



Using Data to Improve Attendance

Truancy Prevention Learning Communities | Spring 2024

Data is a powerful tool in attendance interventions. At a systemic level, analysis can help schools and community partners anticipate community needs, identify the scope of attendance issues to effectively target interventions, and investigate the strengths, needs, and solutions for sub-populations of students. Regularly collecting and reviewing data can interrupt and change poor attendance patterns before academic performance is negatively affected.

Questions and Patterns to Consider

While this is not an exhaustive list of considerations for your data, it may help you get a sense of what might be helpful to collect and review and the stakeholders you may want or need to consult with.

- **What impact do schedules, start times, half days, and holidays have on daily attendance?**
- **Do we see any trends that appear to be connected to seasons, sibling absences, certain classrooms or courses, transitions, grade levels, or common barriers (like access to transportation)?**
- **Are any groups or subpopulations of students chronically absent at a disproportionate rate? Are there specific interventions or services that are effective for those students?**
- **Are students and families engaged with school? What perceptions do students and families have about school? Any negative school experiences?**
- **What types of interventions do we offer? What are the impacts of those interventions on daily attendance?**
- **Are there common root causes for students who are chronically absent? Are any of our interventions effective at addressing those root causes?**
- **When students are referred to Youth Justice, Child Protective Services, or receive a citation/ticket:**
 - **Does their daily attendance improve?**
 - **Does their sense of school belonging and engagement improve?**
 - **Do they ultimately graduate at a rate similar to or higher than their peers who were not referred?**
- **Are there certain types or groups of students for whom YJ, CPS, or citations/tickets are effective?**



This resource was developed with information provided during the Spring 2024 Truancy Prevention Learning Communities. A [recording of the full webinar is available on YouTube](#).

For more information or to share a strategy your community is using to address chronic absence, contact Julie.Incitti@dpi.wi.gov or DCFYJ@wisconsin.gov.



Wisconsin Department of
Children and Families



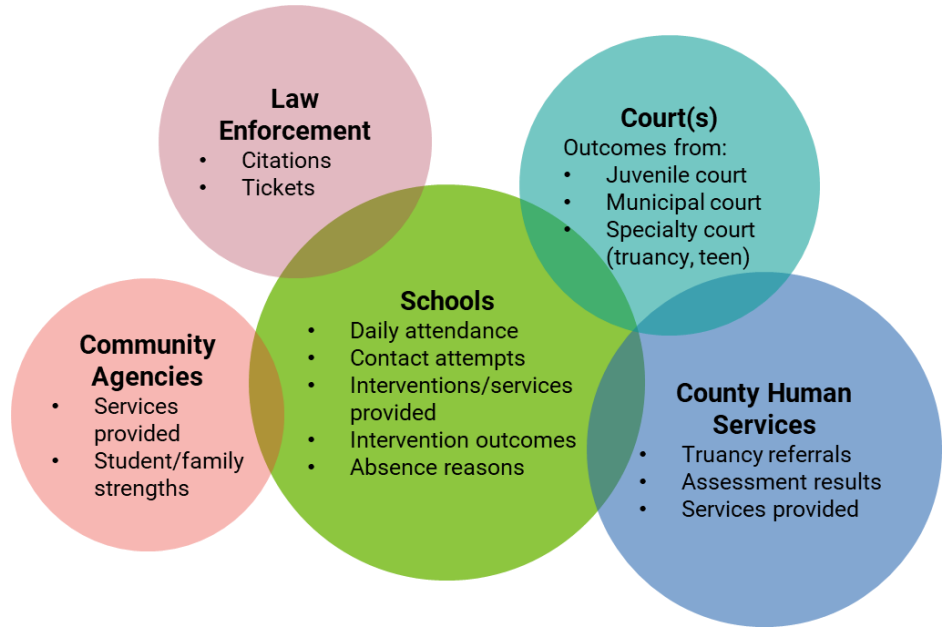
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
Public Instruction

Where to find Chronic Absence Data

Detailed, Local, & Community Specific Information

In each community, data related to different elements of attendance intervention may be split across different agencies—which can make it difficult to piece together the full impact of an attendance strategy without some planning and coordination. Some of the organizations that are frequently involved in strategies to address chronic absenteeism and the info that may be available to them are included right.

**Note—practices vary across the state, so the information available within your community may vary slightly from our example list.*





The state also has location-specific data tools available for school districts and county human service agencies.

- **For School Staff**—[WISEdash for Districts](#)
- **For County Human Services Staff**—[YJ Referrals eWReport](#)

While sharing data across agencies can help to strengthen collaboration and paint a clearer picture of the effectiveness of interventions, it is not always easy (especially when personally identifiable information is involved). NCJFCJ offers some suggestions about [establishing a data sharing agreement](#) and a [sample Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU) can be found in North Carolina’s School Justice Partnership Toolkit.

Big Picture, Statewide Trends

Publicly available data from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and Wisconsin Department of Children and Families is summarized below.

	 WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF Public Instruction	 Wisconsin Department of Children and Families
Focus	Chronic Absenteeism & Attendance	Truancy Referrals
Where to Find	WISEdash Public Portal: Attendance-Dropouts	Annual YJ Referral and Intake Report

Strategies from Wisconsin Counties and Schools



Milwaukee Public Schools

Google Sheets Attendance Tracker | [Katie Kuick](#)

School Social Workers in Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) are responsible for making and maintaining contact with families regarding truancy. A customized Google Sheet tracking document enables multiple staff at Bayview High School to collaboratively access referrals and keep track of contacts attempted and interventions offered.

