

Creating Equitable School Systems

A Roadmap for Education Leaders



Focus on effective instruction.



**ATTENDANCE
AND ENGAGEMENT**

**Evidence-based strategies
for supporting students experiencing
barriers to attendance and engagement**



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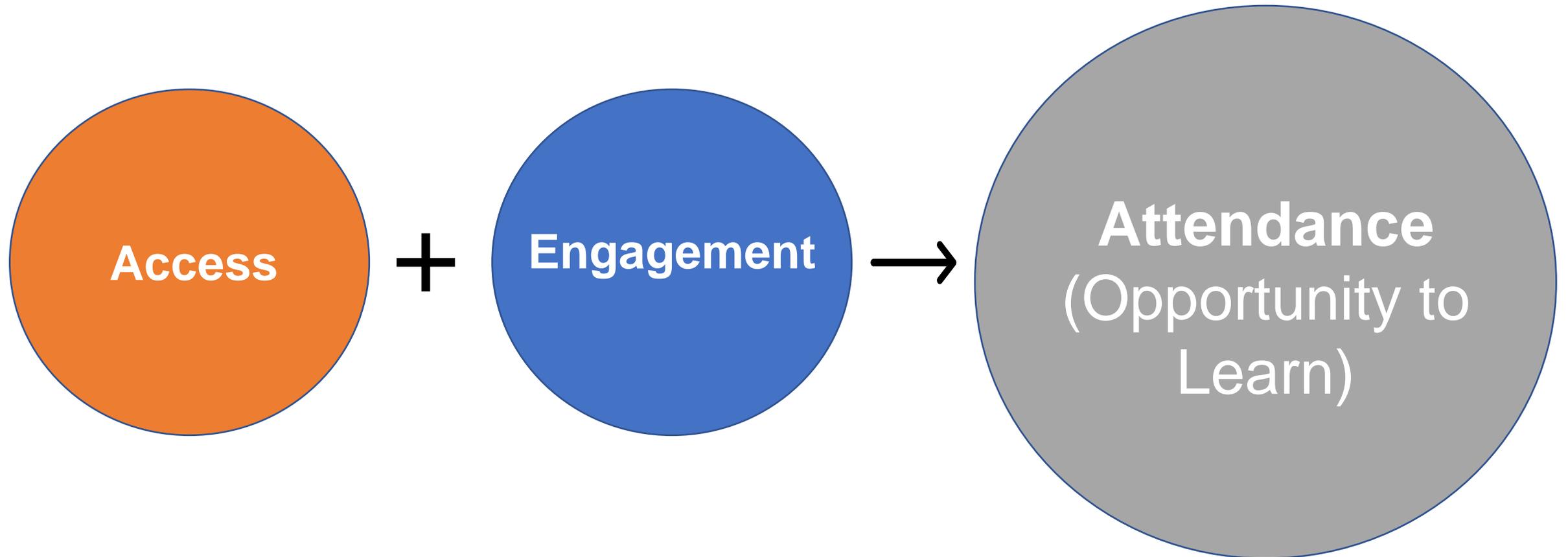
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Attendance is a leading indicator of equity.

