A Place Where We Belong: Improving Conditions for Learning
Welcome

Ayeola Fortune
Senior Director,
Impact and Global Results
United Way Worldwide
Convening Partners
Welcome to our new State Partners!

See all the state partners here: https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/state-partners/
United Way’s Focus on Attendance

❖ Attendance is a core strategy for our work in child and youth success and this means creating a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment for students.

❖ Focus on attendance is often part of broader, multi-faceted efforts to improve educational outcomes

❖ UW are boundary spanners, have strong community-based relationships/partnerships, so are well positioned to lead and/or connect efforts

❖ United Way has partnered with the NFL to provide Character Playbook, an online program which teaches students how to resolve conflict and deal with peer pressure.

❖ Connect with your local United Way to understand how they specifically are working on education.
Theme for 2019

We Belong in School!

ATTENDANCE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN | 2019
2019 Theme: We Belong in School!

Key Messages:

1. Good attendance helps students do well in school and eventually in the workplace.

2. Students are at risk academically if they are chronically absent (missing 2 days per month or 10 percent of the school year)

3. Prevent absences whenever possible

4. Students are more likely to attend school if they feel safe (emotionally + physically), connected, supported, and believe they can learn and achieve.

5. Relationship building is fundamental to any strategy for improving student attendance.

https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/count-us-toolkit-2019/what-are-the-key-messages/
Key Messages:

6. Chronic absence is a problem we can solve when the whole community collaborates with families and schools.

7. The key to success is avoiding laying blame and taking a proactive, positive, data driven, problem-solving approach.

8. Families, educators and community partners need to monitor how many days a student misses school.

9. Reducing chronic absence helps create more equitable academic outcomes, especially for children who live in poverty, experience discrimination and have disabilities.

10. States can lead the way and encourage districts and schools to take action to improve student attendance.

https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/count-us-toolkit-2019/what-are-the-key-messages/
Welcome

Hedy Chang
Executive Director
Attendance Works

& Members of the Attendance Works Team
I. Welcome, Poll, and Overview

II. Presenters

• **David Osher**, Vice President and Institute Fellow, American Institutes for Research

• **Garry McGiboney**, Deputy Superintendent, Office of School Safety & Climate, Georgia Department of Education

• **Arianne Weldon**, Director, Get Georgia Reading Campaign, Georgia Family Connection Partnership

• **Lorri Hobson**, Director of Attendance, Cleveland Metropolitan School District

• **Lauren Bauer**, Fellow – Economic Studies, The Hamilton Project at the Brookings Institution

III. Questions from the Audience

IV. Announcements
Poll Question

What is your field of work?
Chronic absence is different from truancy (unexcused absences only) or average daily attendance (how many students show up to school each day).
Student Attendance is Strongly Associated with Academic Success

PK-1st Grade: Students who attend regularly in the early grades perform better on measures of academic and social and emotional capacities.

3rd Grade: Students who attend school regularly are more likely to be able to read proficiently by the end of 3rd grade.

Middle School Success: Students who attend school regularly are more likely to have passing grades in middle school.

High School Completion: Students who attend school regularly are more likely to graduate from high school.

Chronic Absence = Warning Sign of Academic Risk

College Completion: Students who attend school regularly in high school are more likely to persist in college and graduate.
Solutions must be grounded in an understanding of reasons for absence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Negative School Experiences</th>
<th>Lack of Engagement</th>
<th>Misconceptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Illness, both chronic and acute – physical and mental</td>
<td>• Struggling academically and behaviorally</td>
<td>• Lack of or inequitable access to challenging, culturally responsive, engaging instruction &amp; enrichment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of health, mental health, vision, or dental care</td>
<td>• Ineffective or harmful interventions</td>
<td>• Lack of or ineffective academic, emotional and behavioral support</td>
<td>• Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Family responsibilities</td>
<td>• Bored</td>
<td>• No meaningful or negative relationships to adults in the school</td>
<td>• Missing 2 days per month doesn’t affect learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trauma</td>
<td>• Social challenges</td>
<td>• Stronger ties with peers out of school than in school</td>
<td>• Sporadic absences aren’t a problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Depression or anxiety</td>
<td>• Bullying</td>
<td>• Unwelcoming school climate</td>
<td>• Attendance only matters in the older grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unsafe path to/from school</td>
<td>• Suspensions and expulsions</td>
<td>• Failure to earn credits/no future plans</td>
<td>• Suspensions are not relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Poor transportation</td>
<td>• Harsh, biased disciplinary practices especially for students of color</td>
<td>• Many teacher absences or long-term substitutes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Housing and food insecurity</td>
<td>• Negative attitudes of parents due to their own school experience</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Frequent school changes</td>
<td>• Undiagnosed disability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Involvement with child welfare or juvenile justice systems</td>
<td>• Lack of appropriate accommodations for disability</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inequitable access to resources due to bias &amp; discrimination.</td>
<td>• Pressure for academic success</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.attendanceworks.org
New Research Brief!
Release date: September 10, 2019

Using Chronic Absence Data to Improve Conditions for Learning & Student Outcomes

https://www.attendanceworks.org/using-chronic-absence-data-to-improve-conditions-for-learning/
American Institutes for Research

David Osher

Vice President and Institute Fellow

American Institutes for Research
What are Conditions for Learning?

