

-ENGAGE-



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EVERY STUDENT

**Dr. Sheronda Witter**  
U.S. Department of Education



# The Role of Afterschool Programs in Reducing Chronic Absenteeism for Students in Partnership with Schools and Families

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September 26, 2024



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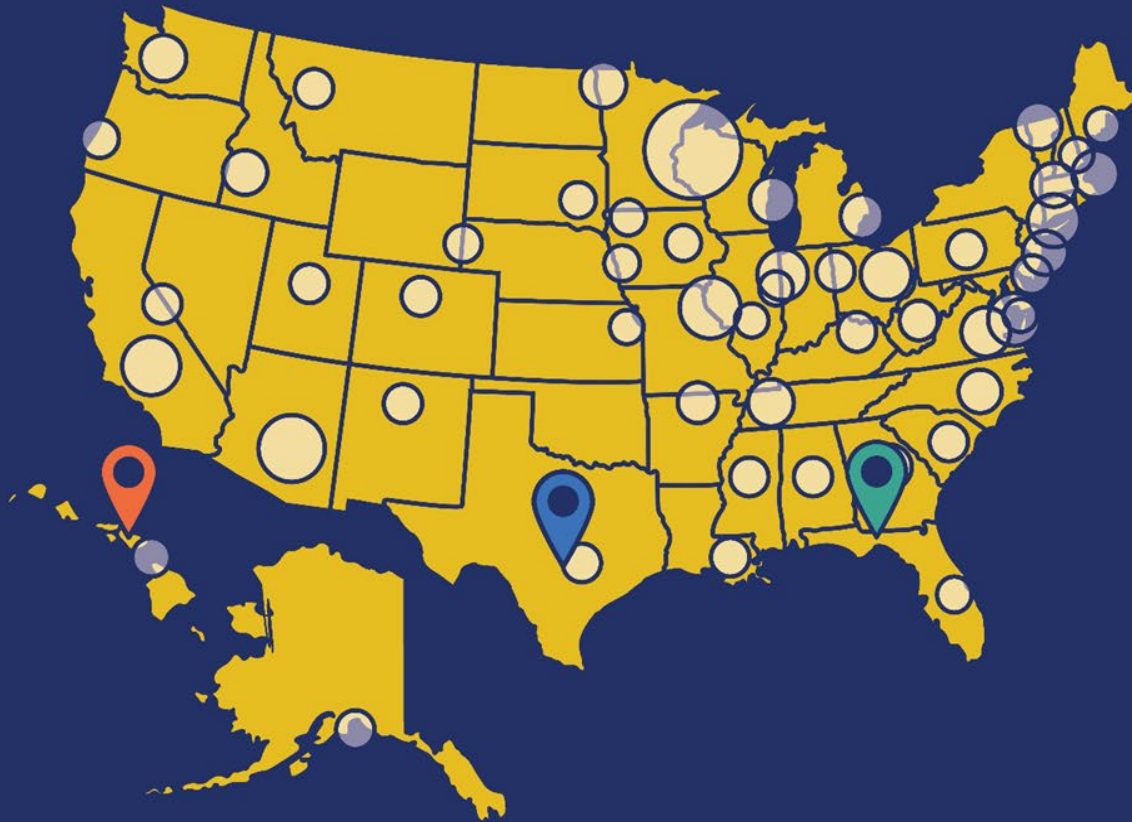
We need to ensure that high-quality out-of-school-time learning programs are **accessible in every community**, and that will take everyone getting involved.



**DR. MIGUEL CARDONA**  
U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION



# Investments in Afterschool and Summer



## Azle Independent School District, Texas

**\$950,000** for afterschool programs serving **more than 200 students**

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## Tallahassee, Florida

**\$30,000** for afterschool and summer programs to **increase the number of new students by 150%**

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## Hawai'i

**\$13M** for summer learning programs serving **20,000 students**



# Engage Every Student Office Hours

October 9, 2024  
1:00 pm ET

Office hours are held on the second Tuesday of every month at 1 p.m. ET. Office hours provides an opportunity for attendees to receive technical assistance related to expanding access to afterschool and summer learning programs from the initiative partner organizations. Registration is required.

