Data + Relationships to Support Transitions to School

Welcome

S. Kwesi Rollins

Vice President for Leadership
& Engagement

*Institute for
Educational Leadership*

Chair, Advisory Board,
Attendance Works

Agenda

I. Welcome

Joline Collins, Program Manager of Leadership Development, IEL

II. Attendance Awareness Campaign

Kwesi Rollins, Director of Leadership Programs, IEL

III. A new data framework for attendance in distance learning

Hedy Chang, Executive Director, Attendance Works

IV. Practice Panel – Data and Relationships

- ❖ *Jacqueline Dungey, Principal, New Paradigm Loving Academy, Detroit MI*
- ❖ *Dr. Beshon Smith, Executive Director, Center for Supportive Schools for Delaware, Maryland and Washington, D.C.*
- ❖ *Angela Duran, Campaign Director, Arkansas Campaign for Grade-Level Reading*

V. AAC 2020-2021 Tools and Resources

Cecelia Leong, Vice President, Attendance Works

About IEL

The Institute for Educational Leadership acts as a catalyst and capacity builder at the intersection of education, community collaboration and workforce development to effectively promote equity and better opportunities for all children and youth. IEL:

- ✓ identifies and implements innovative strategies particularly where educational, economic, and social challenges or gaps exist.
- ✓ has developed, trained, and supported thousands of leaders across various networks.
- ✓ works at the local, state, and national level, investing in community leaders of all ages, stages, and sectors.

To learn more, visit our website: www.iel.org

Convening Partners
AAC 2020

Theme for 2020

Present, Engaged and Supported!

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2020 Theme: Present, Engaged and Supported!

Key Messages

1. Supporting regular attendance and monitoring absenteeism reduces educational inequities.

2. Building strong, trusting relationships that promote belonging is fundamental to improving student attendance and participation.

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

https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkit-2020/what-are-the-key-messages/

2020 Theme: Present, Engaged and Supported!

Key Messages

4. Reducing health-related absences is key because illness is the top reason students and families give for missing school.

5. The key to success is a proactive, positive, data driven, problem-solving approach.

6. Poor participation is a problem we can solve when the whole community collaborates with families and schools to support the transitions into school, whether it be in person, virtual or a blend.

https://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkit-2020/what-are-the-key-messages/

2020 Theme: Present, Engaged and Supported!

This week, leaders of 10 equity-centered, parent-led organizations representing approximately 1 million families in over 100 communities and 30 plus states released a [letter](#) to education leaders and policymakers:

- Our primary concerns are for the physical, social, and emotional health of our children and all staff within school communities.
- This pandemic has reminded us that <u>we are all</u> accountable to building and sustaining a strong, equitable educational system.
- The Bottom Line is Authentic Family Engagement is Imperative.
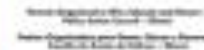
Welcome

Hedy Chang
Executive Director
Attendance Works

**& Members of the
Attendance Works Team**

About Attendance Works

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

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

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

Covid-19 Reinforces the Critical Importance of These Approaches:

❖ **A whole child/family approach** to education that pays attention to social and emotional well-being and school climate along with academics and recognizes families as the first teachers of their children.

❖ **Integrated virtual and in-person learning** that supports different learning styles and making up for classwork when students face challenges (e.g. health or transportation) getting to school.

❖ **Addressing inequitable access** to resources and supports with significant attention to monitoring **absenteeism** (missing too much school) to promote prevention and early intervention vs. punitive action.

❖ **Promote integrated strategies** by working across departments and organizations, including supporting an investment in community schools and leveraging the assets of community partners and health providers.
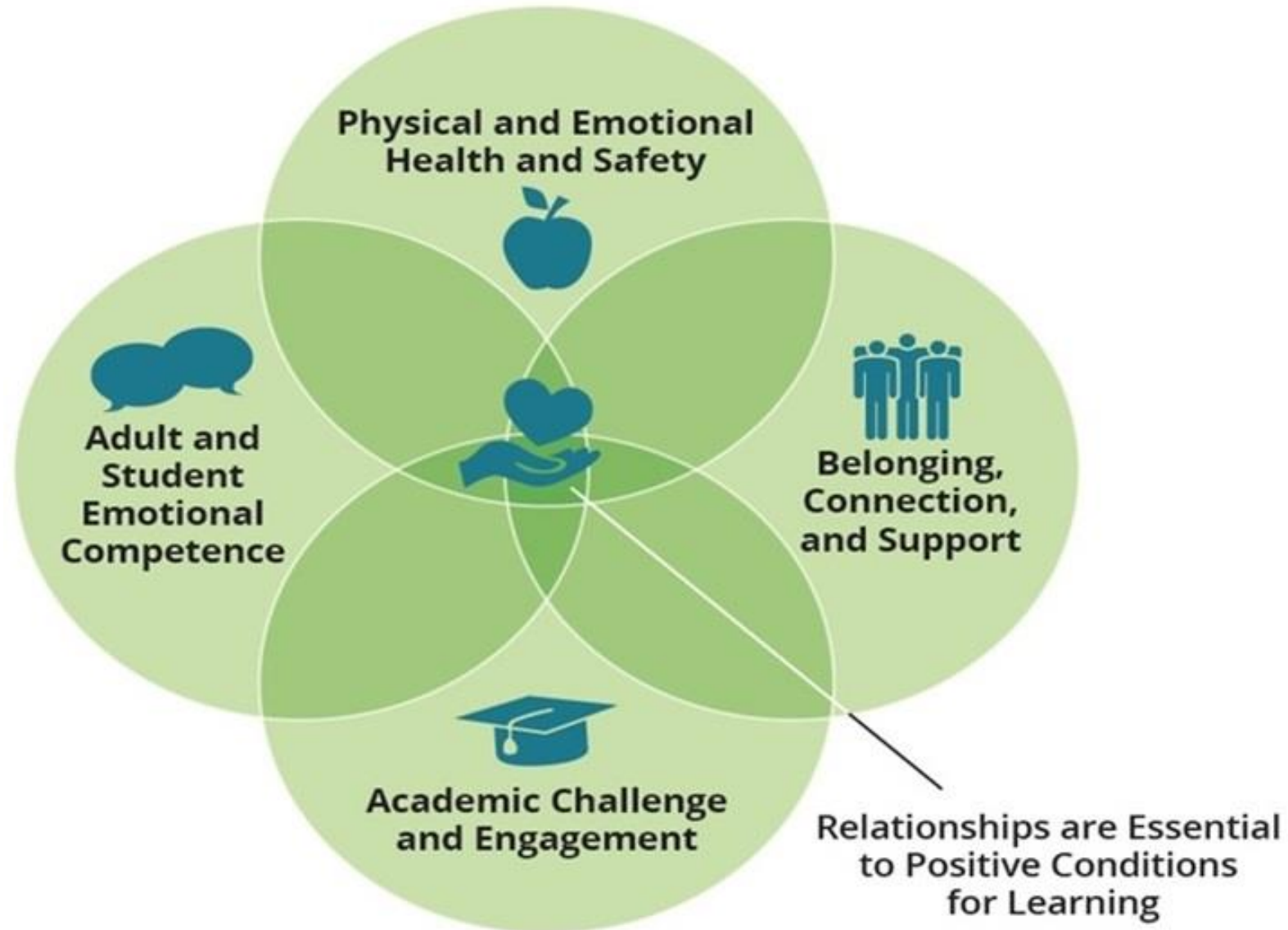
Absenteeism is a *leading* indicator of educational inequity