Physical and Emotional Health and Safety

Adult and Student Emotional Competence

Belonging, Connection, and Support

Academic Challenge and Engagement

Relationships are Essential to Positive Conditions for Learning
What is the Connection Between Conditions for Learning and Chronic Absence?

Conditions for learning and chronic absence, embedded within school and community factors, affect each other.
The Push and Pull of Conditions for Learning

Examples of Push-Out Factors

Feeling:
Ignored
Unsafe
That you do not belong

Experiencing:
Bullying
Boredom
Harsh and Exclusionary Discipline

Examples of Pull Factors

Feeling:
Cared for
Safe
That you belong

Experiencing:
Engagement
Support for students and their families
What is the policy opportunity (and challenge)?

**Positive Engagement:**
Uses caring relationships, effective messaging and a positive school climate to motivate daily attendance.

**Shared Accountability:**
Ensures chronic absence is monitored & reinforced by policy.

**Strategic partnerships**
between district and community partners address specific attendance barriers and mobilize support for all ingredients.

**Actionable Data:**
Is accurate, accessible, and regularly reported in an understandable format.

**Capacity Building**
Expands ability to work together to interpret data, engage in problem solving, and adopt best practices to improve attendance.
Under ESSA, all states must report chronic absence. Most states included it as a metric in their implementation plans.

Who's In: Chronic Absenteeism Under the Every Student Succeeds Act

Future Ed, Georgetown University, September 2017.
The advantages of Chronic Absence Data

✓ Available nationally through the Office of Civil Rights and (soon) Ed Facts
✓ Now published annually by the majority of states
✓ Increasingly produced in real-time by school districts
✓ More frequently available than measures of emotional health or academic performance
The challenge is advancing a new attendance paradigm

From: Truancy
- Counts unexcused absences
- Emphasizes individual compliance with school rules
- Uses legal, typically more blaming and punitive, solutions

To: Chronic Absence
- Counts all absences
- Emphasizes academic impact of missed days
- Uses preventive problem-solving, trauma-sensitive strategies
- Cultivates family & student engagement
Nurture Conditions for Learning & Improve Attendance through Integrated Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports

Additional intensive interventions to address the needs of students who require greater support

Early interventions for students at risk of chronic absence

Foundation
Questions from
the Audience
Georgia

Garry McGiboney
Deputy Superintendent,
Office of School Safety & Climate
Georgia Dept. of Education

Arianne Weldon
Director,
Get Georgia Reading Campaign
Georgia Family Connection Partnership
There is a correlation between student attendance and the School Climate Star Rating (Wu 2017).
**School Climate** is the experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, social interactions, access, engagement, connections, teaching and learning practices, building quality, safety, and organizational practices.
GaPBIS Mission

To improve climates in Georgia schools and community settings through the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework.

Increased the number of PBIS schools from 80 to 1,300 in seven years.

Key Features of PBIS

Evidence-based framework developed to assist school teams in providing preventative, positive behavioral support for **All** students. This system of support includes:

- Clearly defined behavioral expectations
- Social & behavioral skills instruction
- Positive and proactive discipline
- Active supervision and monitoring
- Positive acknowledgement
- Data-based decision making
- Parent training and collaboration
Georgia includes school climate as an early indicator in its accountability system.

The **School Climate Star Rating** is a diagnostic tool to determine if a school is on the right path to school improvement, including attendance, behavior, and academic outcomes.
School Climate Star Rating Data Metrics

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Survey</td>
<td>Student Discipline Data (discipline data and enrollment = weighted OSS rate)</td>
<td>School Attendance Data (students and teachers)</td>
<td>Survey + Discipline Data (Ratio of drugs, alcohol, bullying, &amp; dangerous incidents)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Climate Star Rating (Scale 1-5: Negative to Positive)

*Schools have access to each School Climate Star Rating metric, because the Rating is intended to be prescriptive not punitive. Improvement of school climate depends on effective change of each determinant – identifying patterns and clues.*
Percent of 3rd Grade Students ELA Proficient or Distinguished By School Climate Rating, 2018

- 1: 10%
- 2: 17%
- 3: 27%
- 4: 39%
- 5: 44%
• The Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, and Metro-Regional Education Service Agency developed PBIS Classroom Early Learning Modules for Pre-K — 3rd grade teachers.