WEBINAR

# Promoting the Lifelong Health and Overall Well-Being of Students Through Physical Activity in Out of School Time Programming

Thursday, Oct. 17  
2:00-3:15 pm ET







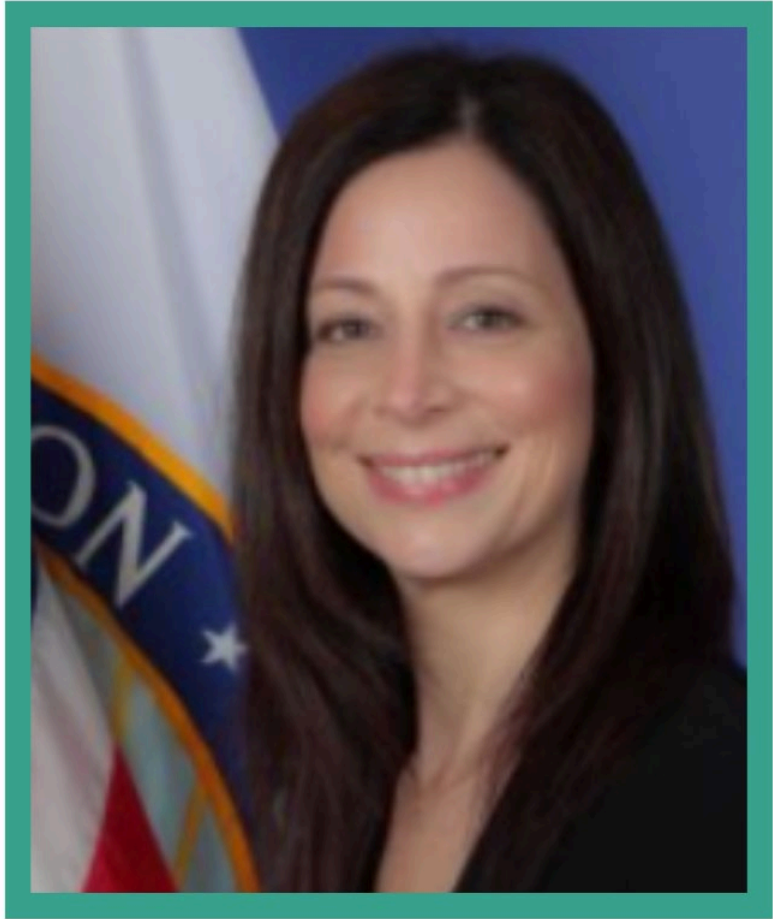
Become an  
**ALLY**  
of Engage Every  
Student.

# Join Us!



Make a  
**PLEDGE**  
to work toward  
Afterschool and  
Summer for all.

[www.engageeverystudent.org](http://www.engageeverystudent.org)



**Jessica Cardichon**

White House

**Hedy Chang**  
Attendance Works





# Addressing Chronic Absence: The Untapped Potential of Expanded Learning Programs



# Defining Terms

## Average Daily Attendance (ADA)

- School level measure (not student level)
- Notices aggregate attendance at certain point in time (e.g., half-days, holidays, bad weather)
- Masks individual student chronic absences

