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Flick reviews agency notes and acknowledges that there is a shallow pool of bilingual educators in CT and that we have a pervasive shortage of teachers in this area. She adds that CT has wonderful teachers in this pool, but there are not enough and that the hope is that by removing some of the barriers while maintaining rigorous expectations, we can increase the pool of available teachers. • She also shares that CT has an Alternate Route to Certification option to help secure additional instructors. • Commissioner Russell-Tucker adds that we have Afghan arrivals coming into the state and that this is a part of our landscape as we think about that pool of educators that can be available for all our families. • Ms. Flick adds that this is a great point and expresses that we are very lucky in Connecticut to have a very linguistically multilingual population. We continue to commit to serving them and maintaining and cultivating language and really bringing linguistically multilingual individuals into the fold as educators of the future.

Inside the Schoolhouse

English Language Learners

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>The state must implement results-based strategies that identify children in state care who are performing substantially below grade level and provide targeted supports to improve their academic performance.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Through the CSDE's data management and reporting systems, such as EdSight, EdSight Secure, the Public School Information System (PSIS), and the Early Indication Tool (EIT), student data is protected and confidentiality is maintained while assuring that appropriate personnel have access to information that can guide programming, instruction and supports to promote student success. These data systems and reports allow for analysis of individualized needs as well as information about trends through aggregate and disaggregated data. MLs are infused throughout these systems.• CSDE and DCF have an ongoing data exchange wherein agencies share longitudinal, historical data about students in foster care. This includes school history, attendance, discipline, test scores, etc. DCF ingests that information into their LINKS system for use by caseworkers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms. Flick reviews agency notes. <p>(Continued on next slide.)</p>

Inside the Schoolhouse

English Language Learners

Policy Recommendation	Responding Agencies	Notes	Meeting Remarks
<p>The state must implement results-based strategies that identify children in state care who are performing substantially below grade level and provide targeted supports to improve their academic performance.</p>	<p>SDE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the CSDE's data management and reporting systems, such as EdSight, EdSight Secure, the Public School Information System (PSIS), and the Early Indication Tool (EIT), student data is protected and confidentiality is maintained while assuring that appropriate personnel have access to information that can guide programming, instruction and supports to promote student success. These data systems and reports allow for analysis of individualized needs as well as information about trends through aggregate and disaggregated data. MLs are infused throughout these systems. CSDE and DCF have an ongoing data exchange wherein agencies share longitudinal, historical data about students in foster care. This includes school history, attendance, discipline, test scores, etc. DCF ingests that information into their LINKS system for use by caseworkers. 	<p>(Continued from previous slide.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioner Russell-Tucker thanks Ms. Flick and asks her to discuss the Seal of Biliteracy. Ms. Flick shares that the Seal of Biliteracy is an initiative that was signed into state statute in 2017 and enables students at the high school level to demonstrate proficiency in English and one or more other language. In doing so, this provides students with an accolade and acknowledgement of their multilingualism. It's not only intended for students that are world language learners who are native English speakers but also for our MLs, former designated MLs, and students who possess a heritage language and have maintained and cultivated it. Annually, since inception, we have seen more students attempt and receive the seal and more districts participate in the initiative. Commissioner Russell-Tucker thanks all of today's CSDE presenters.

Next Steps

Lt. Governor thanks Commissioner Russell-Tucker and each presenter and then reviews next steps.

Policy Recommendation	Meeting Remarks
2022 Meeting Schedule (all meetings will be held from 1 to 3 p.m.)	Friday, March 11, 2022 Tuesday, June 7, 2022 Friday, September 16, 2022 Tuesday, December 13, 2022
Preparation for next meeting	<p>Lieutenant Governor shares that at the March meeting, CSDE will lead a discussion on behavioral health. She invites Council members to let us know if they have something to contribute, inviting them to share in the presentation.</p> <p>She asks that Council members keep three things in mind for future meetings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Updates and measured progress with respect to existing programs aligned with the overall goal of the Council;2) Any new initiatives consistent with goals of the Council, especially with new funding for COVID and recovery; and3) Share any proposed legislation relevant to the work of the Council. <p>Lt. Governor asks for any comments or questions.</p>

Closure/Meeting Adjourned
(apx. 2:40pm)

