

WELCOME!

This event will start shortly. In the meantime,
visit us at OhioFamiliesEngage.osu.edu

Ohio Family Engagement
— LEADERSHIP SUMMIT —

Family Engagement

BYDESIGN

Partnering with Families to Reduce Absenteeism: Approaches for Attendance Teams

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THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY

CENTER ON EDUCATION AND
TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT



Ohio Statewide
Family
Engagement
Center

at The Ohio State University



Welcome!

Diving Right In!



Guiding Question:

**How can schools
improve
attendance through
family-school
partnership?**



Today's Learning Outcomes:

- I can define chronic absenteeism.
- I can explain some researched benefits of effective family-school partnership.
- I can describe some strategies for engaging families around regular attendance.
- I can apply these strategies and resources to my ongoing work to improve attendance.

When we work together well, everyone benefits!

Teachers



Job
Satisfaction



Confidence



Understanding

Students



Test Scores



Attendance



Attitude

Families



Support

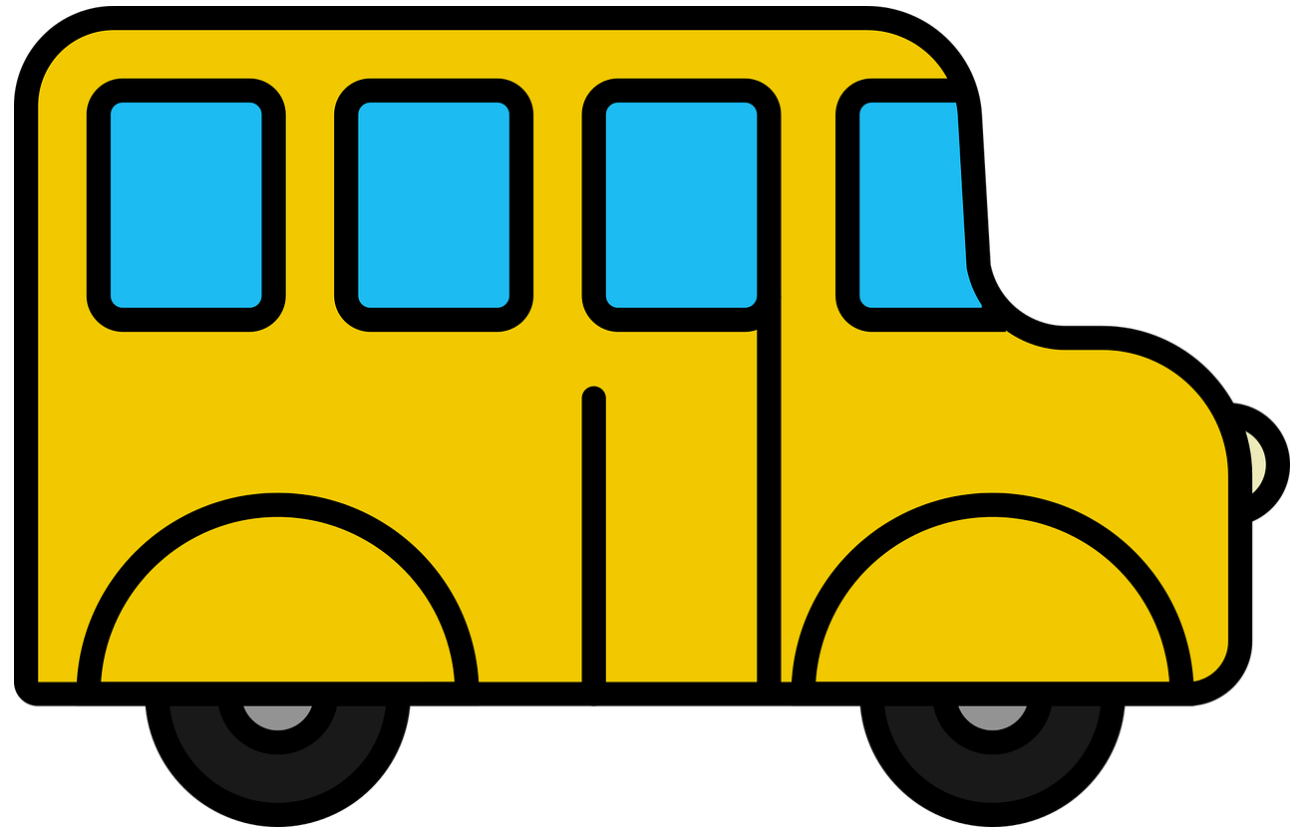


Confidence



Better
Conversations

**Chronic
Absenteeism in
the Literature**



What is Chronic Absenteeism

In Ohio, Chronic Absenteeism is defined by a student missing 10% of the school year for any reason.

Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, 2024



Strategies

- **Strategy #1** Focus on the early years.
- **Strategy #2** Practice effective and predictable two-way communication.
- **Strategy #3** Engage families in equitable and collaborative leadership opportunities.
- **Strategy #4** Develop intentional collaborative community partnerships informed by family interest.
- **Strategy #5** Establish data-systems that address questions generated by chronic absenteeism.
- **Strategy #6** Include chronic absenteeism and attendance in staff professional learning.

Strategy 1



Focus on the early years

Strategy 2



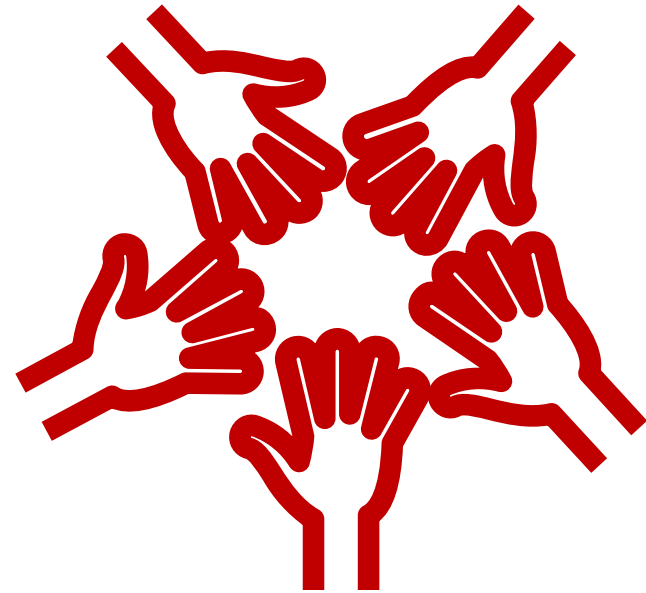
Effective and predictable two-way communication

Strategy 3



Engage families in equitable and collaborative leadership opportunities

Strategy 4



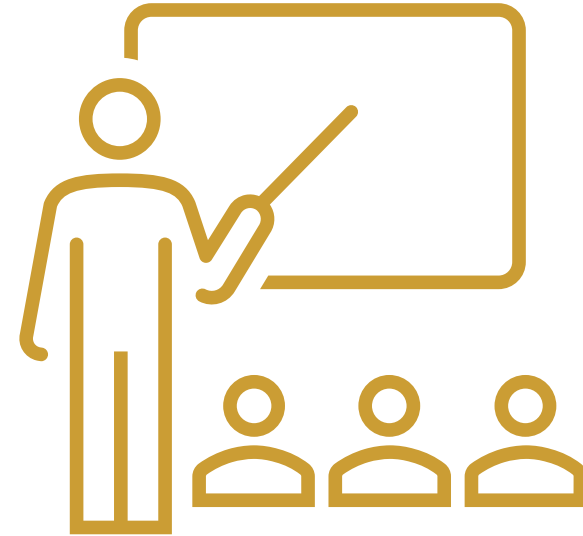
Develop intentional collaborative community partnerships informed by families

Strategy 5



Establish data-systems that address chronic absenteeism

Strategy 6



Professional learning

Which of these
strategies can
enhance your
current efforts?



Throughlines

Throughlines are connecting themes that connect the literature. These should be viewed as essential considerations during conversations about chronic absenteeism.

- Diversity and Setting (e.g., rural vs. urban, race, home language, representation)
- Intervention or Prevention
- Collaborative Approach
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports

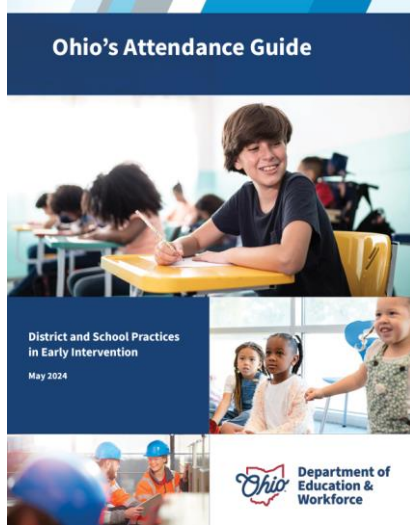
Application

- In small groups, apply the four throughlines to a strategy.
- Once in the group the person who last ate ice cream, describe the strategy.
- As a group take about two minutes to apply each throughline to the strategy.
- Record your thoughts on your notecatcher.

