



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
PHILADELPHIA

# **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

A photograph of a classroom with several students sitting at their desks. The image is faded and has a semi-transparent dark overlay. In the foreground, a young man is writing in a notebook with a yellow pencil. He is wearing a dark blue polo shirt with a logo that reads "G.W. DRIVER HSES BLUE RIDGE SCH OF EXCELLEN". To his right, a calculator is on the desk. Other students are visible in the background, some looking at their work and others looking towards the camera. The text "Attendance Overview" is centered over the image in a bold, dark red font.

# 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

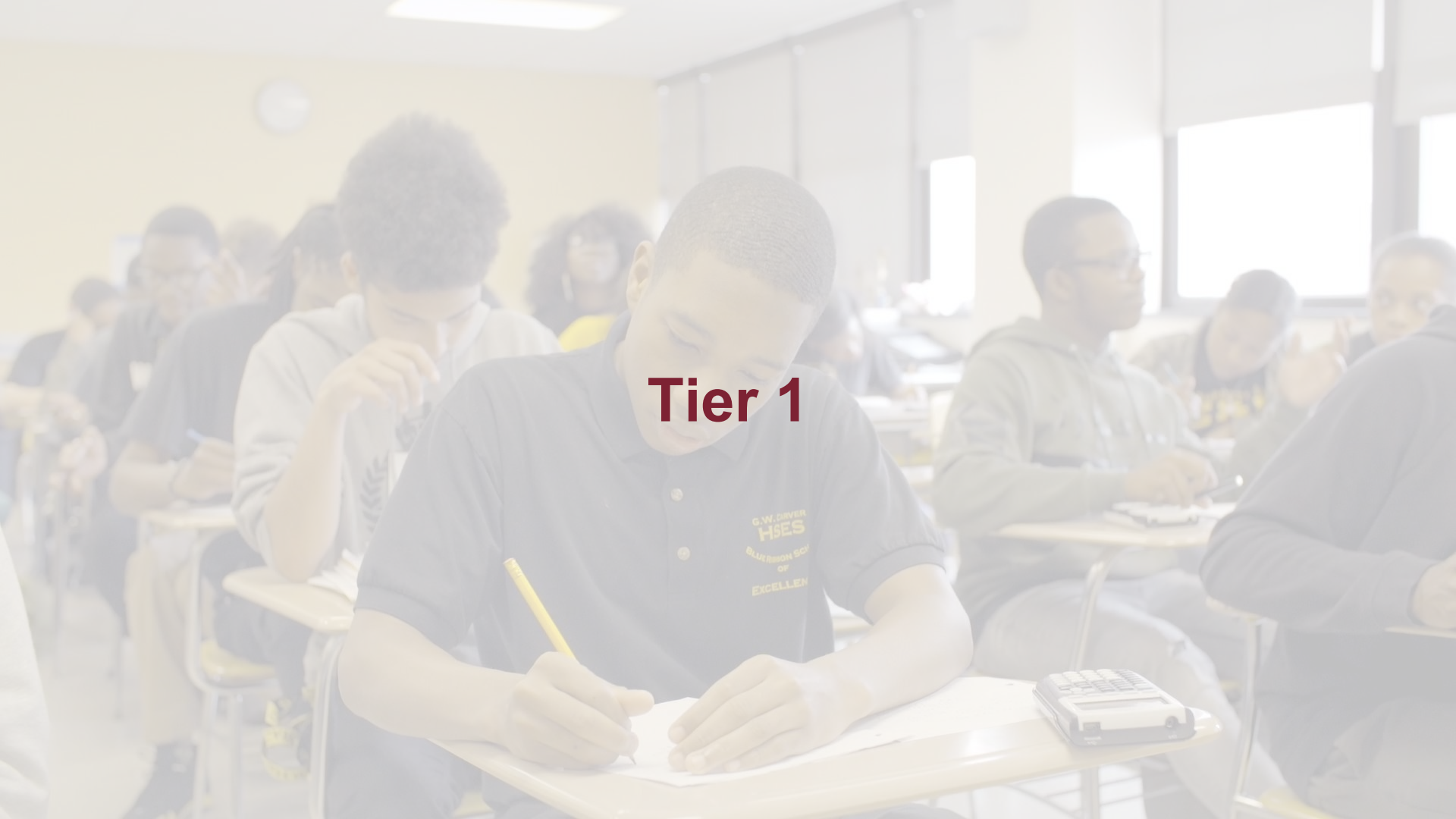
School District of Philadelphia's attendance metric:

- **60%** of students in **K-12 grade** 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 you working through these steps

# Let's Talk!





# **Essential Strategies for High Schools**

# The Basics

☆	Be excited! Let students and families know that attendance matters
☆	<b>ENGAGE</b> 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

# Improving High School Attendance

## Evidence Based Best Practices The Three “E’s”

- Engagement
- Enrichment
- Energy

# Engagement

- Mentoring Programs (Junior/Senior to Freshman/Sophomores)
- Peer Support (Team Challenges, Social Connections)
- One Caring Adult Program (Ensure student connects with one adult in the school)



# Enrichment

- Enhance academic curriculums to provide opportunities for project based activities
- Ensure that academic curriculum is enriched with “real life” applicable learning/skill building (make the connects between school and career/vocational aspirations) Example: applied mathematics
- Involve guest lecturers/ vocational experts to come and work with students in “real world” projects

# Energy

- Create a “buzz” in the school (ensure activities occur on each floor in which some type of learning event is taking place)
- Don’t be afraid to be “lame”- high school students love to watch adults make fools of themselves
- Pop-Up Dance Parties, Rallies for Attendance, Competition with “bragging rights” (i.e. faculty/student basketball challenge)

A photograph of a classroom with several students sitting at their desks, working on papers. The students are diverse in age and ethnicity. The foreground student is a young man with short dark hair, wearing a dark blue polo shirt with a logo that reads "G.W. DRIVER HSES BLUE RIDGE SCH OF EXCELLEN". He is writing with a yellow pencil. To his right, another student is visible, and further back, more students are seated at their desks. The classroom has large windows on the right side, letting in bright light. The overall atmosphere is one of focused study.

**Video**

😂 Whose Principal Is This?! 😂





# School Year Timeline

# 1st Day/Week of School

- Red Carpet
- Give-a-ways/Raffles (School Supplies, Gift Cards etc.)
- Early Arrival Prizes
- Pop-Up Dance Parties
- Reward Teachers who have 100% attendance in their classes

# Attendance Awareness Month

## September is Attendance Awareness Month!

- Back to School Night
- Parent Give-Away for the students who come to school everyday, stay everyday during the month of September (i.e. Grocery gift cards, beverage thermos etc.)
- Messaging the importance of attendance
- Poster contest “Attendance Matters”
- Challenge

# 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)
- First day back from winter break event
- Love of attendance event (Valentine's Day)



# Spring/Avoiding the April-June Slump

- Reminders of when spring is break/expectation for attendance
- Post Keystone Attendance Promotion
- Theme Days
- Spirit Week
- Challenges



# Campaigns

# Having a Successful Campaign

- ✓ Planning
- ✓ Messaging
- ✓ Informing
- ✓ Updating
- ✓ Acknowledging
- ✓ Rewarding

# Sample Monthly Challenges

August	5 “Strive for 5”
September	17 “Achieve 17”
October	23 “Reach for 23”
November	18 “Crush 18”
December	15 “Maintain 15”
January	20 “Jump for 20”
February	19 “Being Here for 19”
March	21 “Ace 21”
April	19 “Pull for 19”
May	21 “Bring on 21”
June	2 “ You can do 2!!”

# Sample Slogans

Every Day, On Time

Present Today and Every Day!

Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow

Every Day. All Day. All the Way!

