

Learning Begins at Home: How Housing Agencies Can Support Attendance and Engagement in School

June 13, 2023



GLR Public Housing Communities Honor Roll 2023

- Identifying, honoring, and spotlighting the great work public housing communities are doing in education
- Building a growing professional network of members
- Developing tools, webinars, and network opportunities to support, resource and scale
- Formal introduction of the Honor Roll cohort was at NAHRO's conference in March
- Formal induction will be at NAHRO's October meeting
- ***All three panelist's represent Honor Roll member communities**

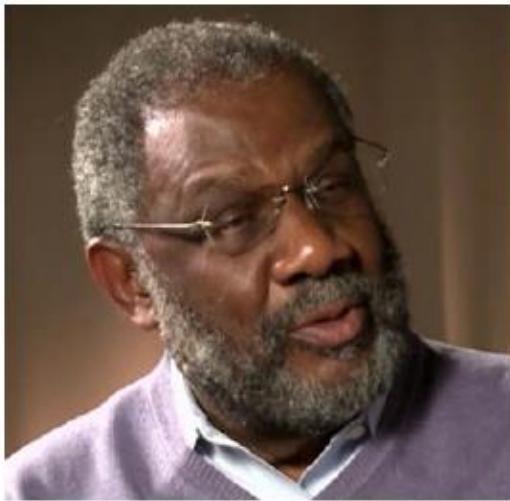
2023 Honor Roll Communities

- Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority, Akron, OH
- Boulder Housing Partners, Boulder, CO
- City of Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Roanoke, VA
- Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority, Cleveland, OH
- Elm City Communities, New Haven, CT
- Fort Wayne Housing Authority, Fort Wayne, IN
- **Fresno Housing, Fresno, CA**
- Harlingen Housing Authority, Harlingen, TX
- Home Forward, Portland, OR
- Housing as a Platform, Inc.
- Housing Authority of Billings (Homefront), Billings, MT
- Housing Authority of the City of Goldsboro, Goldsboro, NC
- **Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA**
- Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI
- Housing Authority of the City of Oakland, Oakland, CA