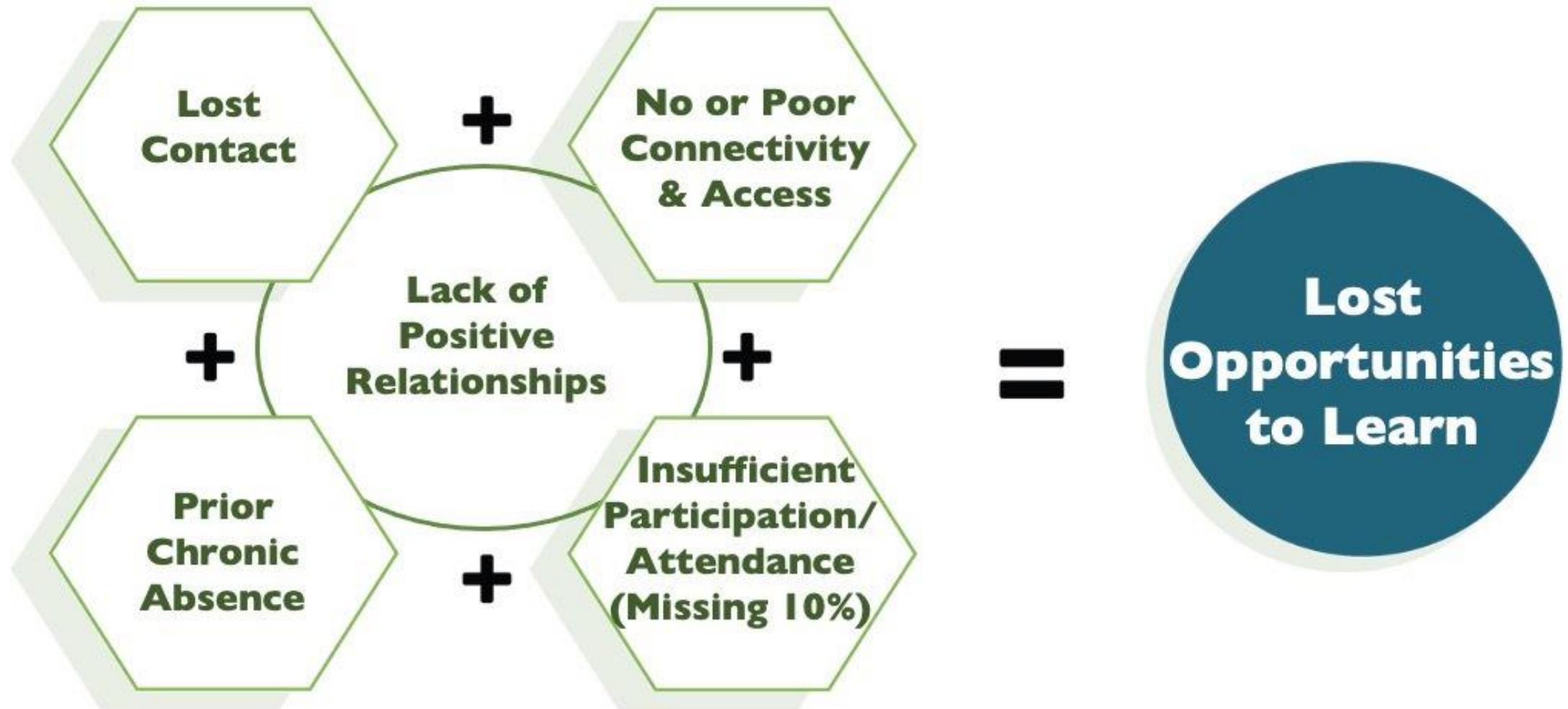
- There is a positive, statistically significant relationship between regular attendance and various educational and life outcomes into adulthood.
 - When students regularly “attend” school, they have **access to academic and other support programs and services** that are important for cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development and wellness.
 - If educators can't proactively, reliably, and easily identify students in need of extra support, there is a substantial risk of struggling students falling further behind.
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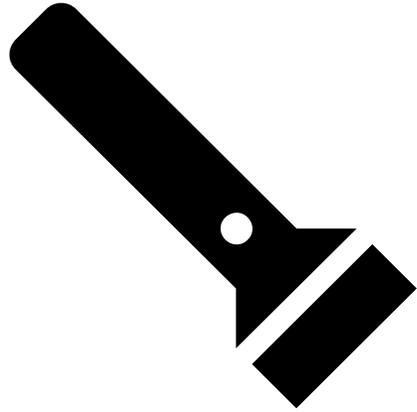


Identifying Students At Risk Due to Lack of Opportunity to Learn



Additional “Attendance Measures ”

