A
THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA
Office of Evaluation, Research, and Accountability
Research Roundup Webinar Series \#9: Focus on Student Attendance

## Agenda

- About ERA and the Research Roundup Webinar Series
- Research on the importance of attendance and barriers to attendance
- How we measure and monitor attendance in SDP
- Attendance data trends
- Research we've done and are doing on attendance
- Q \& A

This webinar is being recorded.
The recording and a PDF of the slide deck will be available at: philasd. org/research/roundup

Please introduce yourself in the chat!

## Evaluation, Research, and Accountability

## philasd.org/era

Evaluation, Research, and Accountability

9 YOU ARE HERE
Evaluation, Research, and Accountability Evaluation, Research, and ${ }_{\text {Accountability }}$


| 2021-22 School <br> Selection: <br> Applications, <br> Admission Offers, and Student Acceptances by internal and External Students Applying to Grades K- |
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Office of Research and Evaluation

District Performance Office
What can we help you find?
Every year, we collect millions of data points on student achievement, leadership, school climate, and progress.
Qur offices work with the data to evaluate and report outcomes and develop informational tools.


Planning and Evidence-Based Supports Office

Office of Assessments

Office of Data Governance

## Evaluation, Research, and Accountability

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| SCHOOL PROFILES | PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC SCHOO DAAf for IItrict, charter, Alternativ <br>  Survey results, 20182019 for |  |  |
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| Search for ashool: | total enrolmment | 197,288 |  |
| Sterst |  |  |  |
| files |  | Total schools $\quad 329$ |  |
| acadenrat paummo | SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA CENTRAL OFFICE <br> Philadelphia, PA 19130 <br> p: 215-400-4000 <br> SUPERINTENDENT <br> Tony B. Watlington Sr, Ed.D |  |  |
| ACADEMY FOR THE MIDDLE YEARS (AMY) AT NORTHWEST |  | DISTRICT SCHOOIS 217 <br> ENROLLMENT 113,43 |  |
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| AD Prma C-ARrir school | 2018-19 PSSA \& KEYSTONE - © ELA PERFORMANCE (ALL GRADES) |  |  |
| adare alkanotrs school |  |  |  |
| ALEEN, OREEHELSCHOOL |  | CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT 13,405 |  |
| Aulen Ertans School | $36 \%$ |  |  |
| ALLEN, RICHARD PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL |  | OTHER <br> ENROLLMENT 2,318 |  |
| ALlance for progess CHartr school | The percentage of students who scored tandardized English Language Arts exam. | DISIRICT PROGRESS TOWARDS GOAIS ANDGUARDRAILS MORE PUBLIC SCHOOLS DATA DISIRICT FAST FACIS |  |
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|  | 2018.19 PSSA \& KEYSTONE. © | 2020-21 four-VEAR | © |

