Every Day, On Time
Promoting Positive School Attendance
Office of Attendance and Truancy
Agenda

● Welcome and Introductions
● Attendance Overview
● Tier 1
● Essential Strategies
● School Year Timeline
● Campaigns
● Tier 2
● Tier 3
● Closing
Attendance Overview
RTI/MTSS Attendance Tiers

**Tier 1 - Universal Strategies**
SDP 95% Metric
Focus on building culture of attendance
Emphasis for SDP Attendance Coaches

**Tier 2 - Targeted Interventions**
RTI/MTSS SAIP Process in SIS
The nucleus at this level is providing supports

**Tier 3 - Intensive Interventions**
Referrals to Attendance and Truancy Office
DHS/Court involvement
Attendance Metric

School District of Philadelphia’s attendance metric:

- **60%** of students in grades **K-12** attend school 95% of the time or more

Having 95% attendance means the student misses 8 or fewer instructional days during the school year*

*Based on a school year with 180 instructional days
Tier 1
Steps to Promote Positive School Attendance

1. Create a culture of attendance
2. Ensure the fidelity of documenting attendance
3. Develop team focused on attendance
4. Use data to strategically improve attendance
5. Create partnerships to support attendance
1. **Create a culture of attendance**
   - Create a school climate that engages students, families, staff, and community
   - Build relationships with students and their families
   - Emphasize the value of daily school attendance
   - Develop and implement a school-wide system of attendance campaigns and incentives

2. **Ensure the Fidelity of Documenting Attendance**
   - Record attendance accurately
   - Follow attendance policies, procedures, and guidelines
3. Develop Team Focused on Attendance

- Establish team of school leadership staff to monitor attendance
- Meet, at minimum, monthly to discuss attendance challenges and successes
- Opportunity to review grade, classroom, and student level attendance patterns

4. Use Data to Strategically Improve Attendance

- Identify students achieving 95%+ attendance
- Use data to determine where additional support is needed
- Drive decision-making regarding attendance improvement strategies (Determine effectiveness of campaigns—“moving the needle”)
5. Create Partnerships

- Collaborate with businesses, parent organizations, social services, health providers, clergy, community leaders etc. to build a positive culture of attendance
- Use partners to support efforts when developing campaigns (i.e. in-kind donations)

Each Learning Network has an assigned Attendance Coach that is available to support your efforts around improving attendance.
Let’s Talk!
Essential Strategies
| ⭐ | Be excited! Let students and families know that attendance matters |
| ⭐ | **ENGAGE** and involve students and families |
| ⭐ | Share attendance data with staff, students, and families |
| ⭐ | Inform and remind students and families of attendance policies and procedures |
| ⭐ | Motivate and encourage staff |
| ⭐ | Implement incentives and communicate expectations |
| ⭐ | Early outreach to students who are absent/tardy |
| ⭐ | Recognize good and improved attendance |
Incentives

1. **They work**: They encourage positive behavior, including better school attendance
2. There are *many ways to use them*
3. Accurate tracking is essential: *you can’t reward what you don’t record*
4. Works best as *part of a multi-pronged approach*
1st Day/Week of School

- Red Carpet

- Photo Booth

- Character Visits e.g. School Mascot, Elmo, Dora, Mickey Mouse

- Welcome Line (Fathers, Community Leaders, School Staff)

- Give-a-ways/Raffles (Schools Supplies, Uniform Gift Cards, Admission Tickets)

- Early Bird Prizes (By grade level)

- Reward teachers who have 100% classroom attendance
Attendance Awareness Month

September is Attendance Awareness Month!

- Back to School Night
- Back to School Breakfast/Luncheon (for families unable to come at night)
- Welcome Kindergarten Families Event
- Messaging the importance of attendance
- Poster contest “Attendance Matters”
- Challenges
- Promotional Videos
Holiday Breaks/Winter Season

- Thankful for good attendance event (Thanksgiving)
- Raffles and Fun activities on days where attendance is likely to be low (half days, report card conferences, days before and after holidays)
- Health and Attendance (Healthy Habits, Cold and Flu Season Tips, “How Sick is Too Sick?”)
- First day back from winter break event
- Love of attendance event (Valentine’s Day)
Spring/Avoiding the April-June Slump

- Reminders of expectation for attendance (vacations, extended trips)
- Post PSSA Attendance Promotion
- Theme Days
- Spirit Week
- Challenges
- Field Days
- Graduation/Moving Up activities (End of May/Early June)
Having a Successful Campaign

✔ Planning (When, Who is Involved)

✔ Messaging (How you frame your campaign, Buy in)

✔ Informing

✔ Updating

✔ Acknowledging

✔ Rewarding
Sample Monthly Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Challenge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>5 “Strive for Five”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>17 “Achieve Seventeen”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>23 “Reach for Twenty-Three”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>18 “Crush Eighteen”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>15 “Maintain Fifteen”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>20 “Jump for Twenty”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>19 “Being Here for 19”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>21 “Ace 21”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>19 “Pull for 19”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>21 “Bring on Twenty-One”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>2 “You can do two!”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Sample Slogans

Every Day, On Time
Present Today and Every Day!
Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow
It’s Cool to Come to School
Every Day. All Day. All the Way!
Miss School, Miss Out!
Don’t Be Wacky, Get Attendance Happy!
Grades Go Down When You’re Not Around
Show Up, Grow Up!
Be Here, Get There!
Stay In School. Don’t Be Late. Graduate.
Don’t let your Education Slip Away. Come to School Every Day
Unless You’re Really Sick, Come to School Quick!
Campaign Checklist

- Name/Title/Slogan
- Campaign Description
- Development of Parent Flyer/Handout
- Supplies/Materials Needed
- Approximated Cost
- Reward Period
- Type of reward
- Data Points
Build Your Own Campaign
Tier 2
Act 138

- Pennsylvania amended the truancy law in November 2016 and changes went into effect in 17-18 School Year

- Purpose is to “improve school attendance and deter truancy through a comprehensive approach to consistently identify and address attendance issues as early as possible with credible intervention techniques”

- Defines Truant- 3 or more schools days of unexcused absence Habitually truant- 6 or more schools days of unexcused absence

- Schools must hold a conference to discuss the barriers to attendance and put interventions in place to support the student coming to school. SAIP is used to document.