Miss School, Miss Out!

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

# 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

First all of his legs got stuck.

I think I've  
trapped one  
of my allies

When he swallowed a bunch of

I give up

Tomorrow he's going to teach  
me how to walk upside down.



# Student Attendance Improvement Plan

*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).

# 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.

# 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

The screenshot displays two browser windows. The left window shows the Infinite Campus website for a student named Jack Ett, with a sidebar menu and a main content area. The right window shows a 'Template Bank' for 'AT2.4 Barriers to Meeting Goal(35)', listing various categories of barriers.

**Infinite Campus Student Profile:**

- Year: 18-19
- School: SDP K-8
- Student: **Ett, Jack**
- Grade: 04 #212780 DOB: 10
- Buttons: Save, Save & Continue
- Menu: RTI Plan Outline, Intervention Plan, Student Demographics, Parent/Guardian Information, RTI Team Meeting
- Left Sidebar: Index, Search, Brandy Armstrong, SIS Questions, Student Information (General, PLP, Response to Intervention), General, Caseload, Behavior

**Template Bank - Google Chrome**

**Template Bank**

**AT2.4 Barriers to Meeting Goal(35)**

- Academic/School Issue - 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/immunizations
- Health Issue - Medical Problems
- Health Issue - student substance abuse
- Home Issue - abuse in the home
- Home Issue - caretaker to family member
- Home Issue - educational neglect
- Home Issue - family member unwell
- Home Issue - financial instability
- Home Issue - homeless
- 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 /harassment
- Social/Emotional - difficult peer relationships
- Social/Emotional - financial issues
- Social/Emotional - gang activity
- Social/Emotional - gender intimidation
- 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 mean

# Interventions

The image shows two overlapping browser windows from the Infinite Campus system.

**Left Window (Infinite Campus):**

- URL: <https://philasd-training.infinitecampus.org/campus/>
- Header: Infinite Campus | District Edition | Test Site
- Filters: Year 18-19, School SDP K-8
- Search Results: **Ett, Jack** (Grade: 04, #212780, DOB: 10)
- Left Navigation Menu:
  - Brandy Armstrong
  - SIS Questions
  - Student Information
    - General
    - PLP
    - Response to Intervention
      - General**
      - Caseload
    - Behavior

**Right Window (Template Bank):**

- URL: <https://philasd-training.infinitecampus.org/campus/planning/admin/bankField/loadFromBank.x...>
- Section: **Template Bank**
- Category: **AT2.5 Interventions(18)**
- List of Interventions:
  - Completing a bullying and harassment complaint for
  - Conflict resolution / Peer mediation
  - Connect with ELECT
  - Connect with homeless office
  - Connect with Office of student placement and enrol
  - Create a Safety Plan
  - Involve Philadelphia Police/School police
  - Meet with School Nurse
  - Meeting with School Administration
  - Meeting with the Counselor / Dean / Climate Manage
  - Meeting with Transportation and counselor
  - Positive incentives
  - Referral to community based supports
  - Referral to mental/behavioral health provider
  - Request/Review IEP/504 Plan
  - Review School District policies
  - RTII Academic Plan
  - Social Service referral
- Other Categories:
  - AT2.6 Actions for Parent(s)/Guardian(s)(7)
  - AT2.7 Actions for Students(4)