Attendance Works ©

Reducing Chronic Absence
Can Help Close Equity Gaps

- ✓ Vulnerable children, especially those living in poverty, are 2-3 times more likely to experience chronic absence at earlier ages.

- ✓ Vulnerable children are much less likely to have the resources to make up for lost learning time in the classroom.

- ✓ Vulnerable children are more likely to experience multiple years of chronic absence.

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

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

Flying Blind is Not Acceptable

Traditional student data tracking systems are not set up to track student attendance during distance learning. It is not clear whether or how most districts identified which students are missing or helped them to engage in distance learning.

Only 32 percent of districts and 61 percent of charter management organizations reviewed required schools to track attendance this spring. Districts that do not track attendance or require teachers to maintain contact with students may not know which students are learning and which are not — and **are now flying blind** as they prepare for fall.

(Results of 82 school districts by Center on Reinventing Public Education at the University of Washington, Bothell)

To Take a Systemic Approach – Need to Redefine Actionable Attendance & Absenteeism Data During Distance Learning

The Multiple Purposes for Attendance Data Should Guide Action

| Allocate Funding	Ensure Compliance with Compulsory Education	Accountability	Early Warning For Additional Support	Inform Program and Policy Decisions
⬆	⬆	⬆	⬆	⬆
Hold Harmless from Funding Cuts	Create Alternatives to Legal Action	Avoid High Stakes Accountability Until We Know More	Use AW Data Framework to Put in Place Expanded Metrics	Use AW Data Framework to Put in Place Expanded Metrics

Chronic Absence Remains a Critical Early Warning Measure

Chronic absence is missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at risk. To ensure it acts as an early warning sign, Attendance Works recommends defining it as **missing 10% or more of school for any reason**.

Excused absences + Unexcused absences + Suspensions → **Chronic Absence**
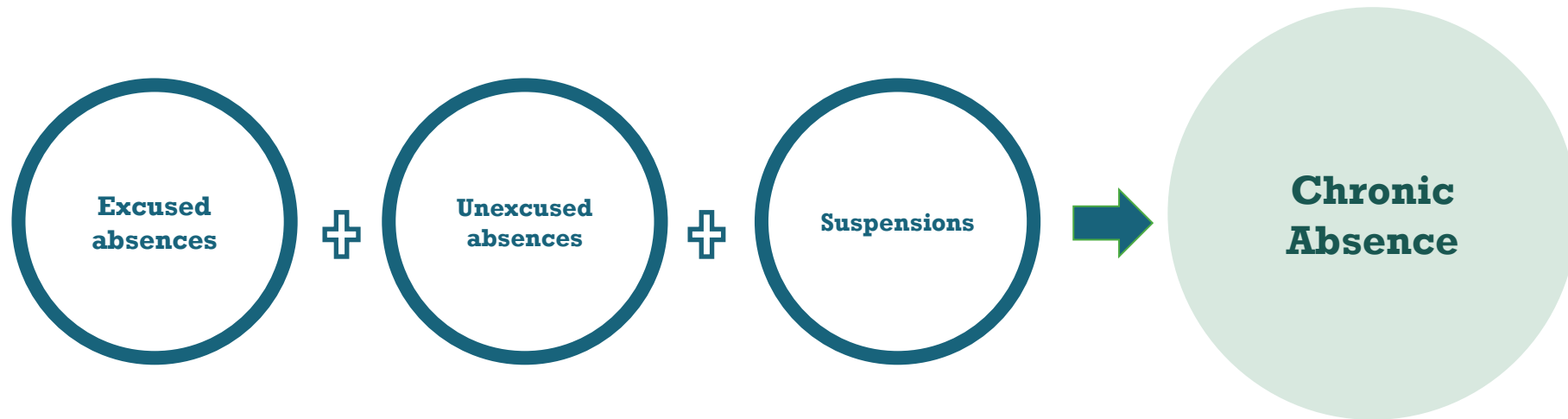
Chronic absence is different from **truancy** (unexcused absences only) or **average daily attendance** (how many students show up to school each day).