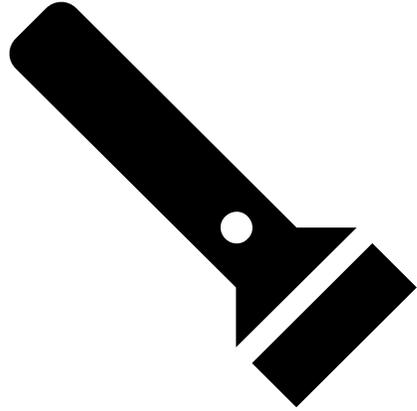
| | What are we (districts, schools & community partners) trying to find out? | What are school/district responsibilities, with support from community partners? | What data can we collect? (Possible data points) | What are the equity implications? |
|----------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Contact | 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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Measuring attendance and engagement during remote learning

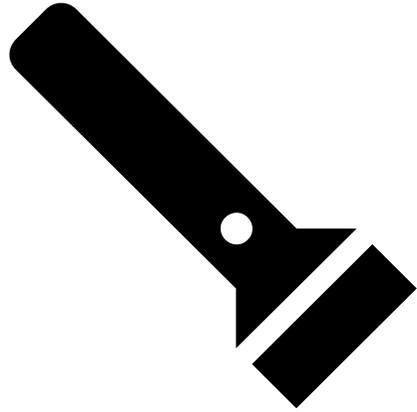
- William McKinley School,
School District of Philadelphia



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William McKinley School, School District of Philadelphia

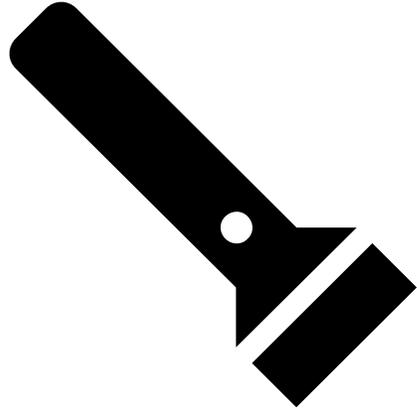
- Teachers cross reference each other's Google classroom meets sessions to confirm that attendance is correct
- Daily communication with parents on Class Dojo to verify attendance
- When appropriate:
 - Students can be marked present by completing daily course work
 - Offer a Modified Instructional Plan where they provide an option for weekly virtual classwork packets
 - Attendance may be counted for students who attend optional, drop-in office hours, where staff members support students in completing assigned work



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Identifying barriers to attendance and engagement

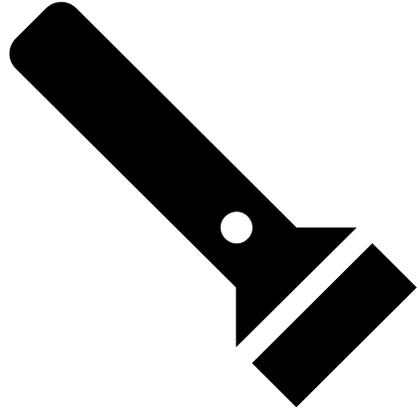
- Center for Student Learning
Charter School at Pennsbury
- William L. Sayre High School,
School District of Philadelphia



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Center for Student Learning Charter School at Pennsbury

- Early Warning Indicator System
- Check & Connect mentors work with students flagged through the EWS
- Ex. barriers working to mitigate:
 - Alternative pathways for work completion and credit accumulation for older students that need to work to support their family
 - Leveraging staff with positive relationship with students to assist with work to mitigate negative learning experiences



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William L. Sayre High School, School District of Philadelphia

- Early Warning Indicator System
- Student Attendance Improvement Conference/Plan (SAIC/SAIP)
- Ex. barriers working to mitigate:
 - School-based teams (and partners) focused on solutions to barriers
 - Technology
 - Mental/behavioral health
 - Work area issues
 - Teen pregnancy/parenting
 - Lack of electricity
 - Housing insecurity