10 Minutes!

- Breakout 1 discuss Strategy 1
- Breakout 2 discuss Strategy 2
- Breakout 3 discuss Strategy 3
- Breakout 4 discuss Strategy 4
- Breakout 5 discuss Strategy 5
- Breakout 6 discuss Strategy 6

Resources



Ohio's Attendance Guide



Build Trust with Families Through Attendance Letters

Every school in Ohio sends letters home to families every year. One such letter received by families lets a family know their child has "excessive absences," which means the child was absent without a medical excuse for 30 hours in a month or 65 hours in a school year. School districts must notify a student's family "within seven days of the triggering absence" in writing. This letter, mandated in Ohio Revised Code Section 3321.19 (ICJ.1), presents an opportunity to schools for setting a foundation for a partnership with families.

When a student has reached the threshold of "Excessive Absence," schools may communicate this information to families in a way that opens the door to a partnership and a trusting relationship between home and school. A letter must be sent within seven days of a student reaching either 30 hours absent in a month or 65 hours absent in a school year. In addition, districts or schools may also provide information about appropriate intervention strategies that are in accordance with the district's local attendance policy.

While certain ingredients are required, using the exact wording from the Revised Code is not. It is not hard to imagine the fear, confusion, hurt, and/or anger a family may experience receiving a letter that uses terms such as "excessive," "chronic," and "habitual." Technical policy terms and attendance calculations are difficult for anyone except a professional educator to understand and should be avoided.

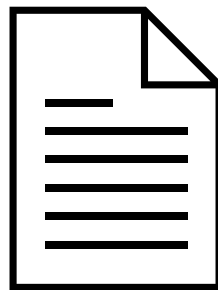
Schools can improve their communications to families about attendance to be more effective, student-focused, and collaborative. This can be done by using ordinary terms and language that is accessible to the family. Phone calls, postcards, and other outreach may also be useful and lessen the threat of a letter. The words used in communications can help families understand, feel supported, have a sense of hope and certainty that the school is committed to their child. It is an opportunity to build trust between home and school.

The Role of Trust in Family Engagement

Schools, families, and the community all play unique and interconnected roles in partnership to support a child's school attendance. Essential to this partnership is trust. What builds trust between the home and the school? Beliefs, actions, and feelings all contribute to trust. First, trust is built when schools and families collaborate in support of a child, like working together on a solution to the child's attendance. Trust is also built when families and schools are actively engaged in this partnership, like when schools actively support families and students with attendance issues through personal communication or solving barriers to attendance such as transportation. By working together, collective trust grows. When families and school personnel both feel valued for their expertise in analyzing and solving attendance challenges, when the

© Ohio Department of Education. (2019). *Keith Clark, Our Future: Supporting Regular Attendance*.
<https://education.ohio.gov/getinvolved/Topic/Parents/Supporting/Child%20Attendance/News/2019-010-040-002-1-Last-Access/Parents-05>

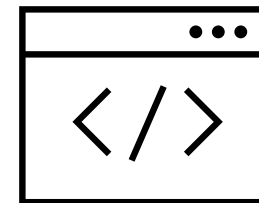
Trust-building Communication Tool



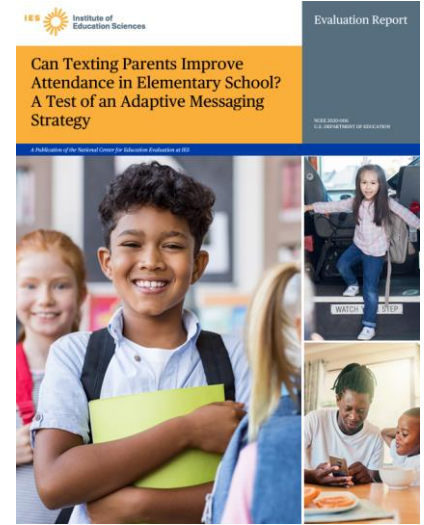
Partnering with Families for Regular Attendance Research Brief



Resources for Educators and Families



A new webpage for attendance resources



Texting to Improve Attendance

Coming Soon to The Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Website:



Questions?



Family Engagement
BY DESIGN



THANK YOU FOR WATCHING!

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— at The Ohio State University —



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