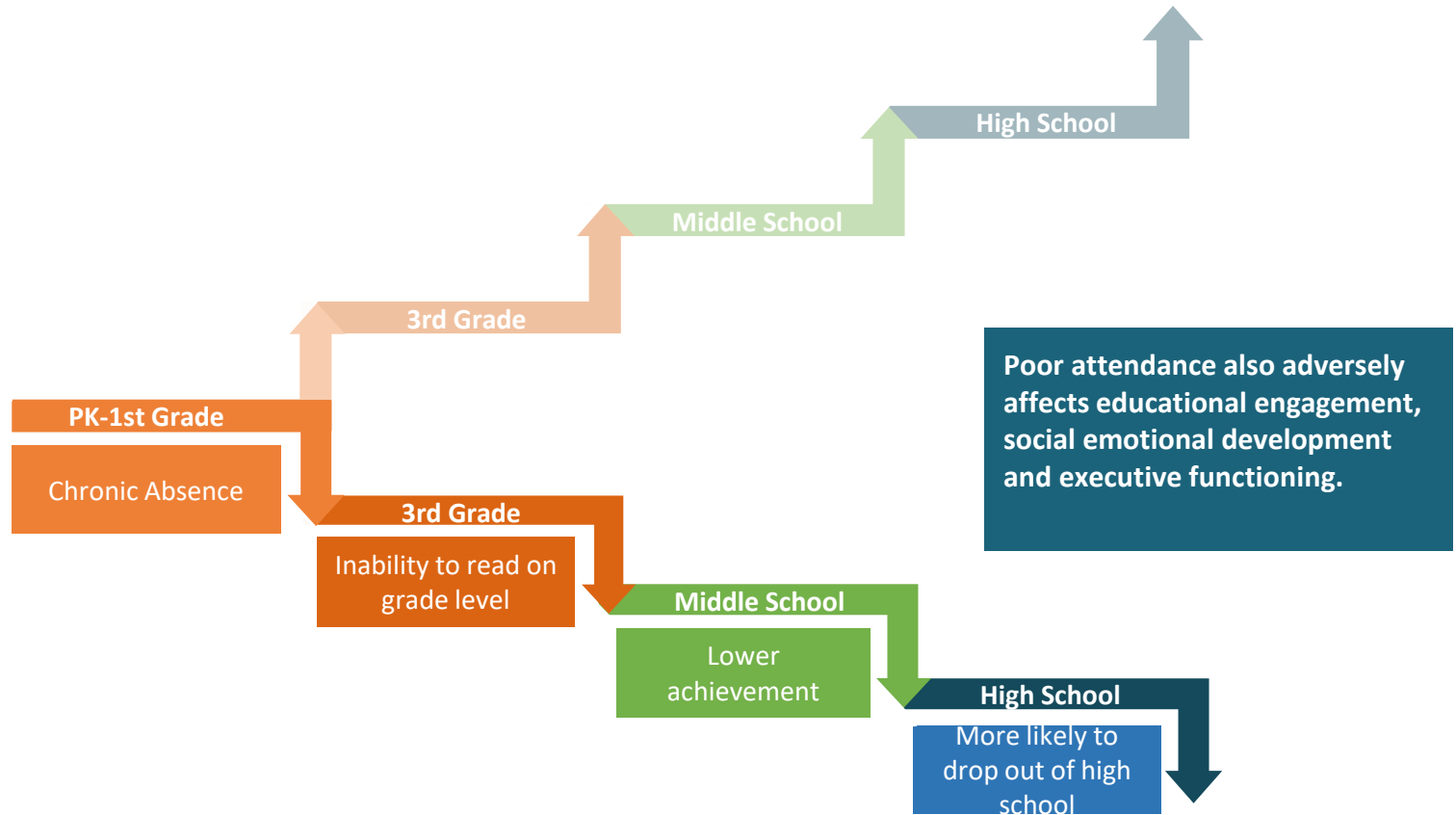
## Truancy

- ▲ Counts ONLY unexcused absences
- ▲ Emphasizes individual compliance with school rules
- ▲ Uses legal, typically more blaming and punitive, solutions

## Chronic Absence

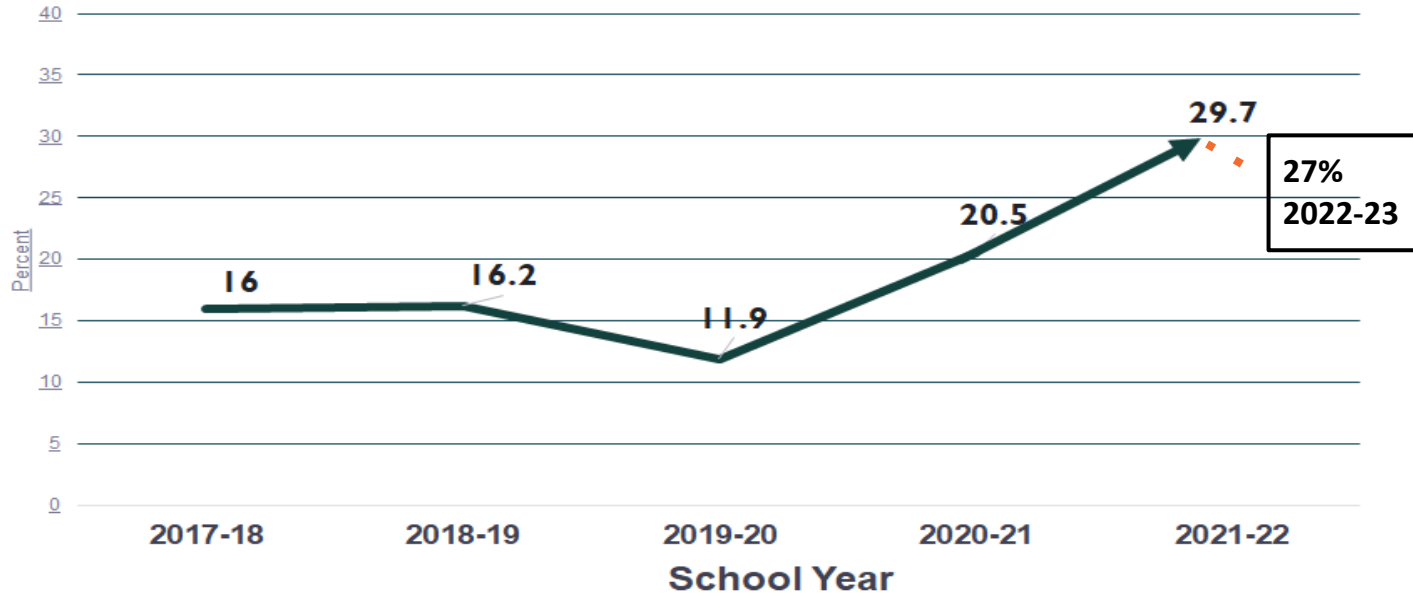
- Missing 10% counting ALL absences (*excused, unexcused, & suspensions*)
- Emphasizes impact of missed days and the benefits of being present
- Uses preventative, problem-solving, trauma-sensitive strategies
- Cultivates family and student engagement

