



School District of Waukesha

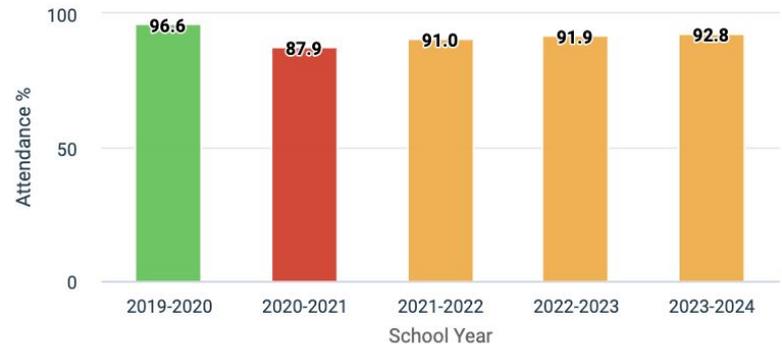
School Engagement & Attendance Specialist (2022-2024)

- Grant funded for 2 years - United Way
- Created to assist in the attendance efforts at a large high school with significant needs
- 22-23 Grade 9 only
- 23-24 Grades 9-10

Mary Green, SSW
*School Engagement & Attendance
Specialist*

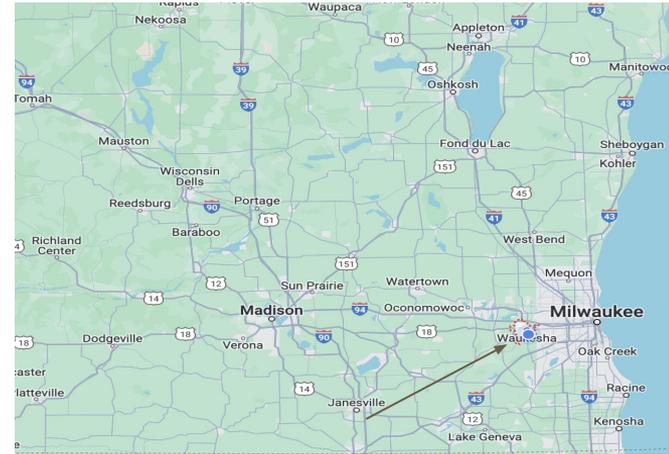
February 21, 2024

Attendance Trend for Current Enrolled Students





School District of Waukesha



Demographics:

- Urban / Suburban Milwaukee: 29 schools
 - a. 11,500 total students = **34%** students of color
 - b. **39%** of students district wide who f/r lunch

- South High School (includes both Waukesha Engineering Preparatory Academy and Waukesha Academy of Health Professions students)
 - a. 1140 students = **52%** students of color
 - b. **58%** of students receive free/reduced lunch

Mindset Shifts

From...

- Punitive
- Compliance
- What happens when you *don't* come to school

To...

- Positive
- Opportunity to learn
- What happens when you *do* come to school



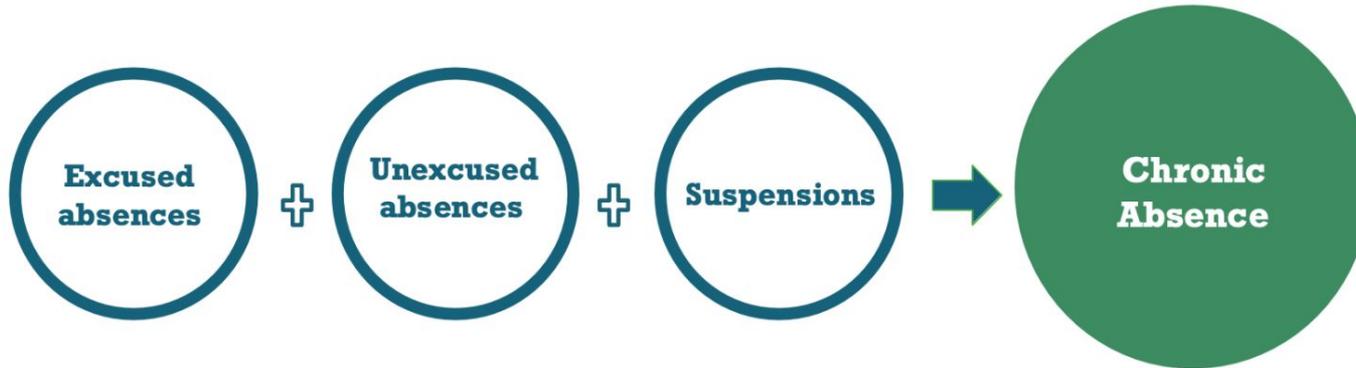
**This creates an
environment that
strengthens family/school
partnerships**



What is chronic absence?

