Collective Action:
Developing a Cross-Sector Approach to Reduce Chronic Absence
Welcome

Samantha Wigand
Director, Childhood Success
Global Impact, Strategy and Innovation
United Way Worldwide
2016 Convening Partners
2015 By the Numbers

- More than 400 communities in 45 states pinned on the Attendance Action Map
- 182,300 website page views in September
- 4,400 listserv subscribers
- 1,351 media hits
- 8,800 tweets using #schooleveryday creating 15.7 million impressions
- 212 superintendents signed Call to Action appearing in EdWeek
2016 Campaign Goals

• **Expand the public’s awareness** of the importance of attendance particularly for our most vulnerable children with special attention to addressing barriers related physical and behavioral health;

• **Use data** to drive and take action; and

• **Activate a wide array of stakeholders** -- educators and likely and unlikely public agencies and community allies
What’s New in 2016

• Greater emphasis on strategic messaging throughout the year with September as a launch activity.

• Leveraging Every Student, Every Day Initiative (including national success mentor initiative, June Summit, OCR data release)

• New momentum created by inclusion of chronic absence in ESSA

• Even greater emphasis on the chronic absence as a barrier to equal opportunity to learn, especially for our most vulnerable students.
Cecelia Leong
Associate Director for Programs
Attendance Works

Hedy Chang
Executive Director
Attendance Works

& Members of the Attendance Works Team
• Review of Key Concepts
• Cross-Sector Partnerships:
  • Susan Dawson
    *E3 Alliance*
  • Dr. Kevin Riley & Treva Haugaard
    *Greater Omaha Attendance and Learning Services*
  • Ellie Rossiter & Uzuri Pease-Greene
    *Hope SF*
• Questions & Answers
• Announcements & Resources
Poll Question

What sector does your organization represent?
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).
# Multiple Measures of Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Daily Attendance</strong></td>
<td>How many students show up to school every day? The percent of enrolled students who attend school each day. It is used in some states for allocating funding.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Truancy</strong></td>
<td>Who is missing school without permission? Typically refers only to unexcused absences. Each state has the authority to define truancy and when it triggers legal intervention.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Chronic Absence</strong></td>
<td>Who is missing so much school they are academically at risk? Broadly means missing too much school for any reason -- excused, unexcused, etc. Researchers commonly define it as missing 10% of school. OCR currently defines it as missing 15 days. Chronic absence is a required reporting metric in ESSA.</td>
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Chronic Absence a Huge National Problem

OVER 6 MILLION

students missed 15 or more days of school in 2013-14.

That’s 13 percent of the student population—or 1 in 8 students.

Source: U.S. Department of Education Civil Rights Data Collection
Why Does Attendance Matter for Achievement?

What we know from research around the country
Chronic Early Absence Connected to Poor Long-Term 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
• **2X** as likely to be **retained** in grade.
• **2X** likely to be **suspended** by the end of 7th grade.
• Likely to continue being chronically absent

Chronic absence in kindergarten  Lower levels of literacy in first grade  Lower achievement as far out as fifth grade
The Effects of Chronic Absence on Dropout Rates Are Cumulative

Proportion of Students Dropping Out by Number of Years the Student was Chronically Absent from 8th-12th Grades

How Can We Address Chronic Absence?
# Unpack contributing factors to chronic absence

## Myths
- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Sporadic versus consecutive absences aren’t a problem
- Attendance only matters in the older grades

## Barriers
- Lack of access to health or dental care
- Poor Transportation
- Trauma
- No safe path to school
- Homelessness

## Aversion
- Child struggling academically or socially
- Bullying
- Ineffective school discipline
- Parents had negative school experience
- Undiagnosed disability

## Disengagement
- Lack of engaging and relevant instruction
- No meaningful relationships with adults in school
- Vulnerable to being with peers out of school vs. in school
- Poor school climate
What is the #1 reason why students are absent in your community?
Invest in Prevention and Early Intervention

**Tier 1**
- Recognize good & improved attendance
- Educate & engage students and families
- Monitor attendance data & set goals
- Establish positive & engaging school climate
- Identify & address common barriers to getting to school