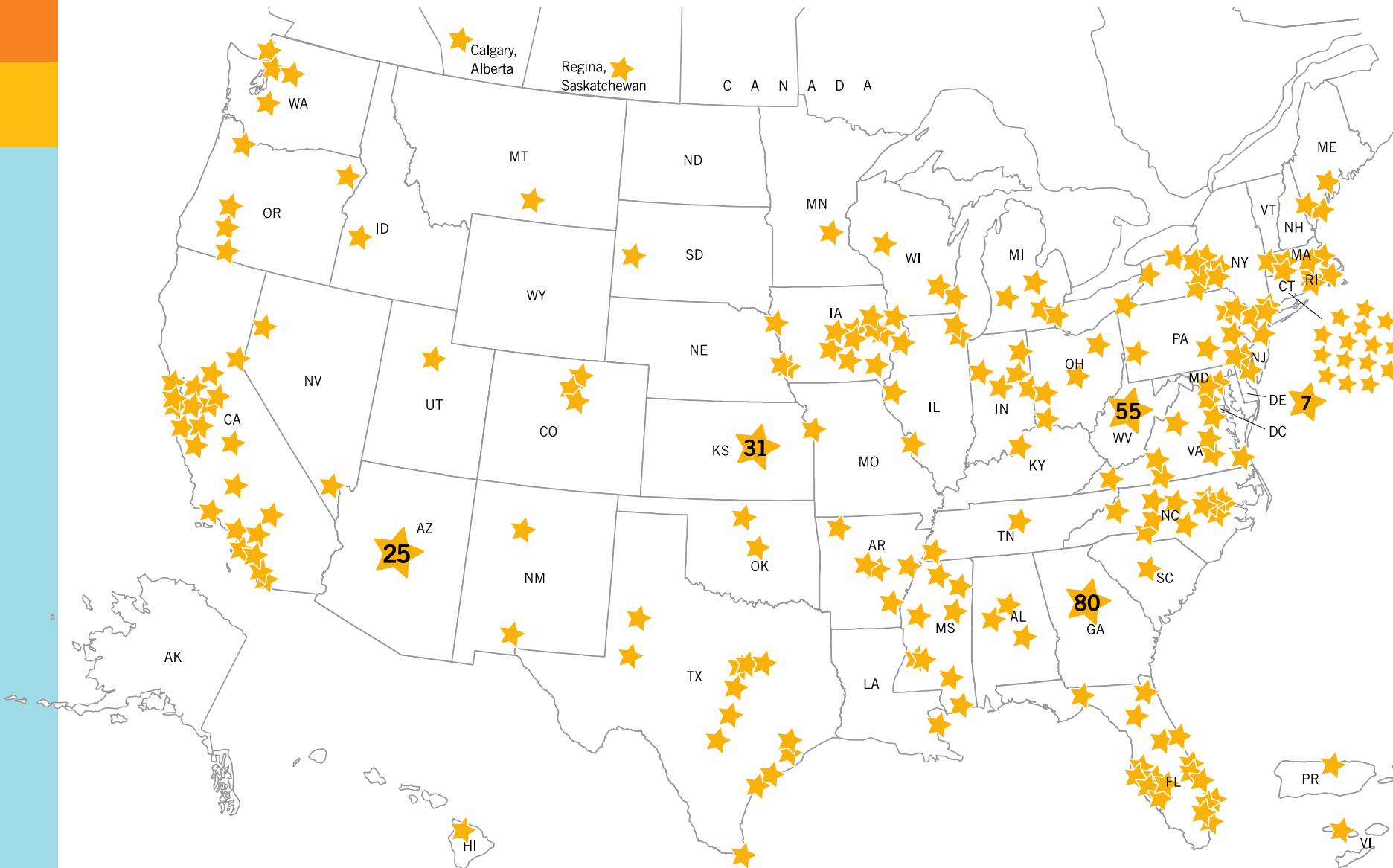
2023 Honor Roll Communities, continued

- Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA
- Housing Authority of the County of Contra Costa, Martinez, CA
- Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo, Belmont, CA
- Lawrence-Douglas Housing Authority, Lawrence, KS
- Lincoln Housing Authority, Lincoln, NE
- Loveland Housing Authority, Loveland, CO
- People's Self-Help Housing, San Luis Obispo, CA
- Portland Housing Authority, Portland, ME
- San Antonio Housing Authority (Opportunity Home), San Antonio, TX
- **Sarasota Housing Authority, Sarasota, FL**
- Seattle Housing Authority, Seattle, WA
- Spartanburg Housing, Spartanburg, SC
- Tarpon Springs Housing Authority, Tarpon Springs, FL
- The Housing Authority of the City of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA
- Tifton Housing Authority, Tifton, GA
- Topeka Housing Authority, Topeka, KS

Framing Comments



Ralph Smith
Managing Director
Campaign for Grade-Level Reading



The decade-long proof-point mobilization effort has worked.

350+ GLR campaigns in **46** states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Alberta and Saskatchewan, Canada.

5,200+ organizations joining local Sponsoring Coalitions.

6.4 million of K–3 students (**44% of that age group**) in **2,500+** school districts and **37,000** public schools live in counties served by GLR campaigns.

500+ state and local funders and donors supporting local campaigns.

“Children in economically challenged, fragile, and marginalized families need more seamless systems of care that are **24/7/365** and **multigenerational**. We must look beyond the schools for this more comprehensive “surround sound” support.”

“The pandemic has stranded more children — especially those served by the nation’s public housing systems — on the wrong side of much wider achievement and opportunity gaps. With exceptional knowledge, experience, and track records, public housing leaders should be at the table and in the mix with decision-makers from public schools, public libraries, public health and public safety, among others.”

