# Bold Goals COALITION <br> serving Central Alabama 

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## Understanding Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism

## Sources:

Many of the slides that follow were developed by the Attendance Works organization: www.attendanceworks.org

## What is Chronic Absence?

Chronic absence is missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at risk. Attendance Works recommends defining it as missing $10 \%$ or more of school for any reason.


Chronic absence is different from truancy (unexcused absences only) or average daily attendance (how many students show up to school each day).

## Average Daily Attendance (ADA) Can Mask Chronic Absence

Chronic Absence For 6 Elementary Schools in Oakland, CA with 95\% ADA in 2012


## 90\% and even $95 \% \neq \mathbf{A}$

Chronic Absence for 6 Schools in New York City with 90\% ADA in 2011-12

$98 \%$ ADA = little chronic absence
95\% ADA = don't know
93\% ADA = significant chronic absence

## Chronic Early Absence Connected to Poor IrongTerm Academic Outcomes



A Rhode Island Data Hub analysis found that compared to kindergartners who attend regularly, those chronically absent:

- Scored $20 \%$ lower in reading and math in later grades and gap grows
- 2 X as likely to be retained in grade.
- 2 X likely to be suspended by the end of $7^{\text {th }}$ grade.
- Likely to continue being chronically absent


## The Effects of Chronic

## Absence on Dropout Rates

 Are CumulativeProportion of Students Dropping Out by Number of Years the Student was Chronically Absent from $8^{\text {th }}-12^{\text {th }}$ Grades


## The first month of school predicts chronic absence

- Baltimore students who missed 2-4 days of school in September were 5 times as likely to be chronically absent.
- Students who missed 5 or more days of school in September were I 6 times as likely to be chronically absent.



## \% Students Absent 15 or More Days


\% Students Absent >15 Days 0.0\%100.0\%

Source: U.S. Department of Education Civil Rights Data Collection, 2013-2014, retrieved June 7, 2016.
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## Alabama's ESSA Plan Goals

## Percent of Students Chronically <br> Absent



## Key Concepts:

1. We need to look at ALL absences, not just unexcused.
2. Elementary absences are serious.
3. Intervening early in the school year is important.
4. Attendance is an indicator for Alabama's ESSA Plan and for local accountability measures.

# Helping Families Initiative <br> Jefferson County District Attorney 



AL Compulsory Attendance Law AL Code 16-28-12

The district attorney
shall vigorously enforce this section
to ensure proper conduct and
required attendance by children enrolled in public school.

## strengthen families

## improve educational outcomes

reduce crime

## Information Sharing

## Individualized Intervention Plans

Case Management Support
BEFORE students are in trouble

## T. MICHAEL ANDERTON

## District Attomey

Tenth Judicial Circuit of Alabama Hetping Families Initiative

To the larant(s) Guardimn(s) of:
?

 Absence

Dear Parcnt(s) Grandiang(s):
Our oftice has received school attendance reports fron Ciry Schools indicating your child has two or more unoxcused absences.

If this informstion is incorrect and the approprisis excuses were sabmitted within the required times trame, contect the scloot within five (5) business days from the date of his feter to resolve this mater.

Noe-complianoe with the Compulsory Attendance Law may result in you being taken to court, finod, unter fail time. Attendance nust improve immediately.

The Fefferson County District Attoney's Office and City Scbools want your child to be succassfill. We hope thes letter draws your attention to the sericus natire and consequences of unexcusod absences and uxcessive tardies, and that no furthor imborvention will he necersary

If you huve questions or nood asistanco from our Helping Familios Initialive, plaase call (205) 264-8181.
Failure to coopento may rosutt in legal coosequences
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## Inter-Agency Team

- HFI Staff

School System Personnel
Director of Student Services
$\square \quad$ Director of Student Ser
Attendance Officers
Director of Special Education
Social Workers
$\square$ Police Department

- DHR

Service Providers

- Mental Health
$\square$ Family Court
$\square \quad$ Probation
Truancy Intervention


## HFI Montgomery



# Helping Families Initiative <br> Jefferson County District Attorney 



## Practical Approaches and Tools

How do we get started?

- Identify or establish school-level teams to address attendance
- Develop an initial plan of action (use self-assessment tool)
- Create a tiered system of supports


## Self-Assessment

## Does Attendance Really Count in Our School?

## A Tool for Self Assessment - (Revised February 2011)

| Key Element | Strength | OK for Now | Could be Better | $\begin{array}{\|l\|} \hline \text { Urgent } \\ \text { Gap } \\ \hline \end{array}$ | Don't Know | How do you know? |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1. Every day, in every class, teachers take roll accurately and in a caring manner. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. Attendance data is entered daily into an electronic data base that can generate regular reports on average daily attendance, satisfactory attendance, chronic absence, truancy and suspension. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Our school has clear guidelines in place about when absences are excused versus unexcused and has clearly communicated them to staff, students and families. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. An attendance team meets at least monthly to identify and share information about students in trouble as well as review attendance patterns by grade, student population and classroom. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5. An effective school wide system of attendance incentives is in place. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6. Our school informs parents about the importance of attendance, works with parents to identify common barriers and encourages parents to help each other get their children to school. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7. Our school tracks and reaches out to chronically absent students and their families to see how attendance could be improved. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8. Our school partners with community agencies that can help reach out and offer resources to assist chronically absent students and their families. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9. Individual learning plans are developed for high-risk students and address poor attendance along with low academic performance. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10. Our school discipline policy and practice ensure students do not miss instruction due to unnecessary suspensions. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11. Our strategies for supporting student attendance are reflected in our school improvement plan. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

(Note: Chronic Absence is missing=> 10\% of school over a year including any type of absence; Satisfactory Attendance is missing=< $5 \%$ of school over a year)

## Establish tiered supports



Tier 1: Creating a positive, engaging school climate that supports attendance

## Attendance is higher when schools:

$\checkmark$ Promote a sense of belonging and connection including noticing when students show up
$\checkmark$ Make learning engaging so students don't want to miss class
$\checkmark$ Engage in restorative practice not punishment
$\checkmark$ Meet the basic needs of our most economically challenged families so all have the opportunity to get to school
$\checkmark$ Build awareness about how absences can easily add up to too much time lost in the classroom

## Tier 2 Interventions

## Tier 2

## Who are the families in Tier 2?

- Targeted interventions that remove identified barriers and increase positive connections that motivate improved attendance.
- Missing $10 \%$ or more of the prior or current school year for any reason.
- Families experiencing some challenge e.g. chronic disease, job loss, divorce, etc.


## Criteria for Identifying

凹lln Priority Students for Tier 2 Supports
$\checkmark$ Chronic absence (missed $10 \%$ or more of school) in the prior year, assuming data is available.
$\checkmark$ And/or starting in the beginning of the school year, student has:


## Possible Tier 2 Interventions



## Tier 3 Interventions

## Tier 3

## Who are the families in Tier 3?

- Tier 3 provides intensive interventions, often from multiple agencies or specialists within a school district or community.
- Missing $20 \%$ or more of the prior or current school year for any reason.
- Already involved in the system (child welfare, juvenile or criminal justice).


## Tools and Resources:

1. http://boldgoals.org/attendance-resources/
2. www.attendanceworks.org


Bringing Attendance Home
Video ( 6 minutes)
$\checkmark$ Facilitated conversation
$\checkmark$ The consequences of chronic
absence
$\checkmark$ How to improve absenteeism
Family practice
$\checkmark$ Increase social capital
$\checkmark$ Identify how school can help
$\checkmark$ Community services

## Spotlight: Tarrant Intermediate School



## Spotlight: Oliver Elementary School



## Thank you!

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