# Improving Attendance Matters



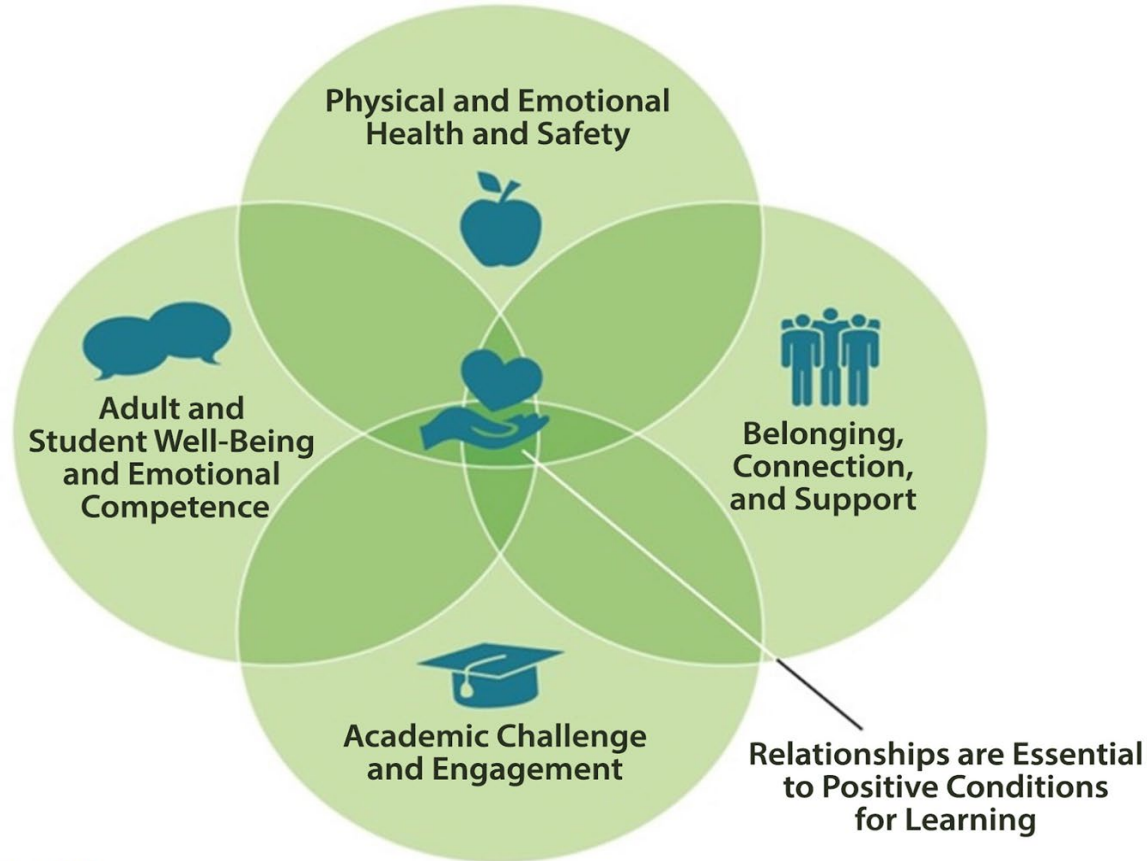
# National Chronic Absence Crisis

**Percentage of Students Chronically Absent Nearly Doubled Nationwide Between SY 2017-18 to SY 2021-22**



- ✓ The number of chronically absent students grew from 8,095,132 to 14,660,261.
- ✓ State data from 2022–23 indicate slight decrease.
- ✓ Emerging data for 2023-24 shows still much higher than before pandemic.