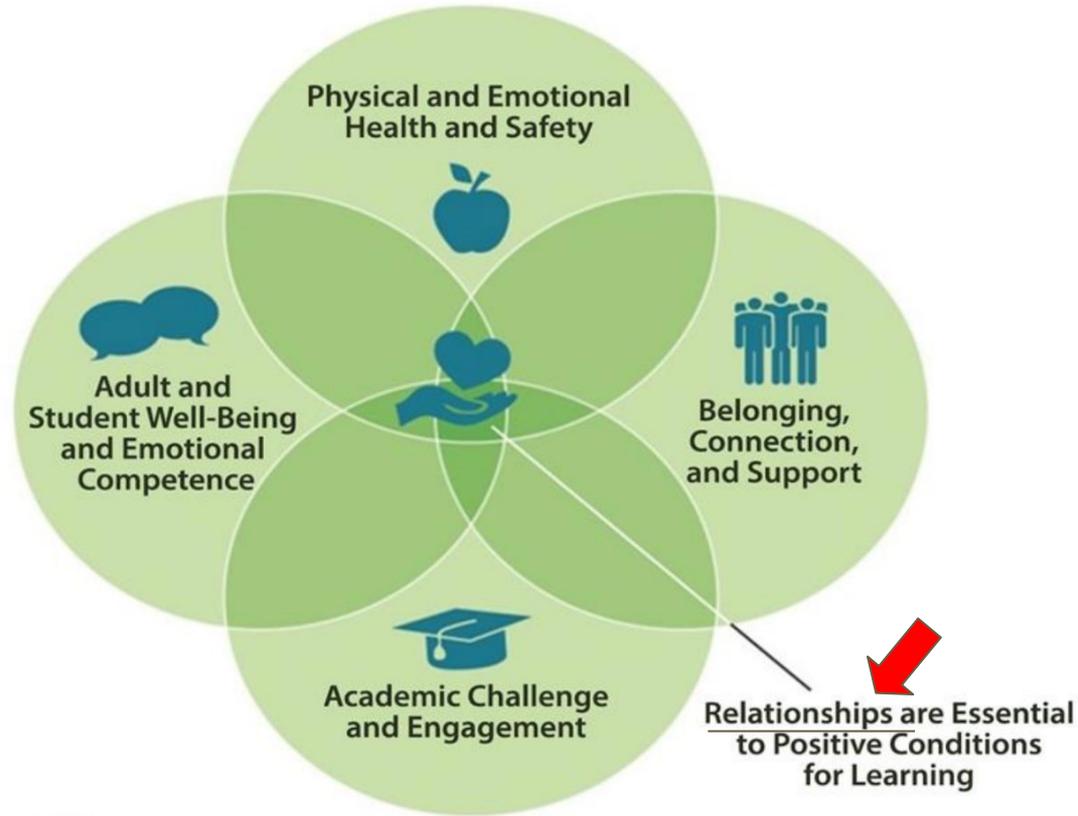
Chronic absence is missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at risk.

Chronic absence is defined as **missing 10 percent or more of school for any reason.**



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

We Must Partner with Families to Ensure and Restore Positive Conditions for Learning





Family Engagement Activities:

What do we do to help parents feel safe, confident and connected to school?

1. School Culture (systems)
 - a. Warm Welcome
 - i. E.g., email to 9th grade parents at beginning of year, establishing connection and contact (quick responses back)
 - ii. Are they connected to each other?
 - b. Partnership with parents
 - i. Building relationships
 - ii. Building trust
 1. Follow through on what say going to do
 2. Advocate on behalf of parent/child when applicable
 - c. Parent sense of belonging
 - i. Parent Advisory Committees
 - ii. Empower parents
 - iii. Language & Culture - bilingual family liaison
 - d. Community Partners - any connections that can be made in the community?
 - e. Data Analysis
 - i. Team that regularly reviews attendance data
 - ii. Creation of steps to take based on this data
 - iii. Assign case manager - hopefully with connection to student/family
 - iv. Review progress regularly
 - v. Sharing of data with parents and stakeholders
 - f. Positive learning environment - how are parents "seen"? How do they feel empowered to contribute to school?
 - i. Call them by name
 - ii. Talk about more than just school
 - iii. Invite parents to participate in school (volunteer, greet, PTO, connect with other parents, etc.)