A New Data Framework is Needed for Distance/Blended Learning

A new framework for attendance and absenteeism data is needed to:

1. Encourage states, districts and communities to monitor lost learning time in school in order to promote student success regardless of ESSA accountability.

2. Adopt a holistic approach to data collection that informs current and future efforts to improve conditions of learning

3. Promote a tiered approach to supporting students beginning with prevention.

4. Strategically target investments that address the digital divide, lack of supports (health, economic, nutrition, housing, etc.) and other inequities.

Additional Terms for "Attendance" During Distance Learning

Contact — Working contact information exists for each enrolled student and their family.

Connectivity — Students and families have access to technology (computer, software and internet access) and school staff are equipped to support digital literacy.

Relationships — Students and families feel connected, supported and engaged in reciprocal, problem-solving relationships.

Participation — The extent to which students show up and complete learning activities.
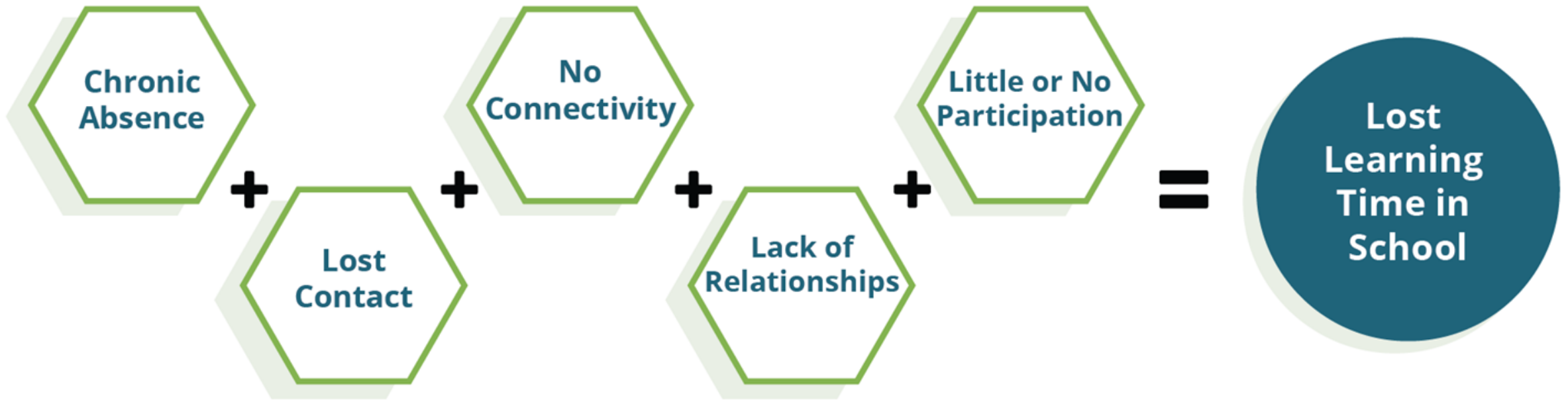
Additional "Attendance Measures"

	What are we (districts, schools & community partners) trying to find out?	What are school/district responsibilities, with support from community partners?	What data can we collect? (Possible data points)	What are the equity implications?
Contact	Can we reach students and families?	Maintain regularly updated contact information.	% of families with working contact information. % of students unreachable, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, zip code, homelessness, foster care, free and reduced lunch, disabilities.	Working contact information is essential to offering supports and learning opportunities.
Connectivity	Are we ensuring all students and families have digital access and competency?	Provide access to technology and equip school staff and families to use it effectively.	% of students/families with technology (have computer, software, and internet). % of staff who have the equipment and skills to support digital learning.	Lack of technology = less access to quality learning opportunities. Digital literacy requires offering support in the home languages of families.
Relationships	Are we establishing reciprocal relationships with students and families and creating a sense of connection and support?	Ensure students and families have meaningful two-way communications with staff and each other about how to improve conditions for learning.	% of students reporting positive relationships with at least one adult in the school. % of students participating in group relationship building activities led by adults or peers (clubs, enrichment activities, advisory and mentoring). % of families reporting positive relationships with school staff. % of families reporting the opportunity to provide feedback on school decisions.	When students and families are connected to and supported by the school community, students are more likely to do well academically and stay in school.
Participation	Are students participating in learning opportunities?	Offer options to participate in meaningful learning opportunities.	% of students participating in learning opportunities at least 95% of the time. % of students missing 10% or more of learning opportunities.	Students who participate regularly are less likely to fall behind academically and graduate.

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Proposal for Calculating Attendance/Participation Rates

Steps to Take	What is It?	Additional Considerations
1. Define the learning opportunities for the quarter or semester.	A learning opportunity is an instructional or learning activity that takes place in person, or synchronous or asynchronous distance learning.	
2. Track "attendance or participation" for each learning opportunity.	For in-person sessions and synchronous virtual sessions, school staff and leaders of enrichment activities would take attendance. For asynchronous distance learning, participation standards would be established, and missed participation documented.	What can be measured for asynchronous learning (e.g., the student showed evidence of completing the work or participating in the activity). How will attendance for each learning opportunity be recorded in a standardized system (SIS, Google doc, etc.)?
3. Calculate attendance and/or participation rates.	# of learning opportunities attended compared to the number of opportunities offered in-person, asynchronous and synchronous, for the period that the student is enrolled.	
4. Calculate the absence rate for each student.	Total # of absences from learning opportunities compared to total # of learning opportunities offered.	Data can be aggregated across quarters/semesters and across classes to determine if a student would be considered chronically absent for the year.
5. Analyze for patterns.	Calculate the number and percent of students with absenteeism rates of 10% or higher by school, grade, classroom, and sub-population.	
6. Develop early warning indicators for preventive action.	Establish appropriate indicators for intervention for each tier of response e.g. Tier 2 – missing 10% or more of learning opportunities in a month or 40% in a week.	