# High Levels of Absence Reflect An Erosion in Positive Conditions for Learning





# Reducing Chronic Absence Requires Addressing Underlying Causes of Absenteeism

## Barriers

- Chronic and acute illness
- Family responsibilities or home situation
- Trauma
- Poor transportation
- Housing and food insecurity
- Inequitable access to needed services (including health)
- System involvement
- Lack of predictable schedules for learning
- Lack of access to technology
- Community violence

## Aversion

- Struggling academically and/or behaviorally
- Unwelcoming school climate
- Social and peer challenges
- Anxiety
- Biased disciplinary and suspension practices
- Undiagnosed disability and/or lack of disability accommodations
- Caregivers had negative educational experiences

## Disengagements

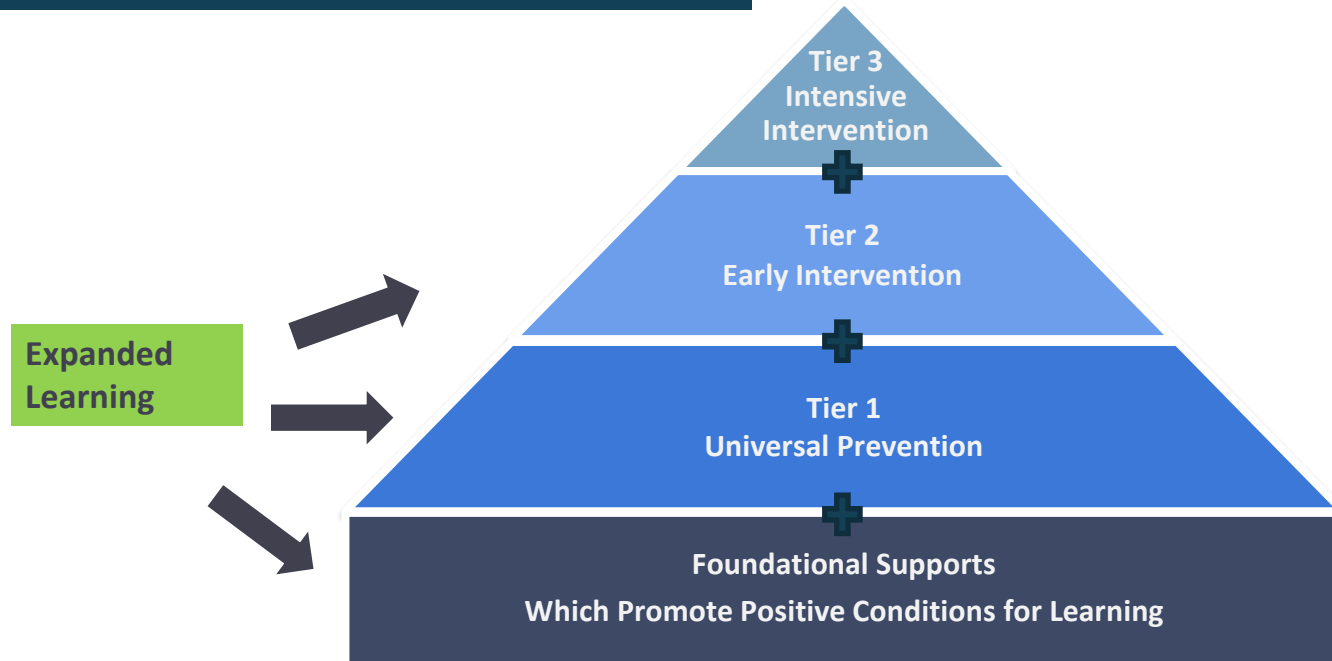
- Lack of challenging, culturally responsive instruction
- Bored
- No meaningful relationships to adults in the school (especially given staff shortages)
- Lack of enrichment opportunities
- Lack of academic and behavioral support
- Failure to earn credits
- Need to work conflicts with being in high school

