Mapping the Early Attendance Gap

September 9, 2015
Welcome!

Eric Glaser

Director
U.S. Network Impact

United Way Worldwide
Attendance Awareness Month

Attendance Awareness Month and Nationwide Campaign 2015
America’s Promise Alliance

Brittany Moore
Manager
Alliance Engagement
Raising Awareness in 2014:
324 Communities in 45 States
Building Momentum in 2015

- 56 national partners
- 4,200 signed up for updates
- 73,000 hits on Attendance Awareness Month website
- 285 pins already on the Attendance Action Map
What are you planning in 2015?

Post your community’s plans for Attendance Awareness Month 2015 on our map!

http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/map/
Attendance Works

Hedy Chang
Director

Phyllis Jordan
Communications Director
Poll Questions:

1. Is your community planning to participate in Attendance Awareness Month 2015?
1. Overview ~ Hedy Chang

2. Mapping the Early Attendance Gap
   Hedy Chang and Phyllis Jordan

3. Health and Absenteeism
   Mark Bishop, Healthy Schools Campaign

4. Panel Discussion ~ What Can States Do
   California, Rhode Island, and Utah

5. Resources and Announcements
Attendance is an Essential Ingredient of Academic Success

Developed by Annie E. Casey Foundation & America’s Promise Alliance
For more info go to http://www.americaspromise.org/parent-engagement-toolkit
Improving Attendance Matters
Because It Reflects:

**Exposure to language:** Starting in Pre-K, attendance equals exposure to language-rich environments especially for low-income children.

**Time on Task in Class:** Students only benefit from classroom instruction if they are in class.

**On Track for Success:** Chronic absence in preK, K and 1st is a proven early warning sign that a student will fall behind in reading by 3rd grade. By middle and high school it predicts failing course and dropping-out.

**College Readiness:** Attendance patterns predicts college enrollment and persistence.

**Engagement:** Attendance reflects engagement in learning.

**Effective Practice:** Schools, communities and families can improve attendance when they work together.

(For research, see: http://www.attendanceworks.org/research/)
Mapping the Early Attendance Gap

Released September 1st
Widespread Media coverage including:

- Washington Post
- NPR
- The Atlantic
- St. Louis Post-Dispatch
- Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Mapping the Early Attendance Gap: An Overview

**WHAT:** Chronic absence is a hidden national crisis

**WHEN:** Chronic absence starts early

**WHY:** Health plays a key role in absenteeism

**WHO:** Low-income students, students of color and students with disabilities most affected

**HOW:** A five-step approach that includes mapping where chronic absence exists
What is Chronic Absence?

Chronic absence = missing too much school for any reason. Researchers often use **missing 10% or more of school days**

Chronic absence is different from truancy (unexcused absences only) or average daily attendance (how many students show up to school each day).
• Our youngest students are nearly as likely to be absent as teenagers.

• Chronic absence is a challenge as early as K and even preschool.
Who is Most Affected? (NAEP data)

- Low-income students have higher rates of absenteeism in every state.
- American Indians have the highest rates of all racial/ethnic groups.
- Black children have higher rates than white students, particularly in some states.
- Hispanic students have higher rates than white students particularly in some states.
- Students with disabilities have significantly higher rates than others.

Source: NAEP 2011 & 2013
Poll Questions:

2. What is the primary reason young children miss school in your community?
Why Are Students Missing School?

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
- Chronic disease
- Lack of access to health or dental care
- Poor Transportation
- Trauma
- No safe path to school

Aversion
- Child struggling academically
- Lack of engaging instruction
- Poor school climate and ineffective school discipline
- Parents had negative school experience
Healthy Schools Campaign

Mark Bishop
Vice President of Policy
Healthy Schools Campaign
Health and Absenteeism
Leading Health Related Causes

Asthma

Nearly one in ten children age 4-14 are diagnosed with asthma, accounting for one-third of all days of missed instruction.