• The modules are designed to help teachers structure positive learning environments by embedding developmentally appropriate classroom practices into Tier I systems of support.
• Based on the **Pyramid Model** framework designed for young children, these modules equip elementary school teachers with a toolkit of age- and developmentally-appropriate strategies.

• This is a new system for Georgia and the nation.
Schools and school districts that conducted close reviews of student absences found that health issues accounted for many absences and are increasing.

➢ Children with tooth decay are almost 3 times more likely than their peers to miss school, and over 52% of Georgia’s third graders have tooth decay.

➢ 10% of Georgia’s children suffer from asthma (75,000 students missed over 470,000 school days).

➢ Tooth decay and asthma are the most common chronic diseases in children, and the leading causes of health-related school absences.
Emergency Room Visits for Asthma, Ages 0-19, (Rate per 10,000)

- Insufficient Data
- 199.10 or less
- 199.11 - 332.50
- 332.51 - 497.80
- 497.81 - 772.40
- 772.41 or more

Source: Georgia Department of Public Health, Office of Health Indicators for Planning

Schools

- % STUDENTS ABSENT 10% OR MORE OF ENROLLED DAYS, 2018
  Greater than 15.0%
- % STUDENTS ABSENT 10% OR MORE OF ENROLLED DAYS, 2018
  10.0% - 14.9%
- 3RD GRADE ELA MILESTONES, % PROFICIENT AND ABOVE, 2018
  Less than 15.0%

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission
• State legislators passed a law in 2018 that prohibits students in preschool – 3rd grade from being suspended from school for more than five days without first receiving a multi-tiered system of supports—a framework for identifying and addressing students’ academic and developmental needs.
  ➢ For example: uncorrected vision problems may be manifest in misbehavior.

• The Georgia Department of Community Health is finalizing a policy change to leverage Medicaid reimbursement and significantly increase the number of school nurses.

• The Georgia Department of Community Affairs is incentivizing affordable housing developers to build properties that include supports addressing barriers to educational attainment, such as on-site early learning centers, on-site preventive health screenings, and health education.

• A state law passed in 2019 includes provisions for supporting tenants’ concerns regarding health and safety issues such as mold and other environmental triggers for asthma.
Questions from the Audience
Cleveland, Ohio

Lorri Hobson
Director of Attendance
Cleveland Metropolitan School District
Cleveland Demographic

- Cleveland has 38,949 scholars.
  - 68 K-8 schools
  - 39 9-12 schools
- 100% on Free and Reduced Price Lunch.
- 64.5% African-American, 15.7% White, 15.8% Hispanic/Latino; 9% Limited English Proficient
“Get 2 School. You Can Make It!”

• In the summer of 2015, with the CEO’s commitment and leadership, Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) launched an attendance campaign to address one of the most significant barriers to student achievement, chronic absenteeism.

  – Ohio Department of Education = Chronic Absenteeism missing at least 10% (18 days) of the full academic year for any reason
  – CMSD = Chronic Absenteeism missing at least 10 days for the full academic year for any reason
Campaign Activities

- Established a campaign committee
- Outreach to stakeholders in labor, central office and departments who touch attendance: transportation, security, secretaries, principals to be a part of the campaign
- Outreach to partners in the community including the Cleveland Browns, McDonalds, Cleveland City Council and county leaders, Faith Based Community, local businesses, parent groups
Attendance Strategies

• Phone Banking
• Canvassing
• Clap Ins
• College Scholarship Opportunities with PBS
• Giveaways/Celebrations
• Social Media
• Professional Development
Campaign Results

• **Baseline: 2014-15**
  – 47.4% of enrollment was On Track

• **2015-16**
  – 55.6% On Track

• **2016-17**
  – 56.3% On Track

• **2018-19**
  – 58.6% On Track
Humanware is an initiative of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. It was based on the 2007-08 AIR audit that identified challenges and recommended three strategies to create safe schools with good conditions for learning.

It is a multi-tiered relational approach to school improvement that involves:

- Conditions for learning
- Social and emotional learning
- Early intervention
- Family engagement
- Coordinated intensive services
Questions from the Audience
School Action Framework
School Action Framework

**STEP 1:** Determine chronic absence levels.

**STEP 2:** Examine overlap with other data.

**STEP 3:** Identify school and community factors affecting attendance and conditions for learning.

**STEP 4:** Use insights to strengthen prevention and early intervention.

**STEP 5:** Take coordinated action and engage in continuous improvement.
Lauren Bauer
Fellow – Economic Studies
The Hamilton Project at the Brookings Institution
Chronic Absence: School and Community Factors

Lauren Bauer
Fellow in Economic Studies, The Brookings Institution

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hamiltonproject.org
Chronic Absence: School and Community Factors

This Hamilton Project at Brookings interactive map shows rates of chronic absence along with relevant school and community factors for every school in the country. You can search by zip code or school name; click on schools to discover more information. By gradespan, schools with lower rates of chronic absence are shown in yellow and schools with the highest rates of chronic absence are shown in red.