# Barriers and Interventions

**Barrier:**

Taking care of family member

**Intervention:**

Social service referral

**Barrier:**

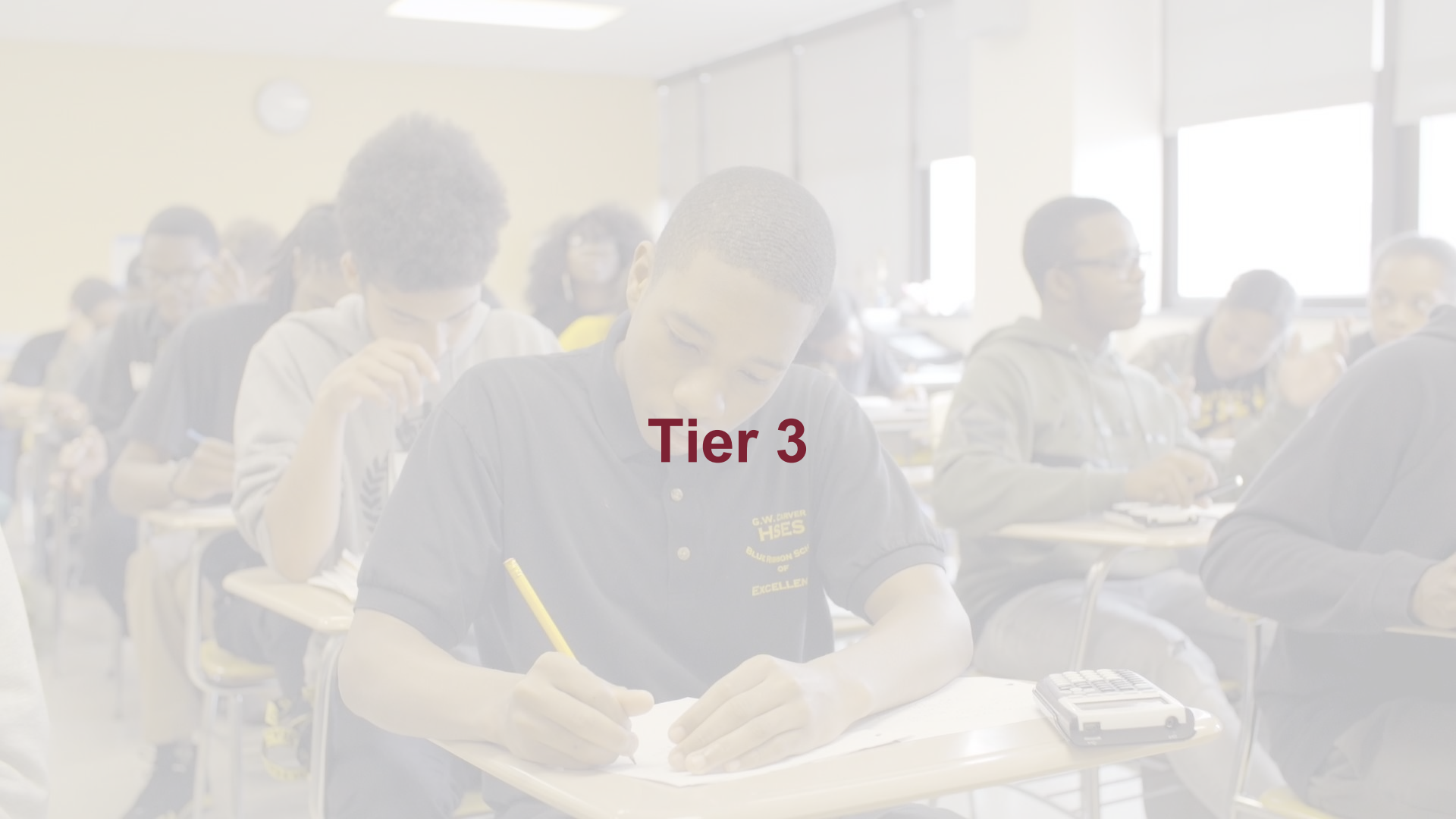
Transportation

**Intervention:****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.





# Closing Thoughts

# Office of Attendance and Truancy

Student Rights & Responsibilities  
440 N. Broad Street, Suite 243  
Philadelphia, PA 19130

215-400-4830, Option 1 (phone)

[attendanceandtruancy@philasd.org](mailto:attendanceandtruancy@philasd.org) (Q&A and Technical Assistance)  
[truancyreferrals@philasd.org](mailto: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/>