- Attendance interventions begin when a student has missed 8 unexcused days. There are 3 other thresholds (15, 25, and 35+ unexcused absences) that are tied to social worker intervention efforts. Each of these intervention thresholds have their own report in Milwaukee's data dashboard and info from these reports are copied and pasted into the corresponding tab in the tracking template.
- Benefit of Google Sheets is tracking sheet can be accessed and edited simultaneously by all social workers in a large high school.
- Tracking template was set up to easily organize, filter, sort and highlight so it is easy to track who has been reached and what interventions have already been tried.

- *Tools mentioned:* MPS Data Dashboard, Google Sheets
- *Data flow:* Infinite Campus → MPS Data Dashboard → Google Sheets (via intervention threshold reports)
- *Resources shared:* [Copy of Tracker Template](#) (must log in to access), [Attendance Tracker Tips & Tricks](#)

Regular Contact with Families of Students Receiving Tier 2 Interventions | [Amanda Welcome](#)

MPS is also investigating the impact of regular contact with families for a small group of 3rd and 4th grade students involved in the district's "Attendance Check In Check Out" program. A school social worker connects with 40 families bi-weekly to notify them of the days their child was absent and the days that were unexcused. If it is discovered a student was absent for an excused reason, that information is relayed back to building secretaries and other social workers so edits can be made to the child's attendance record. Results from this intervention are compared with outcomes for a control group of students. To date, this strategy has had a helped reduce the number of days students are absent for unexcused reasons.

Racine Unified School District

Student Attendance Teams | [Stephanie Hullum](#)

Racine Unified has focused on a team approach to address attendance procedures and interventions districtwide. The district has a coordinator who sets the agendas for monthly meetings with school attendance teams and also maintains systems used to analyze data and provide appropriate interventions. Data is reviewed from multiple dimensions in order to analyze student specific information, and attendance trends. A whole-student perspective is used to then plan appropriate intervention strategies.

- The district provides schools with communication strategies (called "[nudges](#)") monthly in both English and Spanish to encourage regular daily attendance.
- Attendance Teams regularly review data from 3 main data sources:
 - Infinite Campus data hub: detailed, building-level data (tardies, excused absences, truancy lists)
 - [WISEdash Local](#): broader building-level trends (average daily attendance % and year to year changes, days of week least attended, demographic trends)
 - [Panorama](#): "whole student data", includes metrics beyond just attendance (grit, growth mindset)
- So far this effort has been very successful, resulting in 24,000 fewer student absences.

- *Tools mentioned:* Infinite Campus, WISEdash Local, Panorama
- *Resources shared:* [RUSD Teacher Conversation Guide](#), [EAB Supporting Chronically Absent Students Research Center](#) (must log in to access), [RUSD 90% Attendance Certificate](#), [RUSD Attendance Incentive Suggestions](#)

Outagamie County and Appleton Area School District

County Attendance Trends | [Scott Kornish](#) and [Stephanie Marta](#)

Outagamie County Health & Human Services and Appleton Area School District (AASD) teamed up several years ago on a Youth Justice Innovation Grant that was used to help fund an attendance coordinator position in the district. In the time since, the county and AASD have established systems to collect, organize, and analyze data both within and across their respective agencies.

- AASD is strategic about differentiating between students who are chronically absent and those who are referred to human services for truancy. An array of school-based intervention strategies help to support this effort.
- Human services develops a profile of students referred for truancy that includes enrollment and attendance data from the school, responsivity information (this includes factors like mental health, AODA, homelessness, etc.), outcomes of intake meetings, and WARNS Assessment results. Profiles are regularly reviewed to better understand county-level trends.
- Outagamie County is administering the [Washington Assessment for Risk and Needs of Students](#) (WARNS) to students referred for truancy. WARNS is an assessment that calculates a youth's risk of problematic outcomes (especially in school) as well as their social and emotional needs.
- Outagamie County is working to expand this collaborative approach towards truancy to other districts within the county.

- *Tools mentioned: Check & Connect, Washington Assessment for Risk and Needs of Students (WARNS)*
- *Data flow: Agreed data elements are shared between AASD and Outagamie County Human Services*

Note about WARNS & YASI for YJ Staff

WARNS and YASI are both assessment tools that incorporate information about a youth and their circumstances, and indicate areas of need to address. Both tools were developed using the same model from Washington state, but each evolved to focus on predicting different outcomes (truancy/school engagement vs. delinquency). While the factors that lead to those outcomes are *similar*, they are not *identical*. These tools can be complimentary (if necessary), but should not be used as substitutes for each other as there are differences in how WARNS & YASI calculate risk, identify needs, and suggest you assign interventions.

Additional Tools & Resources

- [Data matters: Using chronic absence to accelerate action for student success](#), Hedy Chang, Lauren Bauer, & Vaughn Byrnes
- [Forum guide to collecting and using attendance data](#), National Forum on Education Statistics
- [Using attendance data for decisionmaking: Strategies for state and local education agencies](#), Regional Educational Laboratory at WestEd
- [District Attendance Tracking Tools \(DATTs\) & School Attendance Tracking Tools \(SATTs\)](#), Attendance Works
 - *DATTs are especially effective for smaller districts with more limit data capacity. Companion SATTs provide school-level analysis down to the individual student level.*
- [Early matters toolkit—District and state level practices: Data-informed teams](#), Attendance Works
- [Teaching attendance 2.0 toolkit: Use data for intervention and support](#), Attendance Works
- [Collecting data and sharing information to improve school-justice partnerships](#), National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
- [Toolkit: A step-by-step guide to implementing a school justice partnership](#), School Justice Partnership North Carolina