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Identifying Students At Risk Due to Absenteeism

Chronic Absence + **Lost Contact** + **No Connectivity** + **Lack of Relationships** + **Little or No Participation** = **Lost Learning Time in School**

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Use Data to Identify and Address Inequities

a) Analyze contact, connectivity, relationships and participation data overall, broken down by school, grade, race/ethnicity, home language, disability and zip code.

b) Use qualitative information, especially drawing upon the perspectives of students and families, to deepen an understanding of the contributing factors and how they might be addressed.
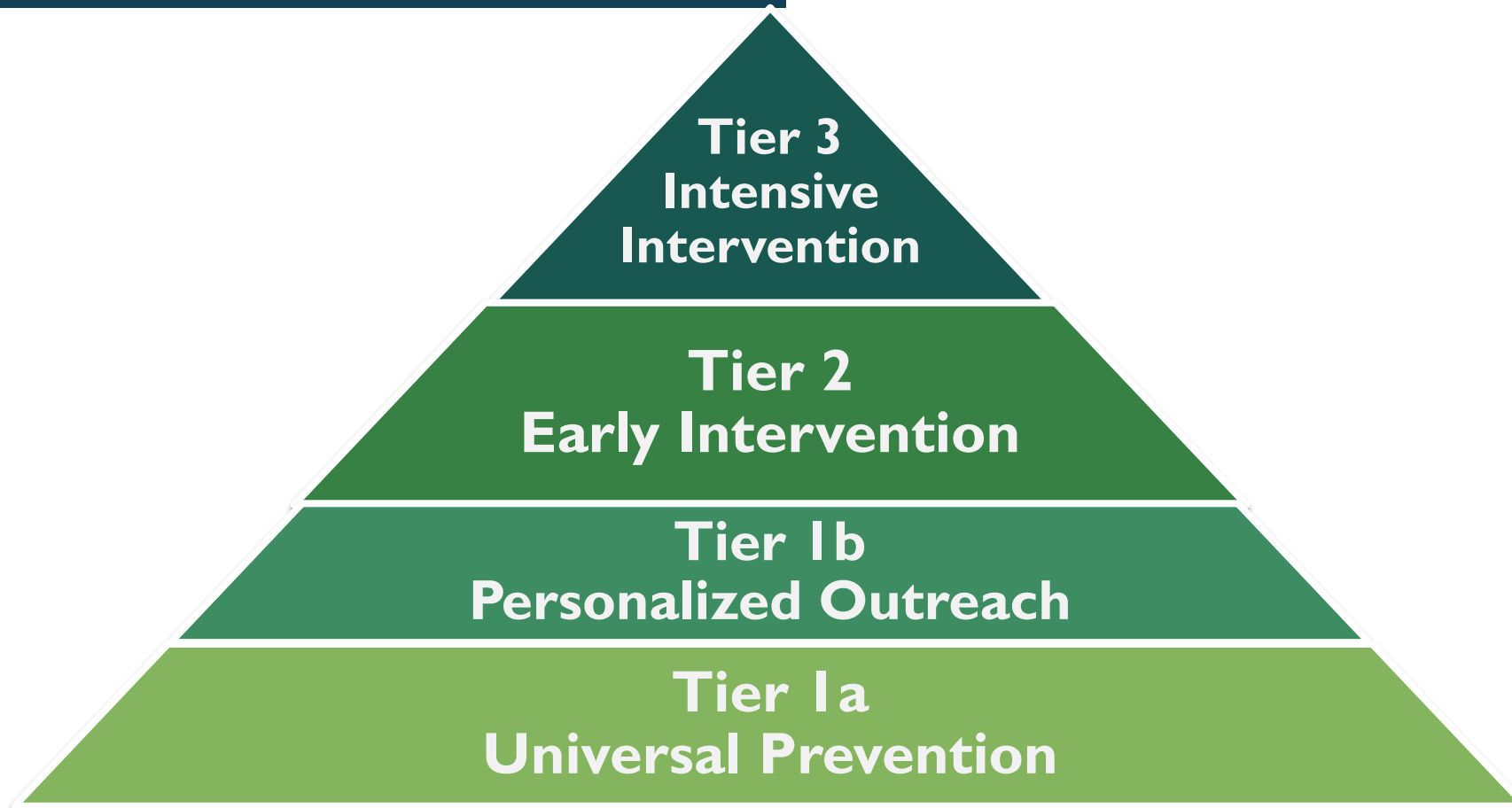
c) Determine how to address unequal access to resources.

Pay Attention to Transition Grades

Grade	Why pay attention to transition in these grades?
Kindergarten	What happens when children are entering formal schooling helps lay the foundation for future success. Families often do not recognize how absences add up quickly for young children and are often very concerned about their children's health and safety.
6th	The shift to middle school is an important transition often marking when parents rely upon students to show up to class on their own. Academic and behavioral success during this transition year is crucial for later school success.
9th	Students on-track in the 9th grade are *almost four times* more likely to graduate than off-track students. Students may not recognize the impact of absences on passing courses and gaining needed skills.
12th	Senior year is a critical time for ensuring students complete all the requirements for graduation and enrolling in post-secondary education.