Oral Health

Children miss nearly two million school days due to oral health issues every year.
**Leading Health Related Causes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asthma</th>
<th>Bullying</th>
<th>Oral Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>Vision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your School Matters

Why Do Students in Central Texas Miss School?

- 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 © 2015 E3 Alliance
# Health Interventions

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Asthma friendly schools</td>
<td>• Community eligibility</td>
<td>• Safe Routes to Schools</td>
<td>• School-based mental health programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Environmental assessments</td>
<td>• Universal breakfast</td>
<td>• Bullying education programs</td>
<td>• Universal interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Asthma friendly homes</td>
<td>• Food backpack programs</td>
<td>• Support groups</td>
<td>• Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Oral Health**
- Community-based oral health programs
- School-based sealant programs
- Mobile clinics

**Vision**
- School-based vision screening programs

**Nutrition**
- Community eligibility
- Universal breakfast
- Food backpack programs
- Farm to school programs
Schools Can’t Do it Alone
Questions?
HOW: A Five-Step Approach for Closing Attendance Gaps
Charting a course for school success

1. Make the case for why it matters
2. Map chronic early absence
3. Engage partners in unpacking why it occurs
4. Learn from positive outliers
5. Embed action into existing activities
I. Make the case that chronic early absence matters

Inspiring action starts with being able to make the case to key stakeholders that chronic early absence is a concern. That requires obtaining the data to show impact and scale, and engaging champions to spread the word.
Break down data to show chronic absence rates by grade, district school, student population, even classroom. Equipped with this information, states and districts can direct resources to places with the highest rates of absenteeism.
Creating effective solutions requires engaging partners in unearthing the reasons for absenteeism. Pay particular attention to health-related causes of absence and the power of health partners to understand why students miss school.
Learn from positive outliers

There are always schools and districts that are beating the odds, improving or maintaining high levels of attendance despite challenging conditions. States can use data to identify these places and figure out what strategies are working for them.
Too often, something that requires new organization or infrastructure simply does not get done. States are finding ways to integrate chronic absence into tiered systems of support, school climate indices, third grade reading initiatives, school improvement planning and community partnerships.
Working across sectors and at multiple levels to promote these key ingredients through strong community/school partnerships:

- Changing the Narrative
- Positive Messaging
- Shared Accountability
- Actionable Data
- Capacity Building
- Developing and Implementing Early Interventions
- Invest in Development of Early Warning Systems

What helps states take action?
Panel Moderator

Yolie Flores
Senior Fellow
Campaign for Grade-Level Reading
State of California

Gordon Jackson
Director
Coordinated Student Support Division, California Department of Education

Jill Habig
Special Assistant
Attorney General for California Attorney General Kamala Harris
State of Rhode Island

Sharon Lee

Director
Office of Multiple Pathways
Rhode Island Department of Education

Rebecca Boxx

Director
Providence Children and Youth Cabinet
Annenberg Institute for School Reform
Brown University
Terry Haven
Deputy Director
Voices for Utah Children

Lisa Wisham
Education Specialist
21st Century Community Learning Centers, Utah State Department of Education

Susan Loving
Transition Specialist,
Utah State Department of Education
Discussion Questions

• Who were the initial champions in your state that made the case that chronic early absence matters?

• What has the data on chronic absence told you about where the attendance gaps are in your state?
Rhode Island Chronic Absence Rates by Income Level