**Tier 2**
- Provide personalized early outreach
- Meet to develop tailored action plan
- Connect to a caring mentor

**Tier 3**
- Intensive case management with coordination of public agency and legal response as needed

- Students missing 20% or more of school (severe chronic absence)
- Students missing 10–19% (moderate chronic absence)
- Students missing 5–9% (at risk)
- Students missing less than 5% (satisfactory)
Take a Data Driven Systemic Approach

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

**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.

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

**Strategic partnerships**
Between district and community partners address specific attendance barriers and mobilize support for all ingredients.
Tailor Response to Scale and Intensity of the Challenge

- **At the District Level**: is there a need for a community-wide response or targeted efforts in a sub-set of schools?
- **At the School Level**: how many students are chronically absent?
- If it’s 30 or less, a student support team can lead the effort.
- If it’s closer to 50 or more, teachers will need to play a critical role.
- If it’s over 100, community partners will likely be needed to provide additional person power

*Source: Everyone Graduates Center*
E3 Alliance
(Central Texas/Austin)
Susan Dawson
President & Executive Director
E3 Alliance

Contact information:

sdawson@e3alliance.org
E3 Alliance is a Catalyst for Educational Change in Central Texas

E3 Alliance uses objective data and focused community collaboration to align our education systems so all students succeed and lead Central Texas to economic prosperity

- Dedicated to systems change in education
- Aligning efforts Cradle to Career
- Serves as the Central Texas regional P-16 Council
- Nationally recognized as a highly effective model of Collective Impact
Missing School Matters Background

• Spring 2011 Legislative Session: What can we do to stem the bleeding?

• Superintendents: community can help increase attendance:
  
  1. “Triple Bottom Line” benefit
     - Students can’t learn if not in school
     - Teachers can’t teach
     - Schools funded based on average daily attendance

  2. Unlike teacher quality, communities can directly and positively impact

• E3 Alliance using powerful data to spearhead regional attendance campaign
Making the Case to Business and Community: Data Collection and Analysis
Central Texas Has More Absences Than Texas on Average at Every Grade

Average Number of Absences, By Grade, 2010-11

Source: E³ Alliance analysis of PEIMS data at the UT Austin Education Research Center
One Fifth of All Students Miss More Than 2 Weeks of School

Percent of K-12 Students by Number of Absences, Central Texas, 2012-13

- Zero Absences: 9%
- 1 to 5 Absences: 46%
- 6 to 10 Absences: 24%
- More than 10 Absences: 20%

Source: E³ Alliance analysis of PEIMS data at the UT Austin Education Research Center
Chronically absent 9th grade students are 10 times more likely to not graduate on time compared to students who miss five or fewer days.
Strategy: Branding & Public Awareness
Missing School Matters

A regional public awareness campaign
Our goal: increase student attendance by 2 percentage points (average 3 days/student)

MORE STUDENTS ACHIEVE

$34 MILLION
Yellow Cab helping to Curb Absences in CTX

- Texas high school students who miss 10 school days a year are three times more likely to drop out than those who miss 5 days.

- E3 Alliance

- missingschoolmatters.org
In this Season of Giving...

- **Give students the chance to learn**
  Only miss school on scheduled school holidays.

- **Give teachers the chance to teach**
  Teachers can't teach effectively when they are "catching up" students who miss extra days.

- **Give school districts needed dollars**
  Every day missed costs schools money that could support more teachers, sports programs and electives.

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Plan family vacations only during school holidays.
- Students in Central Texas miss MORE days of school than their peers in Texas in ALL grades.
- The problem is worse in high school!
- Over half of the absences in Central Texas are potentially preventable (including routine medical, dental check-ups, traveling or just skipping school).

Central Texas school districts save millions of dollars when students are in school.
- Each day a student misses costs the school about $38.
- Absences add up quickly: a typical high school in Central Texas can lose $20,000 a week due to student absences.
- Our schools are losing over $91 million a year due to student absences.

Wrap up the year right!
- Let's give our students the gift of education and keep them in class during school days in November and December!
- Over the past two years Central Texas has saved $12 million in revenue for schools by reducing absences. Let's do our part to continue this positive trend this season of giving!

www.missingschoolmatters.org

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En esta época de bondad...

- **Dé a los estudiantes la oportunidad de aprender**
  Sólo falte a clases los días festivos escolares programados.