## philasd.org/opendata

## School Information

Click below to expand the table to view a description of the data and download a data set for a specific school year. You can also download a Zip file that contains all available years for a specific School Information category. The public release of this data supports our goals to promote greater transparency and community engagement Before accessing these data, please review the Terms and Conditions.

```
+ School Lists
    + School Enrollment & Demographics
    + District Enrollment & Demographics
+ PreSchool Information
    + Catchment Feeder Schools
+ School Catchment Areas
+ School Catchment Retention Details
+ School Catchment Retention Counts
+ District Wide Surveys
+ Youth Risk Behavior Survey
+ School Reopening Information
+ School Selection
+ Houschold Food Insecurity
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## Data Sets

(3) School Information School Information
(1) School Performance Student performance and dilimate
Hroungh the school year
Di District Employees and Finance Sxpenditure, Employee, Budget, and FTE
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Covid-19 testing

Terms and Conditions
Plesse read!

## Quick Data

## R School Profiles

 Vesw malvicual school profileinformation
PSSA \& Keystone Exam Data Detailis on PSSA and Keystone results
schoolprofiles.philasd.org

## Evaluation, Research, and Accountability


philasd.org/era/goals-and-guardrails

## Office of Research and Evaluation

## philasd.org/research


.n. External Research
Comprehensive information about the Research Review Committee process - a requirement before conducting any research in SDP

Philadelphia Education
Research
Consortium
phledresearch.org

## What is a Research Roundup?

- Regular webinar series with a topical focus
- Videos and slide decks available from previous sessions
- Sign up to be notified when webinars are scheduled and when recordings are available
www.philasd.org/research/roundup


## Previous Roundup Topics

| Mar | Literacy |  |  |
| :---: | :--- | :---: | :--- |
| 2022 | July <br> Performance in <br> Grades K-3 | English Learners <br> and Students in <br> Special <br> Education |  |
| April | Math | Oct | PERC Report: <br> 2022 |
| Keystone |  |  |  |
| Performance in |  |  |  |

## Goals for This Presentation

## Attendees will better understand:

1. Existing research on both the importance of student attendance and the barriers to consistent attendance
2. How SDP measures and monitors student attendance
3. Recent attendance trends in SDP
4. Our current and past research on attendance

Research on the Importance of Student Attendance

## Frequent attendance is associated with positive outcomes.



## In SDP, the fewer days of school a child misses, the more likely they are to read on grade level at the end of the year.

- Kindergarteners who attend school consistently are more likely to read on grade level by the end of kindergarten. This trend continues in first grade.
- Kindergarteners who are chronically absent in kindergarten are likely to continue to be chronically absent in later grades.



## 9th grade attendance is closely tied to graduation rates.

- The better a student's attendance in 9th grade, the higher the probability that they will graduate on time.
- No matter what a student's attendance rate is, a few more absences is associated with a meaningful drop in graduation rate.
- Even if a student misses a lot of school early in the year, strong attendance during the second half of the school year dramatically improves their chances of graduating on time.




## PERC reports about attendance and 9th grade

- 8th grade attendance predicts 9th grade on-track status.
- Overall 9th grade attendance patterns are generally consistent with patterns established in the first couple months of 9th grade.



## SDP students with better attendance perform better on the ELA PSSA.

- Students scoring Advanced on the third grade ELA PSSA have an average daily attendance (ADA) of $97 \%$, compared with $92 \%$ for students scoring Below Basic.
- Controlling for student demographics and prior reading levels, every one percentage point increase in ADA is associated with a $5 \%$ increase in the odds that a student will score Proficient on the third grade ELA PSSA.



## Regular attendance is associated with benefits at many stages.



Students who regularly attend school are more likely to read on grade level by the end of 3rd grade. Students who can read at grade by this time are 4 x more likely to complete high school than students who can't.

Students who regularly attend school every year between 8th and 12th grade are 7x more likely to complete high school. The more years a student is chronically absent the more likely they are to drop out.


Completing high school is associated with positive outcomes throughout life including making more money, living longer, and not being incarcerated.

## Research on Barriers to Student Attendance

## National research on chronic absenteeism highlights clear trends and disparities.

National Data on the \% of students who are chronically absent

| Race/Ethnicity | Chronically Absent |
| :---: | :---: |
| Native American | $26 \%$ |
| Pacific Islander | $23 \%$ |
| Black/African <br> American | $21 \%$ |
| Two or more races | $18 \%$ |
| Hispanic | $17 \%$ |
| White | $15 \%$ |
| Asian | $9 \%$ |

Nationally, chronic absence is defined as missing 10 percent or more of school days due to absence for any reason-excused absences, unexcused absences, and suspensions.

According to research, the reasons that students miss school can be grouped into three general categories:

Students who...


## Cannot Attend

## Will Not Attend

## Do Not <br> Attend

## According to research, the reasons that students miss school can be grouped into three general categories:

## Cannot Attend

- Poverty related issues
- Lack of resources
- Chronic illness
- Unreliable transportation
- Housing instability
- Family responsibilities (work, parenting, childcare, etc.)
- Family emergencies


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## Cannot Attend

## Will Not Attend

- Poverty related issues
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- Chronic illness
- Unreliable transportation
- Housing instability
- Family responsibilities (work, parenting, childcare, etc.)
- Family emergencies
- Fears of safety, exclusion, or negative relationships at school or near school
- Unequal access to quality instruction and academic barriers that result in disengagement, such as lack of appropriate supports or enrichment opportunities
- Disconnect between student learning and economic opportunity
- Lack of teachers who reflect cultures, ethnicities, and languages of the student population


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- Fears of safety, exclusion, or negative relationships at school or near school
- Unequal access to quality instruction and academic barriers that result in disengagement, such as lack of appropriate supports or enrichment opportunities