Family Engagement Activities (cont.):

2. Keeping in touch with parents/guardians

- a. Make connections - let them know you want the best for their child
- b. Check in on well being of family, (not just with students), support, resources
- c. Positive contacts, celebrations of success
- d. Contacts with parents at beginning of year for students that struggled last year
- e. Family meetings to strategize about concerns about not getting to school
- f. Assume best intent - families are doing the best that they can
- g. Home visits or morning pick ups
- h. Show link between school and academic success
- i. Take time to understand and appreciate cultural differences and values and how those affect attendance
- j. Note cards with personalized messages
- k. Parent communication resources
 - i. Academic calendar magnet
 - ii. Flyers
 - iii. Parent Newsletters
 - iv. Attendance incentives
- l. Attendance Campaigns (start of school, winter weather, spring break, etc.)
- m. Social media posts
- n. Posters in key locations



Family Engagement Activities (cont.):

3. Advocacy

- a. Look for patterns

- b. Family needs, e.g., transportation

- c. Inequity e.g., location of low income housing + attendance concerns

- d. What factors exist in your community that impact the *behavior* of coming to school?

Heart + Will + Skill



Example 1:

SOUTH ATTENDANCE

92.7% year to date

DID YOU KNOW?

Student absences (whatever the reason) affect progress toward learning, getting along with others graduating from high school and finding success in life.



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD GET TO SCHOOL DAILY?

- Have a good nighttime routine.
- Ask about school and classes and encourage doing well.
- Show that being on time is important in a job as well as school.
- Avoid keeping your child at home rather than going to school.
- Check grades and attendance on Infinite Campus with your child, encouraging positive habits.
- We are here to help! Reach out for support:
Grades 9 & 10: Mrs. Green
Grades 11 & 12: Mrs. Mersberger



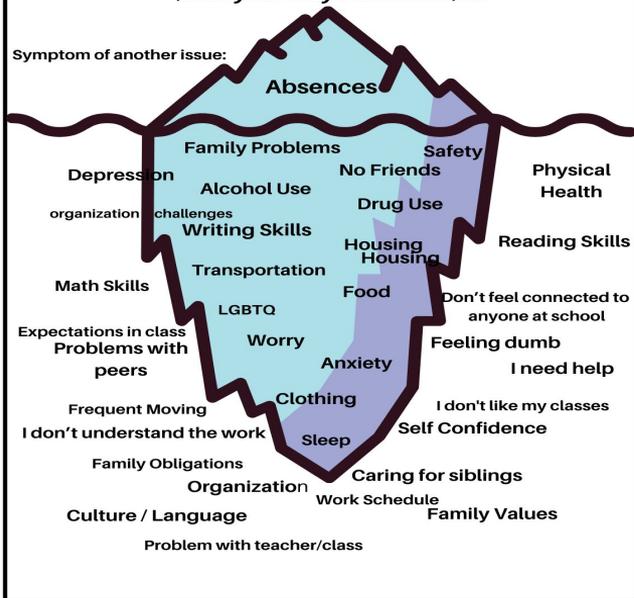


Example 2:

ATTENDANCE

EXPLORING BELOW THE SURFACE

*Reasons why I am not at school every day
(that you may not know)....*



ASISTENCIA

EXPLORANDO MÁS ALLÁ DE LA SUPERFICIE

*Razones por las cuales no estoy en la escuela
todos los días (que tal vez no conoces)...*





EVERY STUDENT, EVERY DAY

WHO IS
ATTENDANCE FOR?

EVERYONE!

ATTENDANCE
MATTERS, BECAUSE
YOU MATTER!



- ✓ **YOU** learn. **YOU** are supported
- ✓ **YOU** create healthy habits
- ✓ **YOU** cultivate a positive future
- ✓ **YOU** build life skills
- ✓ **YOU** earn school credits and life credits
- ✓ **YOU** can become whatever **YOU** want



SCAN TO GET
SUPPORT
REGARDING
ATTENDANCE



Example 3:



Want more information?

[Attendance Plan for 23-24](#)

[Monthly Activities Report 22-23](#)

[Attendance Conference Plan Sheet](#) - secondary

[Attendance Conference Plan Sheet](#) - elementary

[Attendance Works website - great resource](#) - webinars available, get on their email list

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Publications/Full-Equal-and-Equitable-Partnerships-with-Families/Chart-5> - equity related



School District of Waukesha

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