- **Dé a los maestros la oportunidad de enseñar**
  Los maestros no pueden enseñar debidamente cuando tienen que poner al corriente a los estudiantes que faltaron en días regulares.

- **Dé a los distritos escolares los dólares que tanto necesitan**
  Cada día de ausencia, la escuela pierde dinero que podría usar para proporcionar más maestros, programas deportivos y clases optativas.

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Planee las vacaciones familiares solamente durante los días festivos escolares.
- Los estudiantes en el Centro de Texas faltan a clases MÁS días que sus compañeros en el resto del estado en TODOS los grados.
- El problema es peor en la preparatoria.
- Más de la mitad de las faltas en el Centro de Texas se pueden evitar, incluyendo las faltas debido a exámenes de rutina médicos y dentales, viajes, o simplemente las faltas sin justificación.

Los distritos escolares del Centro de Texas ahorran millones de dólares cuando los estudiantes asisten a clases.
- Cada día que su hijo falta, le cuesta a la escuela $38.
- Las ausencias se acumulan rápidamente. Una preparatoria típica del Centro de Texas puede perder $20,000 a la semana debido a las faltas de los estudiantes.
- Nuestras escuelas están perdiendo más de $91 millones al año debido a las faltas de los estudiantes.

¡Termine bien el año!
- Démélos el regalo de la educación a nuestros estudiantes procurando que asistan a clases durante los días escolares en noviembre y diciembre.
- En los últimos dos años, el Centro de Texas ha ahorrado $12 millones en ingresos para las escuelas al reducir las ausencias. Hagamos nuestra parte para que continuemos la tendencia positiva esta época de bondad.

www.missingschoolmatters.org

© 2016 E3 Alliance
$24.5M regional savings since campaign started!

Student and Absence Counts, Central Texas

Source: E3 analysis of PEIMS data at UT Austin Education Research Center for 2002-2013; TEA ad hoc request for 2014
Absence Reasons Study:
Driving Healthcare Partnerships
Absence Reasons Study

- **Which** students miss school, **where** and **why**?
- First of its kind study in Texas (maybe US?)
- Data to drive regional decision-making
  How community systems interact with student attendance and achievement
- Collected, analyzed and mapped **detailed** student attendance data representative sample schools
What Did We Find?

% of Absences by Absence Reason

- Acute Illness: 48%
- Skipping: 5%
- Chronic Illness: 4%
- Family Emergency: 4%
- Routine Dental Appt: 3%
- Preventative Medical: 2%
- Travel: 2%
- Mental Health Issue: 2%
- Suspension (not ISS): 1%
- Family Responsibility: 1%

Source: E3 Alliance analysis of absence data from 9 schools in PISD & HCISD, 1/14/13-3/8/13
Secondary ‘Flu’ Peak Matches Acute Illness Absences

Absences By Week August – March for 2012-13

Source: E3 Alliance analysis of Absence data from 9 schools in PISD & HCISD August 2012 through March 2013
Influenza-Like Illness doctor visit data from Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services

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Flu Immunization Campaign

- Fall 2014: Over 6500 vaccines provided at no cost to districts or families in 56 elementary schools – largest in-school immunization campaign in state history!

- Fall 2015: Almost 20,000 vaccines in 136 schools, 9 districts

- Gearing up for 2016: 14 districts, 350+ schools
  - Expanding to Houston area
  - Planning 75,000 vaccines!
  - Moving to fully sustainable model
Focus Area: Chronic Absence
Chronic Absence Focus

• Launched School Success Mentors in 3 Austin Secondary schools to “laser focus” on near chronically absent students

• Joined national STRIVE Innovation & Improvement network

• Focus of regional My Brother’s Keeper committee
Chronic Absence Rate Bright Spot Schools
Grade 9 Only, 2014-15

*Excluding all Juvenile Justice-focused schools and schools with <10% target population
Questions from the Audience
GOALS
(Greater Omaha)
Dr. Kevin Riley
Superintendent
Gretna Public Schools
Email: Riley@gretnadragons.org

Treva Haugaard
Executive Director
GOALS Center
Email: Treva.Haugaard@goals-center.org
BUILDING COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL COLLABORATIONS TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE
GOALS Center Mission

“To address absenteeism and at-risk behavior through encouragement of coordinated efforts to improve student attendance and learning.”
Eleven Districts in Two Counties

Student membership: 116,897
Number chronically absent: 9,903

School boundaries

1 Bennington  2 Douglas County West  3 Elkhorn  4 Gretna  5 Millard
6 Omaha  7 Ralston  8 Westside  9 Bellevue  10 Papillion-La Vista  11 Springfield-Platteview

SOURCE: Douglas County Election Commissioner’s Office

The six voting districts and the 11 school districts that make up the learning community.