- Disconnect between student learning and economic opportunity
- Lack of teachers who reflect cultures, ethnicities, and languages of the student population


## Do Not Attend

- Students and their families are not aware of the importance of attending school
- Especially true in the early grades, with kindergarten being viewed as optional
- Belief that absences are okay as long as they are excused


# Measuring and Monitoring Student Attendance in SDP 

## SDP looks at student attendance data in various ways.

| Metric | What it tells us | Why it is important |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| The cumulative percentage of <br> students attending $90 \%+$ and <br> $95 \%+$ days | Tells us the \% of students with <br> high attendance across the <br> school year | Gives a picture of how much school <br> students are missing overall that might be <br> missed by only looking monthly |
| Average Daily Attendance (ADA) | Tells us what percentage of <br> students attend school on a <br> typical day | Helps schools track how many students <br> are in attendance on any given day |
| The percentage of students <br> attending $90 \%+$ days within a <br> month | Tells us the \% of students each <br> month that attended $90 \%$ or <br> more school days | Highlights monthly trends that could point <br> to specific monthly issues for all or some <br> students |

## Understanding the different types of attendance metrics:

Number of absences

Average Daily Attendance
(number of instructional days - days absent) / number of instructional days

Percentage of students attending 80\%, 90\%, 95\%+ etc.

Percentage/number of students chronically truant
(10+ unexcused absences)


## Student 90\%+ Attendance Within Month vs. Cumulative: 2022-23



## Understanding the different types of attendance metrics:

## Within Month

Students A, B, and C have all missed days in October.

| OCTOBER 2022 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wod | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 |  | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 |  |  |  |  |  |



Student A
ADA: 95\%


Student B
ADA: 81\%


Student C
ADA: 86\%

Number of instructional days $=21$

Total number of absences $=8$
Average Daily Attendance $($ ADA $)=91 \%$

Percentage of students attending $90 \%+=1 / 3=33 \%$

Percentage/number of students chronically truant* $=0$
*10+ unexcused absences

## Understanding the different types of attendance metrics:

## Cumulative

Students A, B, and C have missed days since the beginning of the year...


Student A
ADA: 97\%


Student B
ADA: 74\%


Student C
ADA: 90\%
= First school day

Number of instructional days= 39

Total number of absences $=15$

Average Daily Attendance $(A D A)=87 \%$

Percentage of students
attending $90 \%+=2 / 3=66 \%$

Percentage/number of students chronically truant* = 1
*10+ unexcused absences

## Student Attendance Within Month: 2021-22 \& 2022-23

In this graph, "regular attendance" is the percentage of students attending $\mathbf{9 0 \%}$ or more school days in a month.


## Student Attendance <br> Trends Over Time



## Cumulative Attendance Bands: 2017-18 to 2021-22



## Cumulative 90\%+ Attendance: 2017-18 to 2021-22



## Cumulative 90\%+ Attendance by Grade Band: 2017-18 to 2021-22



# Our Current and Past <br> Research on Attendance 

## Attendance Mailings: 2014-15 to 2018-19

A low-cost approach to improving attendance that's grounded in behavioral economics theory:

- Started out as a random control trial in 2014-15 in partnership with Harvard Kennedy School
- Due to the success of the RCT, SDP continued to send mailings through the 2018-19 school year


## Learnings from Attendance Mailings:

1. Effective for students in the "will not attend" category
2. Targets families' misconceptions about student attendance
3. Over the years, reduced absences for targeted students by between 1 and 2 days
4. Costs about 5-6 dollars for every additional day students attend

## Attendance Mailings: 2014-15 to 2018-19



Johannes has missed
7 days of school this year.*

## Dear Parent/Guardian of Johannes Demarzi,

Attending school every day in 1st Grade will help Johannes learn and stay on track.
Both excused and unexcused absences can cause Johannes to fall behind.
Absences can decrease the chance that students will graduate from high school.
Thank you for continuing to help Johannes attend school as much as possible.
Sincerely,
William R. Hite, Jr., Ed.D.
Superintendent
The School District of Philadelphia

Todd has missed
6 days this school year.*

Dear Parent/Guardian of Todd Rogers,
Attending school every day in 11th Grade will help Todd learn and stay on track. Both excused and unexcused absences can cause Todd to fall behind. Absences can decrease the chance that students will graduate from high school.

Thank you for helping Todd attend school as often as possible.

## Sincerely,

William R. Hite, Jr., Ed.D.
Superintendent
The School District of Philadelphia

Todd has missed more school than many classmates this school year
Johannes missed more school than many classmates this year


The number Iited above indudes all excused and unexcused absences between the first day of school and 111/1520017. If you have
 this mailisg. We appologize tor the incocvenenence.
"This is he average number of absences for all stuvents at ABC School in ist Grade.


This is the total number of absences (unexcused and excused) between the first day of school and 117ri2018. We understand that students
 keep your sutudent to home. Please call (215) 914.9022 to be connected to additiona resources. If Todd no longer iwes at this addess, plese distegard this
mailing. We apologize for the incorvenenence
"This is the average number of absences for all students at Any High School in 11 G Grade

## Attendance Ambassadors: 2016-17 and 2017-18

- Partnership with Read by 4th to address barriers to chronic absenteeism in early grades in six schools
- Ambassadors were paid members of school community who helped ensure families were aware of importance of attendance and how it connects to reading achievement and collected information on barriers to attendance to help families problem-solve challenges


## Findings from two years of Action Research

1. Primary barriers included district-wide half days, transportation issues, lack of family resources (clean uniforms, coats, etc.), and lack of knowledge about the importance of attendance in early grades.
2. Parents may not be aware of the importance of kindergarten or the relationship between attendance in the early grades and academic achievement.
3. Consistent, individualized communication with parents is important both in identifying barriers to attendance and identifying resources needed to improve attendance.
4. Incentives are important to recognizing both consistent attendance and improvements in attendance.

## Attendance Ambassadors: 2016-17 and 2017-18

## EVERY DAY <br> COUNTS START <br> TO FINISH

DATE

## WE MISSED YOU!

Our class is just not the same without you. We're here to help you catch up