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Use Data to Support an Integrated Multi-tiered System of Support

Tier 3
Intensive
Intervention

Tier 2
Early Intervention

Tier 1b
Personalized Outreach

Tier 1a
Universal Prevention

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Define Indicators to Activate Additional Support

	Early Warning Indicators
Tier 1b Personalized Outreach	**What activates more personalized preventive check in?** (e.g. 1 missed interaction, 1 missed assignment, 1 missed class) **Who provides this?** Teachers?
Tier 2 Early Intervention	**What activates more ongoing sustained early intervention ?** (e.g. Missing 40% of learning opportunities in a week or 10% of learning opportunities in a month) **Who is involved in outreach and support?** Attendance staff? Counselors? Nurses? Others depending upon need for intervention?
Tier 3 Intensive Intervention	**What activates intensive intervention?** (e.g. Loss of contact?) **Who is involved in outreach and support?** Social Workers? Staff of public agencies, etc.?

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Practice Panel Discussion

The panel will give us an opportunity to explore:

- How did these panelists respond to Covid-19 during the spring?

- What did they learn about the challenges facing students, families, principals and districts?

- What are the implications for the coming school year?

Practice Panel

Jacqueline Dungey
Principal
New Paradigm Loving Academy

Dr. Beshon Smith
Executive Director
Center for Supportive Schools

Angela Duran
Director
Arkansas Grade-Level Reading Campaign

Our Success Story

OUR WORK DURING REMOTE LEARNING

- About our school:

  - Principal of New Paradigm Loving Academy, PreK-5 and Glazer K-8

  - Two of Six schools in the New Paradigm for Education Charter Network

  - Located in the North End/Focus Hope Area Neighborhood of Detroit

  - 138 students enrolled Loving/174 students enrolled Glazer

Our approach:
Connect and Re-engage with our students and families

Initial Response

- NPFE Leadership team training, planning and preparation prior to closure to support teachers and families

- Mobilize the team

- Implement and utilize wellness tracker among all staff (teachers, student support specialist, reading intervention, PE teacher, special education, etc.) to document student contact data, connection, notes on the impact of the virus

- Assessed family and student needs, issues, concerns, and technology needs

- Analyzed the data daily/weekly

- Employed personalized prevention and intervention strategies, based on student data trends

CHALLENGES

- Inability to connect with some families

- Food insecurity and instability

- Job loss

- Homelessness

- Illness and death (of parents, families, caregivers)

- Trauma and grief

- Inadequate and lack of technology access, devices, and computer literacy

- Loss of teacher and school staff stability and consistency for the families

- Families' fear of their own inability to deliver instruction at home (as a teacher would support their children), and inability to manage it all

Our approach:
Connect and Re-engage with our students and families

- Weekly meetings 2x a week with CAO

- 1 to 1 meetings with CAO

- Weekly meetings with SSS

- Weekly meetings with entire staff

- 1 to 1 meetings with teachers

- Google classroom observations

- Virtual parent meetings

- Weekly videos sent to students, parents and teachers

- Weekly newsletters

HOW WE MET THE NEEDS

- Food distribution two days after school buildings closed

- Supported families with resource coordination (e.g. district, city, state resources)

- NPFE funding to support family needs (funeral costs, rent support, and gift cards for basic needs)

- Conducted home visits to reach out to students and families, to drop off homework packets, and to support food distribution, technology and access to learning platforms

- Continued to use weekly announcements to families to keep parents informed, share update on resources, parent education and engagement (PBIS parties, online games, etc.)

- Provided access to social workers and grief counselors

HOW WE MET THE NEEDS

- Engagement activities for students

- Modified the classwork or the way the assignments were rolled out

- Office hours were modified for parents

- Provided deep engagement and follow-up with families (weekly calls, social media, emails, dojo, text messages, condolence cards, etc.)

- Provided hotspots and technology

- Made and delivered paper packets

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

- Data-informed approach to 20-21 SY, reflection, input (survey families and staff) and planning
- Creation of multiple plans for re-entry based on CDC, state, and district guidelines
- Social-emotional learning and support for teachers and school staff
- Professional development on SEL, curriculum, technology skills, online platforms, and parent education and engagement
- Relationship building remotely with students and families
- Communication with families, and consistent check-ins with them (wellness calls, Dojo, social media, virtual conferences and parent meetings) to increase the sense of belonging, engagement and participation
- Re-engagement of students to the new school year whether it be in-person, hybrid model or a virtual learning experience
- Summer/Covid gap intervention for students for 20-21 SY

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Principal Jacqueline Dungey
- jdungey@npfeschools.org

CENTER FOR SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS

Dr. Beshon Smith
Executive Director
Delaware, Maryland, and Washington, DC

Who Are We?

CSS helps schools become places where students want to be.

We help leverage the resources in schools to create more caring and vibrant learning communities.