THE WORLD-HERALD
Purpose of GOALS Center

- Early Identification of Students and Families in Need
- Identification and Elimination of System Issues
- Prompt Delivery of Cooperative, Multiagency Resources
In 2009 the GOALS Center established as part of the Superintendent’s Plan to reduce excessive absenteeism
LB 800

Interlocal Agreements with all Public School Districts in Douglas and Sarpy Counties, with each committing personnel/in-kind resources

Memorandum of Understanding with community partners NE-DHHS, Probation, County Attorney, Law Enforcement

Established as a 501(c)3 in 2013

Subsequent years have seen law changes:
2011 (LB 463)
2012 (LB 933) and
2014 (LB 464 – AM 1264)

2011 GOALS served first students, now rounding out 5th year of services

GOALS Center History
GOALS Center Pyramid of Intervention

- Targeted Interventions
- Referral to GOALS
- District Level Intervention
- Building Level Intervention

Community Interventions
GOALS Center Service Model

Referral
- Referrals from school district, caregiver, or another community stakeholder with concerns about school attendance

Assessment
- Family Advocates will complete a full assessment which will funnel in to the Service Plan
- Ohio Scales and/or SRA utilized

Service Plan
- Family Advocates, with the student, family, and school personnel, develop a service plan outlining goals for the student to be successful in school
- Plan is reviewed and revised as necessary

Service and Closure
- Ongoing meetings with family, student, school personnel
- Successful case closure occurs with improved, consistent school attendance and completion of the service plan
Family voice and choice important when connecting families to resources

Ensuring financial ability to connect to resources

Resources are culturally competent and respectful

Family voice and choice important when connecting families to resources
Other points of interest:
- 77% of referrals came from the schools
  - 155 different school buildings represented
- Recent significant increases in engagement
  - Especially by middle school students, African American students
- Need for a waiting list for services

Program/Process Data Notes
As of May 13, 2016:
- 1,064 Referrals have been received
- 81% appropriate for services
- 63% of those engage with services
- 455 have been served and closed
- 93 currently being served
- 22 on waiting list
GOALS Center Key Outcomes

Prevention of Involvement with Juvenile Justice

Other outcomes measured:
- Academic performance at referral and closure
- Involvement with community resources at closure
- Consumer satisfaction
- Ohio Scales

Increase in Attendance for Students Served
Program Outcomes (Dec 2014 – May 2016)

Successful closures (n=110) demonstrated dramatic improvement in the proportion of days attended; Neutral closures (n=44) saw some improvement; Unsuccessful closures (n=66) did not improve.

- 70% of all served were offered community resources
- 78.3% were not involved with the court for truancy
- 67.6% of all served were passing all or most classes at closure
Anecdotal Impact...

“Knowing there was someone on my side and who had my back was reassuring. He gave us great suggestions and was able to guide us to better school years.”

“This lady right here was a huge part in the success and him graduating...she was a tremendous help to him and to myself! Thank you so much for all you did for my son and family!”
Questions from the Audience
Hope SF
HOPE SF: A Trauma-Informed Approach to Improving School Attendance in Public Housing
Disrupting intergenerational poverty, reducing social isolation, and creating racially equitable mixed income communities without mass displacement.

Improve Outcomes for Existing Residents

Build Housing w/out Mass Displacement

Create Thriving, Mixed-income Neighborhoods

Government

Developers

Community

Philanthropy
How Data Influenced Our Actions

Chronic Absence in San Francisco

City  | Bayview  | HOPE SF
-----|---------|-------
      |         |       

66
Building Community Around Children

- Do No Harm
- Acceptance
- Self-determination
- Safety
- Trust-building, Consistency and Reliability
- Sustainability
The Walking School Bus
HOPE SF Education Strategies

Each HOPE SF site has an Education Liaison—a community-based professional that promotes family engagement and advocates for students at schools.