- Schools shall not expel or impose out-of-school suspension, disciplinary reassignment or transfer for truant behavior.
A Student Attendance Improvement Plan Conference is required by state law. This conference is a meeting where the child’s absences and reasons for the absences will be discussed. The purpose of the conference is to identify the barriers the child is facing and address them by creating a plan to put interventions in place that will help the student attend school on a regular basis. The parent/guardian and student must be invited to the conference. The conference must still take place even if parents/guardians are unable to attend. At the end of the conference, the school will create the Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) in the SIS (Infinite Campus).
SAIP Process

- Send out the Third Day Illegal Notice (C-31) at the 3rd unexcused absence. Also, must send out written notification to invite the parent/guardian (student) to the SAIP Conference.

- SAIP Conference should be held no later than 6th unexcused absence.

- SAIP must be completed, regardless if parent/guardian or student are able to attend the conference.

- A completed SAIP consists of: contact log, identification of barriers, implementation of interventions that address the identified barriers and progress monitoring.

- Progress Monitoring is to ensure that the school is working to support the student to alleviate the attendance barrier/s, it should occur 30 days after the SAIP is created and implemented.

- Finalize Plan:
  - Barrier alleviated, attendance has improved, plan closed
  - Truancy continues, further support needed, refer to Office of Attendance and Truancy.
Barriers

- At 24 Barriers to Meeting Goal (36)
  - Academic/School issues - conflict with staff
  - Academic/School issue - lack of academic support
  - Academic/School issue - poor academic performance
  - Academic/School issue - school discipline
  - Academic/School issue - suspension
  - Health issue - disability
  - Health issue - issues with pregnancy
  - Health issue - lacking medical care/communications
  - Health issue - Medical Problems
  - Health issue - student substance abuse
  - Home issue - abuse in the home
  - Home issue - caregiver to family member
  - Home issue - educational neglect
  - Home issue - family member control
  - Home issue - financial instability
  - Home issue - homelessness
  - Home issue - interpersonal violence
  - Home issue - Parent/guardian overwhelmed
  - Home issue - runaway
  - Home issue - student is a parent
  - Home issue - substance abuse in the home
  - Other:
    - Social/Emotional - anxiety/depression
    - Social/Emotional - bullying/verbalization
    - Social/Emotional - difficult peer relationships
    - Social/Emotional - financial issues
    - Social/Emotional - gang activity
    - Social/Emotional - gender identity
    - Social/Emotional - negative role models
    - Social/Emotional - other mental health concerns
    - Social/Emotional - personal relationships
    - Social/Emotional - student lack of motivation
    - Transportation - distance is too far
    - Transportation - no financial means
    - Transportation - no reliable means
Interventions
Barriers and Interventions

Barrier: Medical, Asthma
Intervention: Meeting with School Nurse

Barrier: Housing Instability

Barrier: Bullying
Intervention:
Tier 3
Truancy Referrals

- If truancy continues for a student who has a SAIP in place and that student needs further support the attendance designee may send a referral to the Office of Attendance and Truancy.

- **Students in grades K-3** - DHS contracts with Family Empowerment Services (FES) providers that will provide intensive supports to the family.

- **Students in grades 4-12** - Families will receive a subpoena/citation from Philadelphia Family Court to appear in Truancy Court. DHS contracts with Truancy Providers that will work with the family to identify and remove barriers to regular attendance. You can check the status of a case in the Truancy Court tab in SIS.

- Case managers from FES and Truancy Providers will contact school staff for demographic and attendance information for students assigned to their caseload. Case managers need to provide a FERPA form to the school for release of student demographic information. Options including either a FERPA signed by the parent or a FERPA with two documented unsuccessful home visits.
Office of Attendance and Truancy

Student Rights & Responsibilities
(Attendance & Truancy)
440 N. Broad Street, Suite 243
Philadelphia, PA 19130

215-400-4830, Option 1 (phone)

attendanceandtruancy@philasd.org (Q&A and Technical Assistance)
truancyreferrals@philasd.org (SAIP Truancy Referrals)

Kelly Aichele - Project Assistant & Innovation Network
Katie Rendon - Program Assistant & Learning Network 1
Maurice West - Director & Opportunity Network
Attendance Coaches

Molly Ashburn - Learning Networks 3 & 10
Shirley Carroll - Comprehensive High Schools (across Learning Networks)
Danielle Davenport - Learning Networks 2 & 12
Kesha Hines - Learning Networks 5 & 7
Justin Proctor - Learning Networks 8 & 9
Kirsten Walker - Learning Networks 4 & 11
Duane Wilkins - Acceleration & Learning Network 6
Additional Resources

Attendance Works

Get Schooled

National Dropout Prevention Center

Education World | Connecting educators to what works

Office of Attendance and Truancy
https://www.philasd.org/studentrights/programsservices/attendance-truancy/