Developing all students into leaders

Empowering teachers to collaborate with each other and with students

Engaging entire school communities to improve how learning happens

Our Scale

262 schools actively implementing one or more CSS solutions

186 schools actively implementing Peer Group Connection (PGC)

783 schools touched by CSS since 1979

494,300 students served in all schools touched by CSS (cumulative, estimate)

14 states plus the District of Columbia with one or more schools implementing one or more CSS core solutions

Peer Group Connection (PGC)

- Peer-to-peer mentoring model that trains and mobilizes older students (peer leaders) to make schools more engaging, inspiring, safe and supportive for younger students

- School-based, research-based, social-emotional learning curriculum

- PGC-HS: 11th and 12th graders support 9th graders*

- PGC-MS: 8th graders support 6th graders*

- Peer leader class is daily, students earn an elective credit and/or service-learning hours towards graduation requirements

CENTER FOR SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS

Biggest Challenges Faced by Partner Principals

- Working with district offices to conduct needs assessments and responses for faculty/staff, students and their families (technology needs, housing needs and other basic needs)

- Addressing the fears, discomfort and social-emotional support needs of faculty/staff

- Addressing the fears, discomfort and social-emotional support needs of students and families

- Managing and leveraging existing school partnerships to support the school community's most pressing needs

CENTER FOR SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS

Our Strategy: A Focus on Relatability, Relationships, & Resources

- Relational Support Plan

- Programmatic Support Plan

Relational Support Plan

- **Weekly check-in emails, calls, and texts** focused on caring, sharing, and laughing

- **Three-Part Staff Support Series** for school-wide staff/faculty that provided a safe and supportive space for connecting

- **A Pause for Our Partners,** pop-in support sessions in response to the polarization of police brutality and anti-black racism

- **Candy, Cookies & Closure,** candy and cookies were mailed to partner homes, we facilitated a fun, end-of-year closure session via Zoom

Programmatic Support Plan

- We **reimagined the work** first: revised curriculum for a virtual platform; incorporated the use of social-media and other youth-centered tools; relaxed contractual requirements

- Theme-based, pop-in, 30-minute **brainstorming sessions:** How to Honor Your Seniors; Virtual Student Engagement and Outreach Strategies

- We offered to **assist them in their virtual classrooms** with a variety of tasks

- We **listened and prioritized** their realities

| CENTER FOR SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS

The 2020-21 School Year

- We are moving into the new school year with a continued focus on relatability, relationships and resources

- All our programs and supports in Delaware, Maryland & Washington DC will be exclusively virtual

- Modified the focus of PGC by offering two additional models that will allow every student in the school building to receive social-emotional support

- Offering a Four-Part Faculty/Staff Support Series to focus on the emerging emotional and mental support needs of faculty/staff
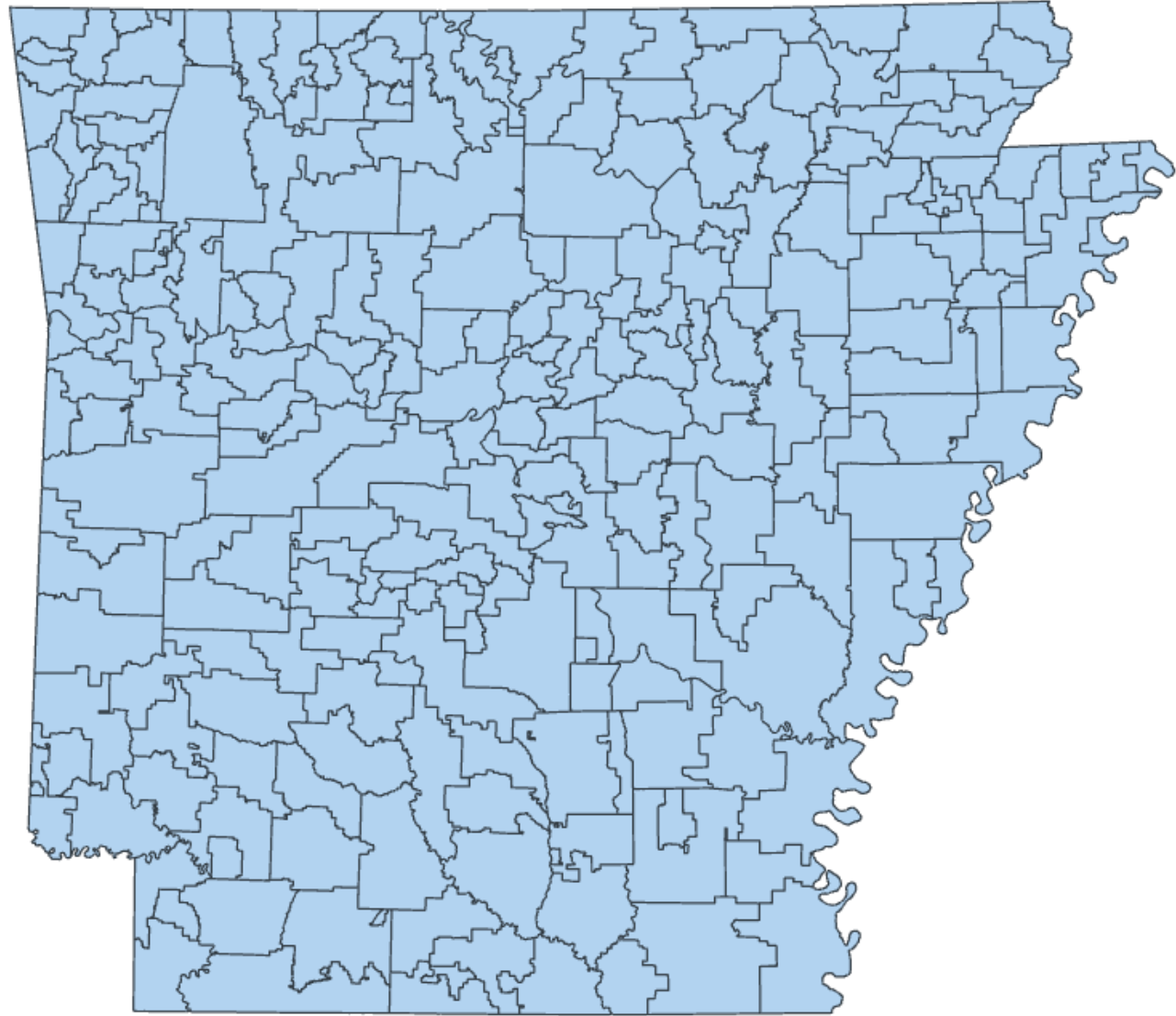
ARKANSAS
CAMPAIGN FOR
GRADE-LEVEL
READING