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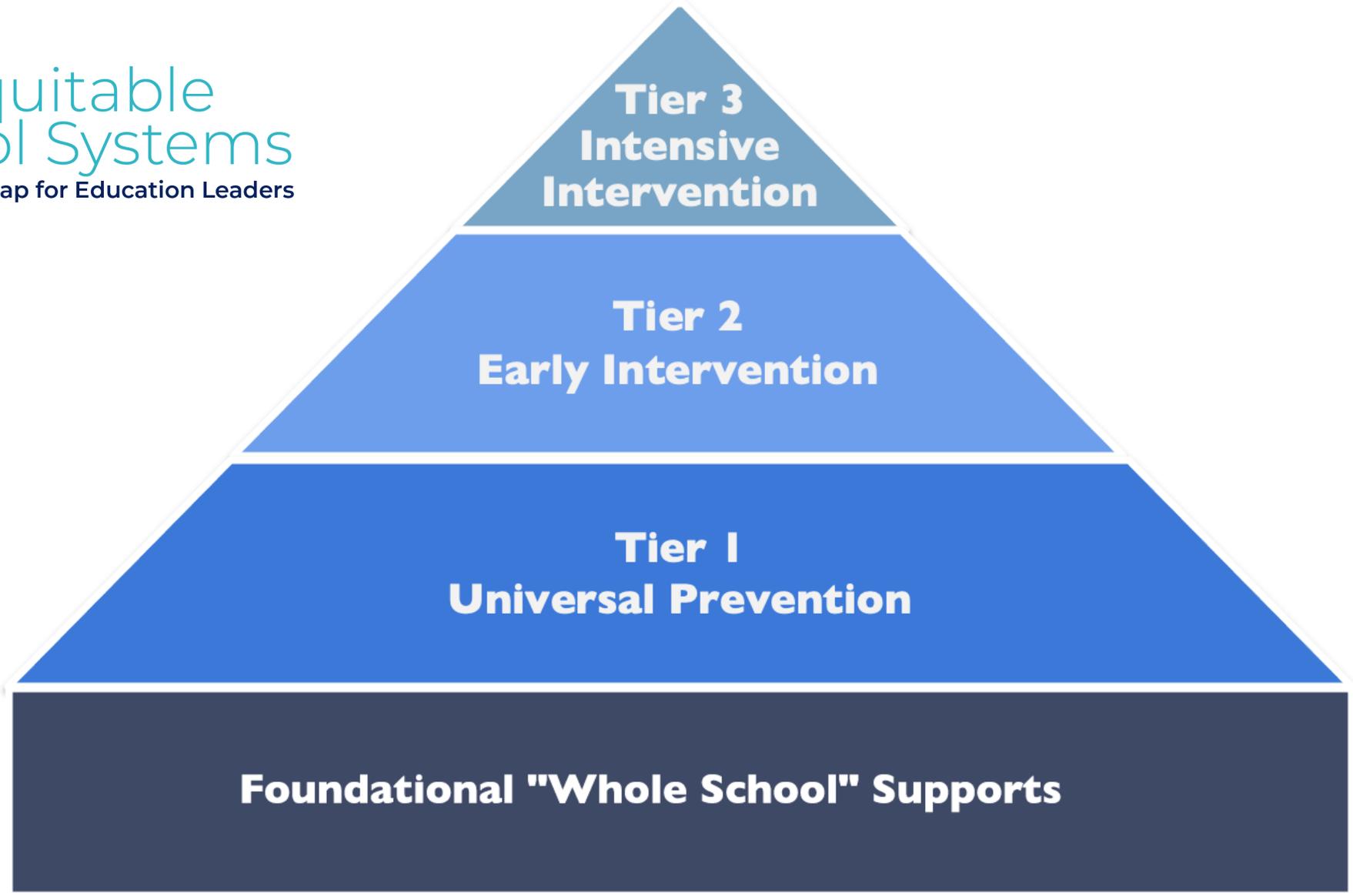
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As schools and communities devise strategies to address chronic absence and habitual truancy, it is imperative that they draw from evidence-based strategies.