## Misconceptions

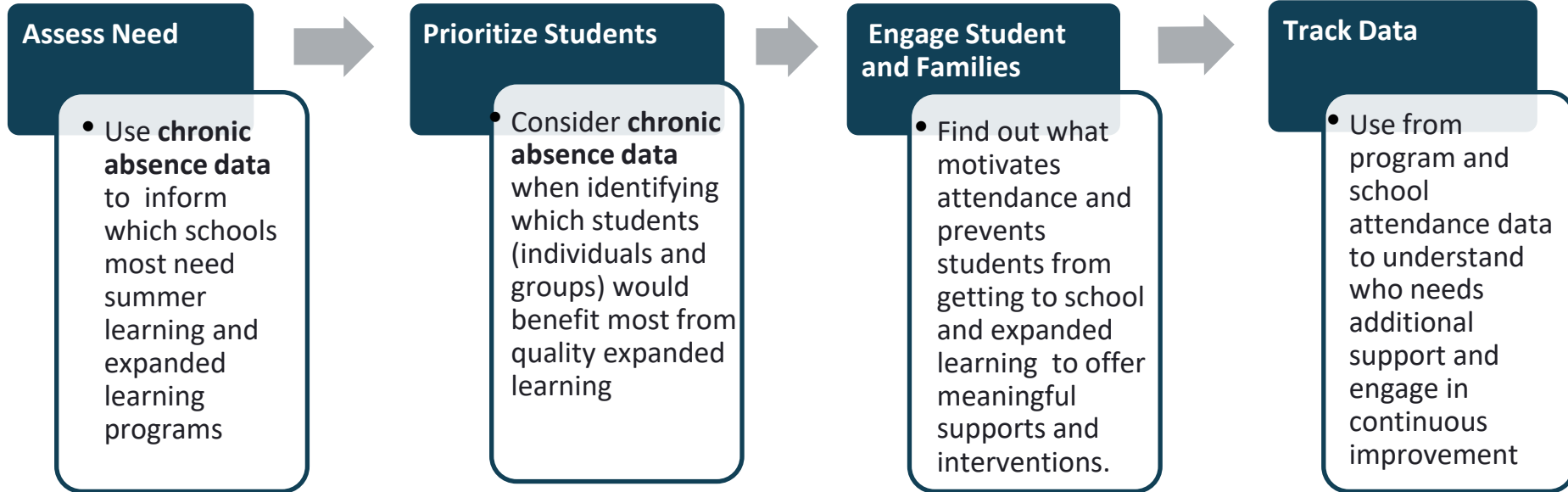
- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Missing 2 days per month doesn't affect learning
- Lose track and underestimate TOTAL absences
- Assume students must stay home for any symptom of illness
- Attendance only matters in the older grades
- Suspensions don't count as absence



## Expanded Learning is Part of a Multi-tiered Response



# The Opportunity: Use Expanded Learning to Increase Engagement, Attendance, and Achievement





## What Can Expanded Learning Programs Do?

### Step 1: Create Culture of Attendance

- a. Take roll every day in a caring manner
- b. Partner with schools to educate families and students about the importance of attendance
- c. Reach out to students/families with poor attendance
- d. Offer incentives for attendance
- e. Use engaging program activities to motivate attendance.
- f. Analyze program attendance data to identify areas in need of improvement.
- g. Engage students in helping develop meaningful attendance messaging

# Insights From “*Back to the Classroom*” (9/10/2024)

## Ad Council Research Institute

### Attendance messaging that most resonated with 5,000 parents:

- Is positive in tone.
- Communicates the opportunities associated with in-person learning, not just the consequences of missing school.
- Focuses on how school develops children holistically, beyond academic performance.
- Includes realistic goals for parents to work toward not being chronically absent, such as to attend as much as possible vs. citing a specific number of days or saying “every day.”
- Acknowledges their hesitations and avoids chastising or shaming parents by telling them what’s acceptable or not.
- Is delivered by a child’s teacher, whom parents say they trust the most.



## What Can Expanded Learning Programs Do?

### Step 2: Monitor Attendance Data on Program Participants

- a. Seek parent waiver allowing A/S to see attendance and grades, ideally as standard part of enrollment.
- b. Regularly get data on in-school attendance for program participants.
- c. Find out if you are serving any students with problematic attendance.
- d. Use poor attendance in afterschool to identify students who might begin to have trouble showing up to school day program.
- e. Partner with school staff to find out what are the challenges facing students with poor attendance and what would help get them to school.