- Kindergarten: 24% Lower Income, 7% Higher Income
- 1st Grade: 19% Lower Income, 4% Higher Income
- 2nd Grade: 17% Lower Income, 4% Higher Income
- 3rd Grade: 15% Lower Income, 4% Higher Income
- 4th Grade: 15% Lower Income, 4% Higher Income
- 5th Grade: 16% Lower Income, 5% Higher Income
- 6th Grade: 20% Lower Income, 5% Higher Income
- 7th Grade: 23% Lower Income, 6% Higher Income
- 8th Grade: 26% Lower Income, 8% Higher Income
- 9th Grade: 34% Lower Income, 10% Higher Income
- 10th Grade: 34% Lower Income, 12% Higher Income
- 11th Grade: 37% Lower Income, 15% Higher Income
- 12th Grade: 41% Lower Income, 19% Higher Income
Rhode Island Chronic Absence Counts by Grade and Race/Ethnicity
Compared with kindergartners who attend regularly, those chronically absent:

- Were 20% less likely to be proficient in reading and math in subsequent grades; 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.
Utah Education Policy Center

Chronic Absenteeism in Utah

THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

UTAH EDUCATION POLICY CENTER

Bridging Research, Policy, and Practice

1901 E. South Campus Drive
Salt Lake City, Utah 84112
http://uepc.ed.utah.edu/
The grade of the student was related to chronic absenteeism. The general U-shaped trend is typical of what is seen in other states.
Covariates of Chronic Absenteeism

Students who were homeless in 2010-2011 were 2.5 times more likely to be chronically absent than students who weren’t homeless, and students who checked out of one school and into another during the 2010-2011 year were 4.2 times more likely to be chronically absent.

Figure 3. Change in Odds Associated with the Covariates of Mobility and Homelessness
### Covariates of Chronic Absenteeism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homelessness Category</th>
<th>Proportion of Students who were Chronically Absent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not homeless</td>
<td>12.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With another family due to loss of housing or economic hardship</td>
<td>23.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a motel or hotel</td>
<td>38.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a shelter</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a car, park, campground or public place</td>
<td>29.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhere without adequate facilities</td>
<td>29.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaccompanied minor</td>
<td>27.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4. Proportion of Students from Each Homelessness Category who were Chronically Absent**

This graph of proportion of chronically absent students by homeless category shows that students in shelters or living in motels had extremely high incidence of chronic absenteeism.
Elementary chronic absence is a statewide challenge with some communities affected more than others (Voices for Utah Children)

In Utah, 12% (36,638) of elementary students are chronically absent
IN SCHOOL + ON TRACK 2014

California’s Elementary School Truancy & Chronic Absence Crisis

What We Can Do To Solve it

#EveryKidCounts
In California, Disadvantaged Youth Suffer Greater Disparities

Chronic Absence Rates
Broken Down by Race and Grade

Almost 90% of students with severe attendance problems are low-income.
• 250,000 CA elementary students at risk of falling behind due to poor attendance.

• African American elementary students suffer biggest attendance disparities.

• Absenteeism is worst in Kindergarten and 1st grade for all racial/ethnic groups – when it’s most important for long-term foundation.

• Cost to students, schools, & state = too high.
Share an example of how you engaged with partners in unpacking the root causes behind early absenteeism.

In every state, there are the early innovators at the local level. Can you share an example of one such community or district from your state and how they influenced your thinking?
• How can you leverage existing state initiatives to map and address the attendance gap?
Scaling Up: Proposed Local to State Pathway

- Advance local practice through peer learning
- Inform state organizations with insights from local practice
- Spread work state-wide through TA and policy

Locality A
Locality B
Locality D
Locality C: Early Innovator

Peer opportunities to compare data, share & learn about best practices, and identify and problem-solve common challenges

Communities/Districts Across State Join In
Ongoing peer learning, TA, administrative guidance, regulations, and legislation promote best practices & systemic change

State Dept of Education
State Policy Makers
Education Associations
Unions (teachers, admin., etc.)
Parent Organizations
Advocacy Organizations
ECE/HS Association
Others
To learn more about these states:

- Read the state profiles in *Mapping the Early Attendance Gap* brief:
  http://www.attendanceworks.org/research/mapping-the-gap/

- Check out the state profile pages on the Attendance Works website:
  - **California**: http://www.attendanceworks.org/policy-advocacy/state-reports/california/
  - **Rhode Island**: http://www.attendanceworks.org/policy-advocacy/state/rhode-island/
  - **Utah**: http://www.attendanceworks.org/policy-advocacy/state-reports/utah/
Attendance Works

Cecelia Leong
Associate Director
Announcements & Resources
Count Us In Toolkit  
(your essential resource!)