Education Renewal Zones

Arkansas School Districts

Challenge

How to:

- **think about attendance in a time of virtual and blended learning**

- **think differently about the drivers of attendance during a pandemic**

- **deploy strategies that address families' needs and challenges**

- **deliver tools to schools/districts in time for them to be proactive**

Response

Webinar Series in Late May/Early June

- **Webinar 1 – Assess and Expand Mental, Behavioral, and Emotional Health Supports AND Examine Student and Family Data**

- **Webinar 2 – Back to School Engagement: Taking a Trauma Informed Approach**

Ongoing Coaching by ERZs throughout the school year and additional PD in the fall as Attendance Works' new materials are released

Implications For This School Year

Districts are still determining their plans for the '20-'21 school year, and COVID cases are on a steep rise in Arkansas, creating uncertainty for parents and teachers

New cases by day
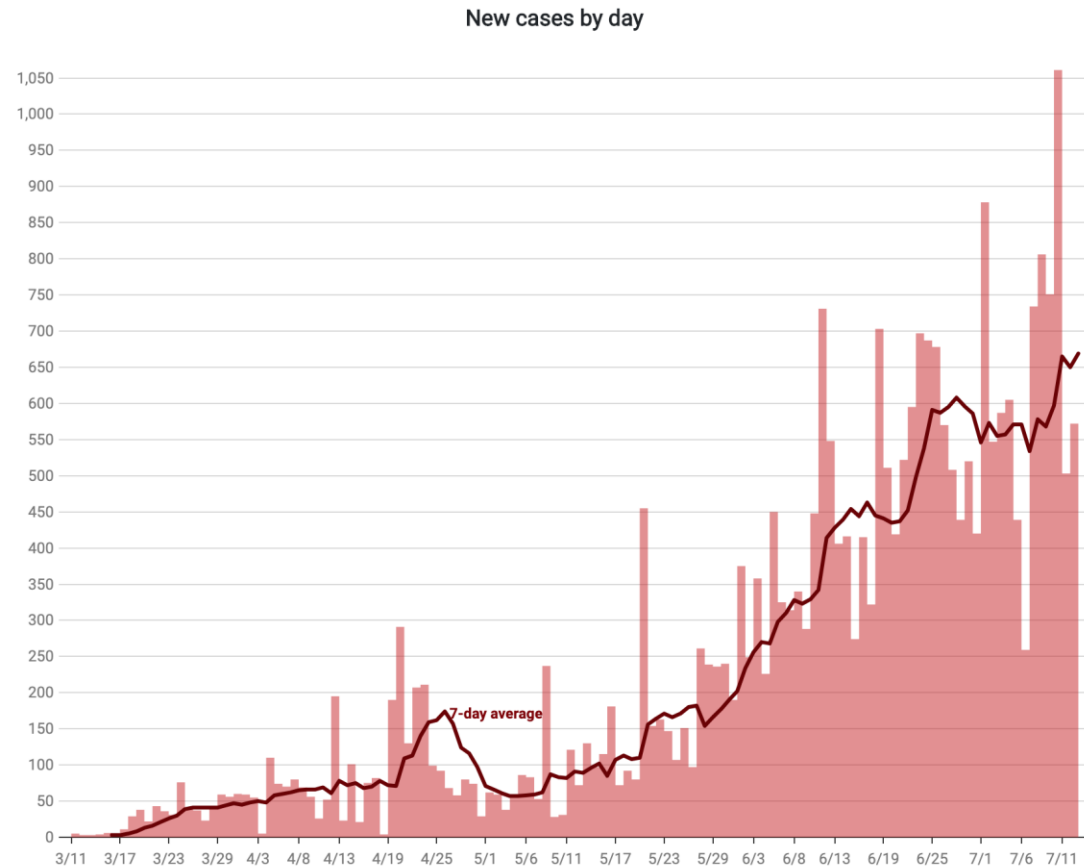
Implications For This School Year

Create authentic partnerships with teachers, students, and parents, and communicate early and often

- **Engagement**
- **Explanation**
- **Expectation clarity**

All hands on deck - think differently about how to engage staff – counselors, non-core teachers, therapists, etc.

Implications For This School Year

Creativity in low-income, rural districts, with limited broadband access

- **Home visits to deliver lessons and check in with families**
- **Run bus route to deliver food and pick up and drop off lessons**
- **Provide laptops/tablets to students**
- **Set up Internet hotspots**
- **Develop partnerships with Internet providers for affordable access**