Source: The Hamilton Project
https://www.hamiltonproject.org/charts/chronic_absence_across_the_united_states
Chronic Absence: School and Community Factors

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Source: The Hamilton Project
Panel Discussion

David Osher  
VP & Institute Fellow  
American Institutes for Research

Garry McGiboney  
Deputy Superintendent  
School Safety & Climate  
Georgia Dept. of Education

Lorri Hobson  
Director of Attendance  
Cleveland Metropolitan School District

Arianne Weldon  
Director  
Get Georgia Reading  
Georgia Family Connection

Lauren Bauer  
Fellow, Economic Studies  
The Hamilton Project at the Brookings Institution
Announcements

Cecelia Leong
Director for Programs
Attendance Works
New resources available today!

September Research Brief
Using Chronic Absence Data to Improve Conditions for Learning

https://www.attendanceworks.org/using-chronic-absence-data-to-improve-conditions-for-learning/

Interactive Data Map from the Hamilton Project at the Brookings Institution

http://brookings.edu/chronicabsence
Attendance Playbook: A New Resource from FutureEd & Attendance Works

- Offers nearly 2 dozen interventions for reducing chronic absenteeism
- Provides ESSA research level, tier of support, rationale and resources for each approach

https://www.future-ed.org/attendance-playbook/
### Yearly Planning Calendars

**District and School team versions available**

**Blank versions available so you can customize your plan!**

- [https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/year-long-planning/](https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/year-long-planning/)
Scan of Environment and Attendance Tool (SEAT)

Designed for school leaders to engage staff, students, parents and community members to identify strengths and opportunities to promote positive school culture and strong attendance.

https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/scan-environment-attendance/
#PROMISECHAT

How Safe and Supportive Learning Environments Can Improve Attendance
#SchoolEveryDay

September 12 at 3pm ET/12pm PT

Join @AmericasPromise, @AttendanceWorks, & @FutureEdGU
Back to School Twitter Chat

MENTOR, Attendance Works, and SchoolHouse Connection are teaming up to chat about how caring adult relationships can help youth thrive and stay in school.

September 19 | 2PM EDT

#MentorIRL #SchoolEveryDay
PROMOTE LOCALLY

✓ Download our free materials and our online Count Us In! toolkit and share with local districts.

✓ Encourage schools and community partners to join our listserv: 18,000+ members.

Sign up for Updates: www.awareness.attendanceworks.org
Superintendents Call to Action

Own the issue  Mobilize the Community  Drive with Data

To sign-up for the Call to Action, or to learn more, please visit: www.attendanceworks.org/superintendents-call-to-action
Superintendents Call to Action

Call to Action Timeline

• Invite your Superintendent to join using our template letter

• Press release sharing the names of all the Superintendents who joined will be sent out on October 16

• Deadline for inclusion in press release: Monday, October 7

Find the template letter and more resources for Superintendents here:
https://www.attendanceworks.org/take-action/educators/superintendents-call-to-action/
Opportunities to Promote AAC 2019!

Share the Attendance Awareness website: http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/

✓ Like us on Facebook

✓ Tweet using #schooleveryday @attendanceworks

✓ Add a badge to your signature line or materials (Spanish versions are available, too!) https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/promotional-materials/2019-badges/

✓ Write a blog post on your website promoting regular attendance and the Attendance Awareness Campaign!
Share Your Story!

What are you doing for Attendance Awareness?

We would love to know what you’re doing! Fill in your details, send a photo, and look for your story in Community News 2019.

https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/share-your-story/
2019 Webinar Series

★ March 21: Lay a Foundation for Success: Engage Families to Address Early Chronic Absence

★ May 16: Nurture Dreams: Ensure Students Feel Safe, Supported, Connected and Engaged

★ August 8: Open Doors: Create a Healthy School Climate

★ September 10: A Place Where We Belong: Improving Conditions for Learning

http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/webinars/
And special appreciation to our philanthropic partners:

The California Endowment
Campaign for Grade-Level Reading
Jonathan Logan Family Foundation
Skillman Foundation
United Way of Southeastern Michigan
Support AAC 2019

http://www.attendanceworks.org/donate/
Webinar Recording

We will post a recording of this webinar within 72 hours:

http://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/webinars/
Feedback

Please let us know how we can improve:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/conditions-for-learning

Thank you!