- Download our free materials and toolkit and share with local districts

- Encourage schools and community partners to join our listserv: 3,500+ members

http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkit/
What to Do When

What to Do When: At a Glance

Spring

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!
Share What You Are Planning

Post your community’s plans for Attendance Awareness Month 2015 on our map!

http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/map/
Look on the Community Page

State of New York: Every Student Present

Every Student Present is a public awareness campaign designed to help school staff, parents, and communities understand the impact of chronic absence—missing 10 percent of school. The goals of the campaign are to promote awareness of chronic absence and to build capacity among schools, families, and communities to reduce it. For more information, visit the Every Student Present website.

Waterloo, IA: Attendance Awareness video

Students need to be in school to learn. See why attendance matters here!

Washington, DC: Wrap-around services increase attendance

http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/newsroom/community-news/
Share on Social Media

#schooleveryday

https://www.facebook.com/attendancemonth
The Superintendents Call to Action

Prioritize Attendance

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
Superintendent’s Call to Action

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

Visit the website to find:

• Updated Call to Action
• A list of Superintendents who have joined the call
• Tips for getting started
• Tips for developing a community action plan
• Toolkits and resources
• Media tools
Look for the EdWeek Ad in September

Note: Superintendents will be featured in an EdWeek Ad!

The best curriculum and instruction won’t work unless students show up for school!

SUPERINTENDENTS CALL TO ACTION
MISSING SCHOOL MATTERS!

As many as 7.5 million students nationwide miss nearly a month of school every year, excused and unexcused absences that erode student achievement. As superintendents, we are launching this new school year with a commitment to:

1. Prioritizing Attendance: We are making reducing chronic absence a top priority in our district from the superintendent to the teachers, from the school staff to the families.
2. Mobilizing the Community: We are making student attendance a broadly owned and widely shared civic priority. That includes engaging families and tapping civic and elected leaders, local businesses, health providers, housing authorities, clergy members and more.
3. Driving with Data: We are using data to determine how many and which students are chronically absent in each grade, school and population. And we are intervening to ensure absences don’t add up.
America’s Promise Alliance

Follow the 9/11 National Day of Service on Twitter at twitter.com/911dayofservice, and on Facebook at facebook.com/911nationaldayofservice, and MyGoodDeed at twitter.com/MyGoodDeed
Mentoring Effect & Attendance Week

• Save the Date: September 15-20, 2015!
• Week is focused on amplifying the message that quality mentoring can be instrumental to attendance and academic success.
• Promotional toolkit available with social media messages, graphics and more. Download here: http://www.mentoring.org/get_involved/campaigns_events/attendance_awareness_month/
• Join us for a Twitter chat on mentoring and attendance on Wednesday, September 16 at 3 pm ET / 12 pm PT!
Parents Are the Secret Sauce:
A Lineup of Successful Parents Webinars for GLR Communities
Fall 2015 Series

Attendance Awareness Month Special

September 30, 2015 @ 3pm ET

Getting Beyond Negative Perceptions about Parents:
Key Insights about Engaging Parents in Ending Chronic Absence

Featured Guests: Ben Chida & Jill Habig, California Department of Justice,
Office of Attorney General Kamala Harris

Register Today!
Special thanks to all the partners and our funders!
Thank You for Attending!

- For more information about Attendance Awareness Month 2015, go to: http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/

- A recording of today’s webinar will be posted within 72 hours: http://www.attendanceworks.org/peer-learning-resources/

- Please take a moment to provide feedback about today’s webinar: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MappingGap