Eight SFUSD elementary schools in HOPE SF neighborhoods adjust their methodology based on what is culturally relevant to the student and the community.

- **4 HOPE SF SITES**
- **4 EDUCATION LIASIONS**
- **8 SFUSD SCHOOLS**

**Attendance**

**Achievement**

**Graduation**
Questions from the Audience
To Learn More

- **E3 Alliance**
  http://e3alliance.org/
  http://www.attendanceworks.org/what-works/central-texas-a-regional-campaign/

- **GOALS**
  http://www.goals-center.com/

- **Hope SF**
  http://hope-sf.org/
Resources & Announcements
Superintendent’s 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
What to Do When: At a Glance

Let’s get started!
- Convene coalition
- Recruit partners
- Meet with district
- Enlist health care providers
- Launch poster contests and other marketing campaigns

Early Summer
Getting into specifics
- Distribute talking points
- Enlist elected officials & celebs
- Line up incentives
- Analyze data

Late Summer
It’s Go Time
- Tape PSAs
- Begin media outreach
- Print banners & posters
- Plan assemblies and Back-to-School events
- Launch door-knocking campaigns

Back to School!
- Release proclamations
- Host Back-to-School events
- Host press conferences

September!
- Share data
- Spread the word!
Call to Action: Role of Collaborating Partners

• Download our free materials and toolkit and share with local districts.

• Encourage schools and community partners to join our listserv: 4,400+ members.

http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/count-us-toolkit-2016/
Pin on the 2016 Action Map

- Post your community’s plans for Attendance Awareness Month 2016 on our map
- Bragging rights to the state with the most pins!

http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/aam-map-form-2016/
Making the case

Do you want to engage partners in these areas?

- Business leaders
- Early childhood educators
- Faith leaders
- Health providers
- Mayors and city leaders
- Out of school time providers
- Philanthropy
- Volunteers and national service

FREE FROM ATTENDANCE WORKS!

The District Attendance Tracking Tools (DATT) and School Attendance Tracking Tools (SATT) are available in Three Modules:

• Grades PK-5
• Grades 6-8 and
• Grades 9-12

We also offer a Tool to Combine the Modules for PK-12 reports.

http://www.attendanceworks.org/tools/tools-for-calculating-chronic-absence/
Mentoring *In Real Life* & Attendance Week

- September 19-25, 2016
- Week is focused on amplifying the message that quality, real life mentoring can be instrumental to attendance and academic success.
- Promotional toolkit available with social media messages, graphics and more. [Download now.](#)
- Join us for an engaging Twitter chat 9/21!

MENTORING & ATTENDANCE

Twitter Chat

Wednesday, Sept. 21 at 3PM ET/12 PM PT

#MentorIRL
#SchoolEveryDay
Addressing the Health-Related Causes of Chronic Absenteeism: A Toolkit for Action

Taking action to address health-related chronic absenteeism can have a powerful impact on students’ academic success and well-being for a lifetime.

This document highlights key points from Healthy Schools Campaign’s toolkit for addressing this critical issue. It focuses on preparing educators—particularly school district decision-makers—with knowledge and practical guidance for creating meaningful change to address health-related chronic absenteeism.

To access the full toolkit, please visit: healthyschoolscampaign.org/chronic-absenteeism

HEALTHY SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN
EVERY CHILD DESERVES TO LEARN + THRIVE

healthyschoolscampaign.org/policy/education/
Early and Often

Save the Date!
2016 Webinar Series

- **April 12**: Motivating Good Attendance All Year Long
- **May 17**: Using Data to Drive Action; Portraits of Chronic Absence
- **August 16**: Collective Action: Taking a Cross-Sector Approach
- **September 8**: Ensuring an Equal Opportunity to Learn: Leveraging Chronic Absence Data for Strategic Action
- **November 1**: Attendance Awareness All Year Long: Reviewing and Sustaining Progress

[http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/webinars/](http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/webinars/)
We will post a recording of this webinar on our website within 72 hours at:

http://www.attendanceworks.org/peer-learning-resources/
Please let us know how we can improve:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Collective-Action
Support AAC 2016

http://www.attendanceworks.org/donate-to-attendance-works/
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