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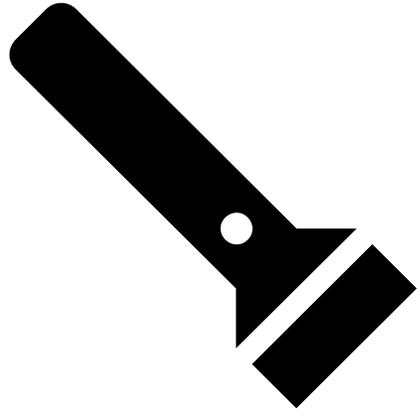


www.attendanceworks.org



Foundational Supports are Building Blocks of Schools that Promote Attendance

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Physically healthy learning environment | Enrichment activities and clubs | Positive relationships | Support for families to facilitate learning at home |
| Access to tech equipment and connectivity | Access to Learning Supports | Routines, rituals and celebrations | A culture of continuous improvement |
| Welcoming, safe, trauma-informed school climate | Home rooms and/or Advisory | A published schedule of classes | Active engagement of families in planning |
| Foundational Supports | | | |

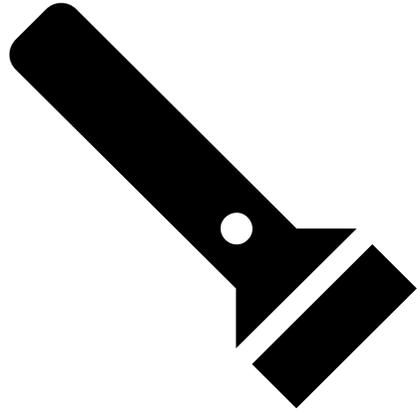


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Tier 1 Strategies:

Establishing a foundation for positive attendance

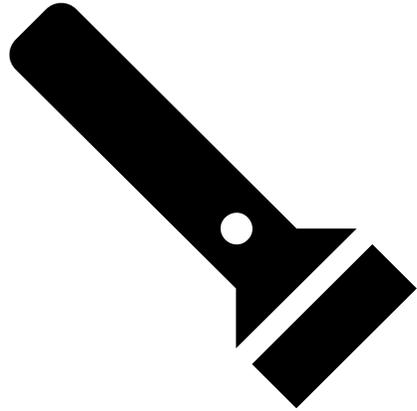
- Sto-Rox Primary Center, Sto-Rox School District
- Pittsburgh King K-8, Pittsburgh Public Schools
- Wagner Middle School, School District of Philadelphia
- Kensington Health Sciences Academy, School District of Philadelphia



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Sto-Rox Primary Center, Sto-Rox School District

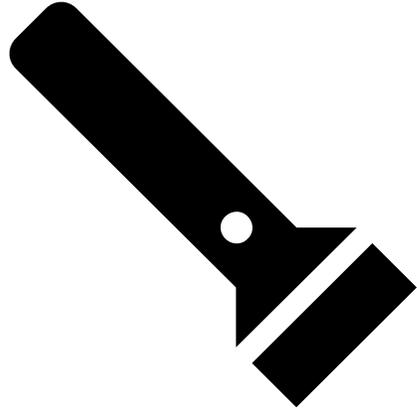
- Tech squad composed of teachers and school counselors visit homes or provide virtual support
- Schedule includes one hour per day for teachers to call homes and support families
- Lunch bunch in central location where families pick up school lunches and get support/answers



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Pittsburgh King K-8, Pittsburgh Public Schools

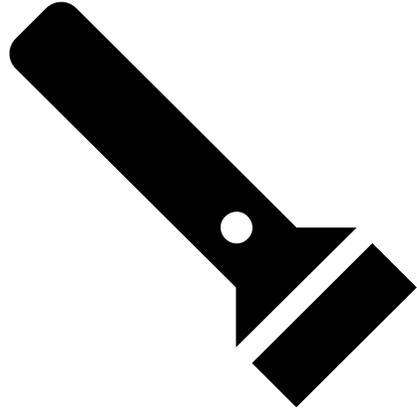
- Partnership with professional sports team and local hospital to provide incentives for positive attendance
- HBCUs provide paraphernalia to encourage post-secondary education
- Partnership with local church:
 - Drives (winter coats, desks/lamps for virtual learning spaces)
 - Offering learning hub during school day
- Peer-to-peer learning among teachers focused on strategies for engaging students