```
Here's what you missed:
```

Parents: We know it takes a to get children to school every day on time. THANK YOU for doing what you do to make school attendance a family goal.

Don't forget, you have three days from your child's absence for it to be excused. Feel free to return the excuse note on the back
For more help, contact:
NAME: $\qquad$ EMAIL/PHONE: $\qquad$


## Challenges of Absenteeism: 2019-20 to 2021-22

As reported by principals and teachers on the Philly School Experience Survey (formerly known as the District-Wide Survey)


## Challenges of Tardiness: 2019-20 to 2021-22

As reported by principals and teachers on the Philly School Experience Survey (formerly known as the District-Wide Survey)


## Challenges to Student Attendance: 2021-22

As reported by parents and guardians on the Philly School Experience Survey (formerly known as the District-Wide Survey)


## Resources

## ORE Reports and Briefs on Attendance

- Kindergarten Attendance and Reading On Grade Level
- 9th Grade Attendance and Graduation
- School-Level Student Attendance Patterns During

Digital Learning, 2020-21

## PERC Reports on Attendance

- Ready from the Start: Identifying and Supporting At-Risk Ninth Graders from their Earliest Days in High School
- Present from the Start: Ninth Grade Attendance Patterns in the School District of Philadelphia, 2015-2017

Regional Educational Laboratory Program: Impact Study

- A Randomized Experiment Using Absenteeism Information to "Nudge" Attendance


## Publicly Available SDP Attendance Data

- School Profiles
- School Progress Report on

Education and Equity (SPREE)

- Open Data