## What Can Expanded Learning Programs Do?

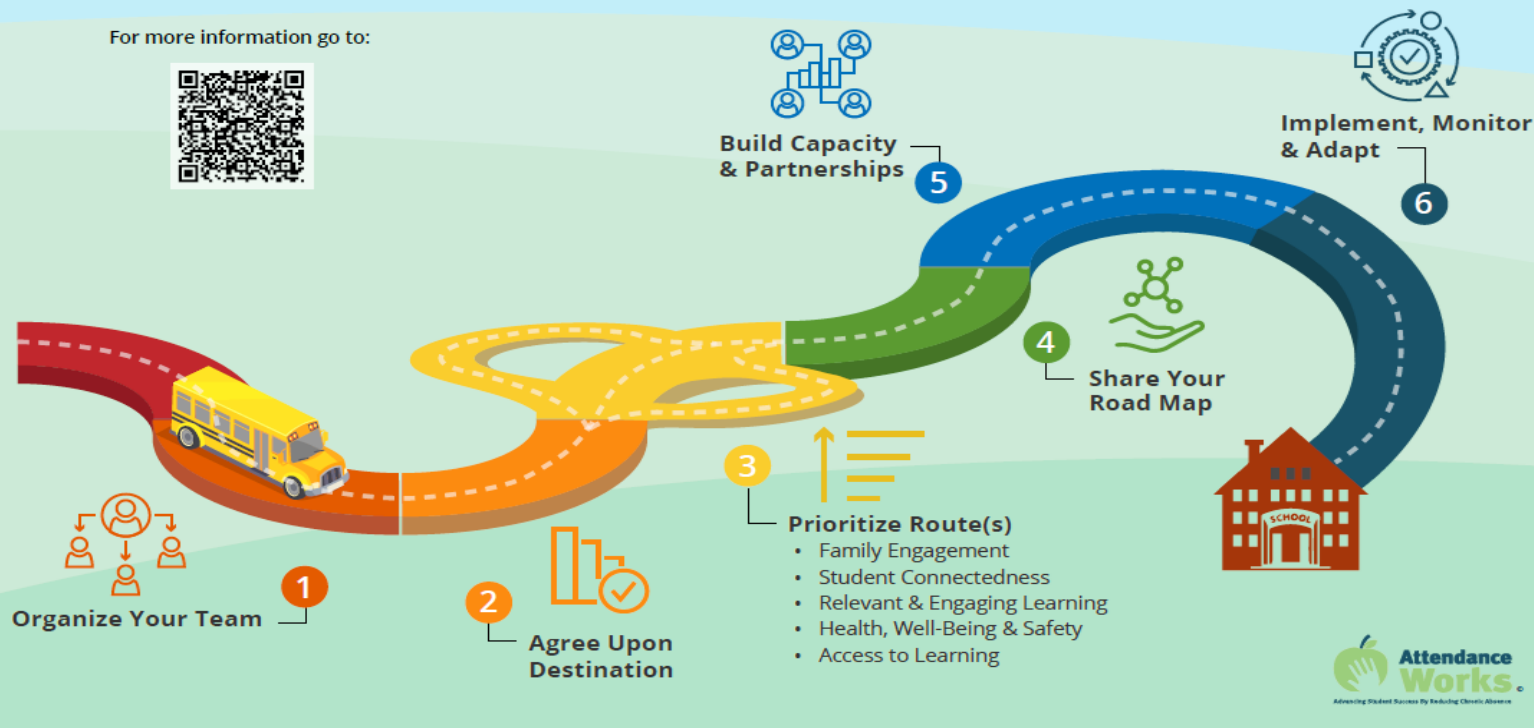
### Step 3: Find Out About Attendance In Schools Served

- a. Find out what the school is doing to reduce chronic absence and improve attendance. Identify if there is a role for the afterschool program, for example, serving as a success mentor.
- b. Learn if your school has a team that monitors attendance data; Seek membership on the team or at least access to review school day attendance
- c. Use the afterschool program as an opportunity to solicit insights from students and parents about what are the barriers to attendance in the school day and what could help overcome them.