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Wagner Middle School, School District of Philadelphia

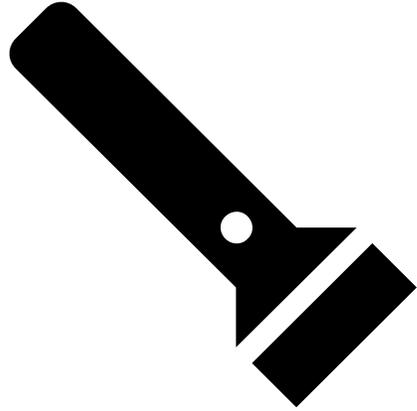
- Student-Teacher and Family-Teacher relationship building
- Student Attendance Improvement Conferences
- Students keep own attendance trackers
- Partner organizations: clubs/extracurricular activities, mentoring, social emotional support groups, items to meet basic needs
- Ongoing professional development on trauma-informed practices



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Kensington Health Sciences Academy, School District of Philadelphia

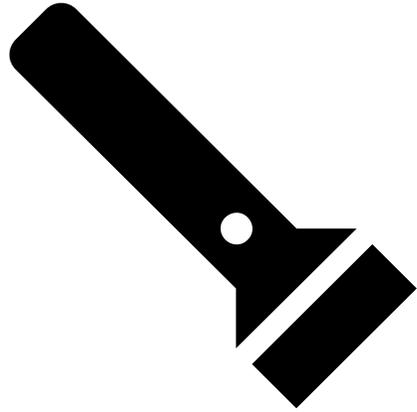
- Advisory model expanded to include daily one-on-one meetings with advisees
- Monthly attendance challenges
- School community-building events



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Tier 2 Strategies: Supporting students at-risk and/or those already chronically absent or truant

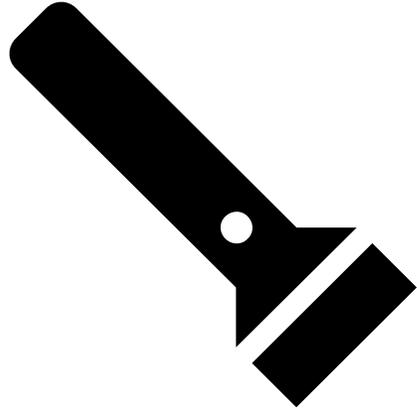
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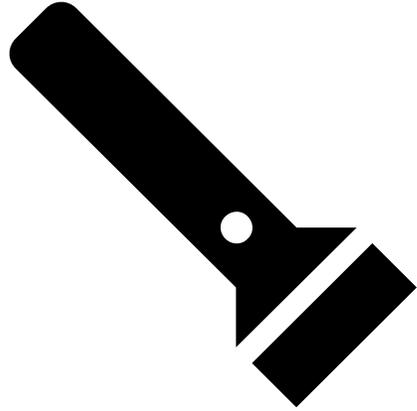
- Support for English Learners in 9th grade
- Conferences with student, family, and school team
- Pair student and family with mentor that speaks home language



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Tier 3 Strategies: Supporting the most vulnerable students and/or students missing more than 20% of instructional time

- Crispus Attucks Charter School



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Crispus Attucks Charter School

- Person Centered Planning
- Mentors for students demonstrating warning signs of disengagement from school

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Breakout Room Discussion Prompts:

- How is your school or LEA measuring attendance and engagement this year? Are you seeing differences across grade levels, instructional delivery models, student groups?
- What are the barriers to attendance and engagement students in your school or LEA are experiencing? What are the strategies you have implemented to address these barriers?
- Is there a current problem of practice related to attendance and engagement your school or LEA would like to pose to the group for thought-partnership?

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For more information on measuring, reporting, and improving Attendance in SY 2020-21, please email:

Dr. Rosemary Hughes - rosehughes@pa.gov

For more information on Act 138: Safe Schools Truancy, please email:

Joseph Loccisano - jloccisano@pa.gov