Jacqueline Dungey
Principal
New Paradigm Loving Academy

Dr. Beshon Smith
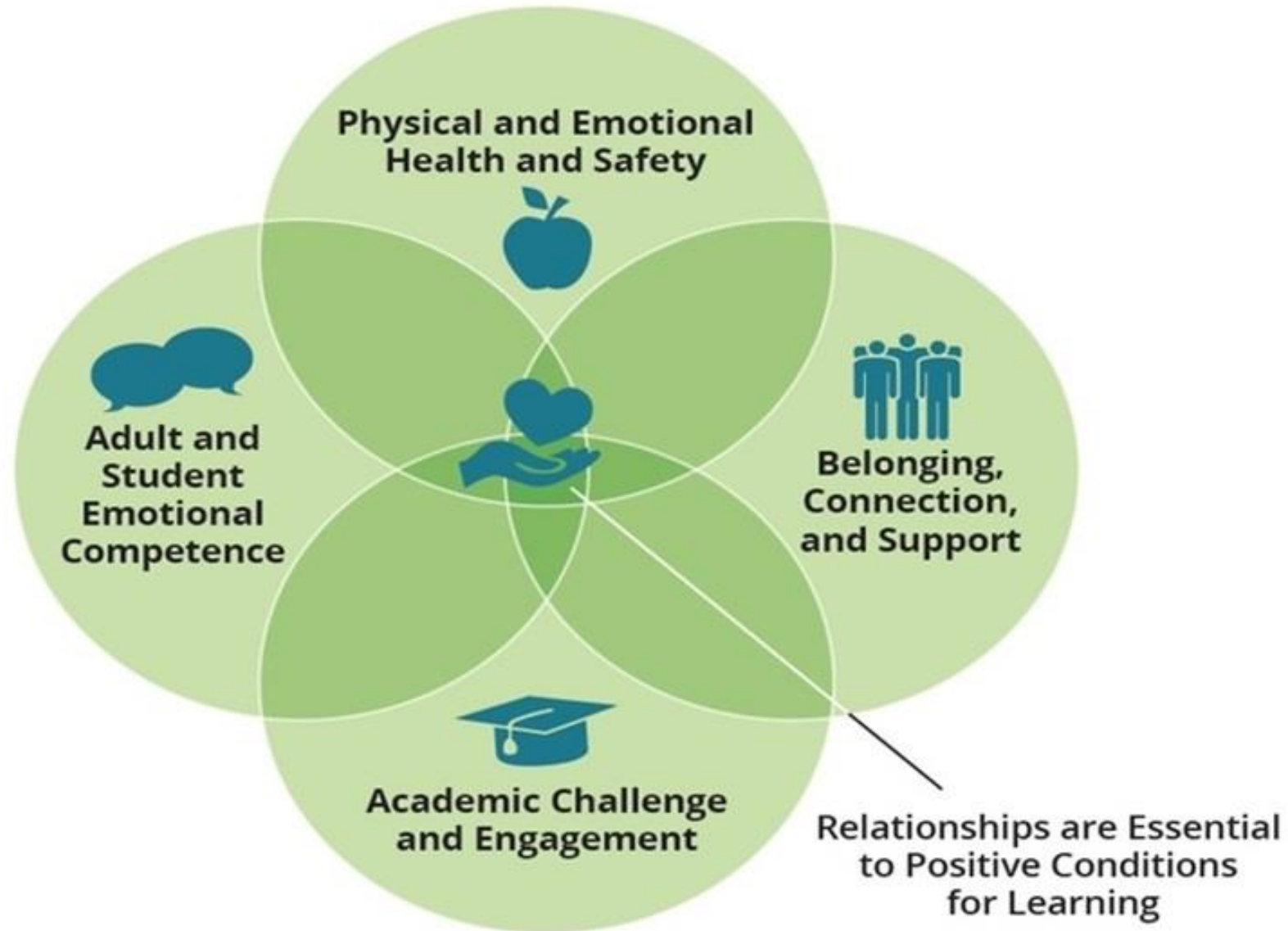Executive Director
Center for Supportive Schools

Angela Duran
Director
Arkansas Grade-Level Reading Campaign

Attendance Awareness Campaign

2020-2021

The Transition Guide Provides Districts and Schools the Opportunity to Create Transition Plans Connected to 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

To plan for the transition back to school, Attendance Works recommends the following actions. For support with developing a data informed plan, go here: https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/transition-guide/

Capacity Building	Actionable Data	Positive Engagement	Strategic Partnerships	Shared Accountability
Work as a team to ensure staff have the skills to manage hybrid learning and respond to the social-emotional and physical needs of the entire school community.	Use chronic absence (prior to closure) and other participation data gathered during the Spring to coordinate outreach and provide additional support as needed	Build upon assets to organize a warm trauma-informed welcome to school for students, families and staff	Partner with school staff, families, and community partners to develop plans for the coming school year	Ensure data and systems help key stakeholders work together, across silos, to support a coordinated approach to the return to school.

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Present, Engaged and Supported Transition Guide

Three separate audiences:

- District
- Elementary (PreK-5)
- Secondary (6-12)

Familiar Frameworks Adapted for Covid Era

- Conditions for Learning
- 5 Ingredients of Systemic Change
- Expanded Attendance Metrics for Distance Learning

https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/transition-guide/

Step-by-step Guide

1. Convene a team

2. Review key ingredients

3. Complete worksheets and self-assessments

4. Develop or strengthen your transition plan

5. Communicate the plan

https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/transition-guide/

Highlights for Each of the Five Ingredients

- ✓ Attention to equity descriptors

- ✓ Bright spots

- ✓ Resources

- ✓ Worksheets for Districts and Schools

- ✓ Invitation to pilot an Attendance self-analysis tool

https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/transition-guide/

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Save the Dates:
Present, Engaged and
Supported!
2020 Webinar Series

★ **July 22:** Data + Relationships to Support the Transition to School

★ **August 19:** Trauma-Informed Welcome to School

★ **September 30:** Best Practices for Successful Transition During Covid-19

http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/webinars/

And special appreciation to our philanthropic partners!

The California Endowment

The Heising-Simons Foundation

Skillman Foundation

Stuart Foundation

United Way Southeast Michigan

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/data-plus-relationships

Thank you!

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