# Cut Chronic Absence by 50% in 5 years

## Craft Your Engagement & Attendance State Road Map

For more information go to:





# Panel



**Jennifer Cisneros**

Santa Ana Unified School  
District

**Ann Durham**

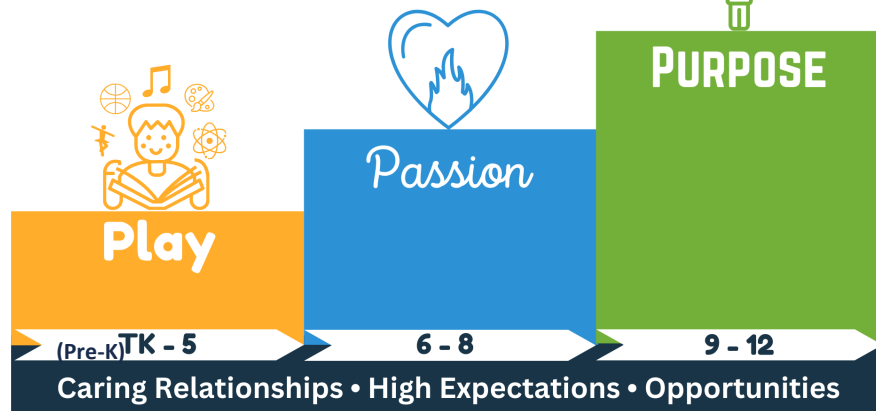
Providence After School  
Alliance

**Saskia Traill**

ExpandedED Schools

# Student Engagement – THE POWER OF P3

*"Unlocking Passion, Finding Purpose through Play."*



- Youth Voice & Choice**

- Enrichment
- Sports

- Collaboration and Integration**

- Career Technical Education
- Mental Health & Health Services
- Family & Community Engagement

	# of students	Chronic Absences (#)	%
ASP Students	9,617	1,439	14.96%
Non ASP Students	19,195	4,799	25%
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>28,812</b>	<b>6,238</b>	<b>22%</b>

\*ASP - After School Program

ASP Participation	# of students	# of Chronic Absences	%
<90 days	4917	953	19.38%
90+ days	4668	478	10.24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9585</b>	<b>1431</b>	<b>14.93%</b>

- Among 28,812 students, 22% had chronic absences—14.96% for ASP students and 25% for Non-ASP students.

- ASP students participating in the program for 90+ days were less chronically absent.

# Using After School as a Carrot to Combat Chronic Absenteeism in Providence

1. **Youth-Focused, Engaging Programs:** Ensure programs offered are desired by youth and a draw for them to attend (relevance, quality, leadership, fun)
2. **No School, No After School:** Students who do not attend school during the day cannot attend PASA-supported after school programs
3. **Goal Alignment:** Align 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC goals to partner school's attendance goals
4. **Referral Process:** refer chronically absent students to afterschool programs to help increase attendance instead of withholding participation as a punishment



# Key Strategies for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism at ExpandED Schools in NYC

- **Strengthen partnerships** between school leaders and OST site directors to align goals, create clear plans and share resources.
- **Focus on relationships** between young people and adults in every out-of-classroom experience led by partners, including mentorship, tutoring and afterschool enrichment.
- **Share timely and relevant data** so everyone can actually help!
- **Engage young people** in OST to serve as investigators to recommend ways to boost connectedness.
- **Share bright spots** to spread success, perhaps working with your local OST intermediary.

# New Visions Data Portal “At a Glance”

Recent Support: Student Start Date	Recent Support: Student End Date	Recent Support: Name	Recent Support: Provider	Recent Support: Student Attendance	Attendance Risk Group	Current YTD Attendance
11/6/2023	3/31/2024	HIT Enriched Lit Pod #2	ExpandEd - Other	88.9%	At risk	92.5%
11/6/2023	3/31/2024	HIT Enriched Lit Pod #2	ExpandEd - Other	96.3%	Not at risk	99.4%
11/14/2023	3/31/2024	HIT Braintrust Yellow	ExpandEd - Braintrust	85.7%	At risk	91.9%
11/6/2023	3/31/2024	HIT Enriched Lit Pod #2	ExpandEd - Other	77.8%	At risk	92.5%
11/6/2023	3/31/2024	HIT Enriched Lit Pod #6	ExpandEd - Other	100%	At risk	92.5%
11/14/2023	3/31/2024	HIT Braintrust Pink	ExpandEd - Braintrust	96.3%	At risk	95%

The image above captures comparative attendance data between High-Impact Tutoring (“Recent Support”) and current school attendance. ExpandED coaches can identify trends, both positive and negative utilizing the data portal and look at individual student attendance data. They make suggestions during site visits about students with low attendance so schools and providers problem-solve together in real time.

# Closing Remarks

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**Bryan Joffe**  
AASA



Thank you for attending today's  
Engage Every Student Webinar.  
Help us continue to refine future engagement  
opportunities by completing our short  
evaluation using the link in the chat.