Presenters



Mary Helen Caggianelli
Senior Manager,
Resident Empowerment
Fresno Housing



Maria Casey
Associate Director for
Staff Development
Attendance Works



William O. Russell, III
President & CEO
Sarasota Housing
Authority



Jennifer Thomas
Assistant Director of Strategic
Initiatives, Housing Authority
of the City of Los Angeles

Moderator



Hedy Chang
Executive Director
Attendance Works



Learning Begins at Home

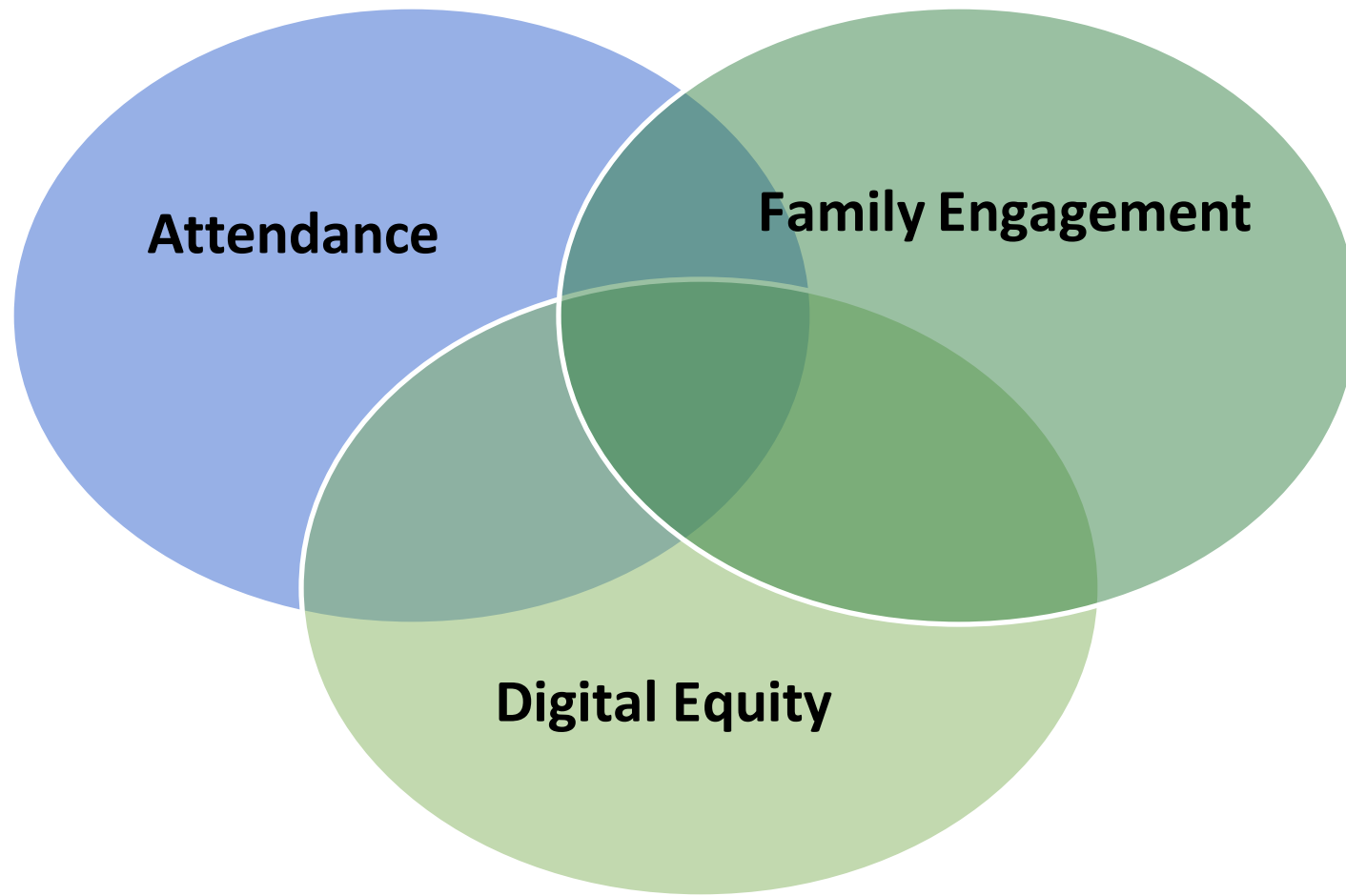
How Housing Agencies can Support Attendance and Engagement in School

June 13, 2023

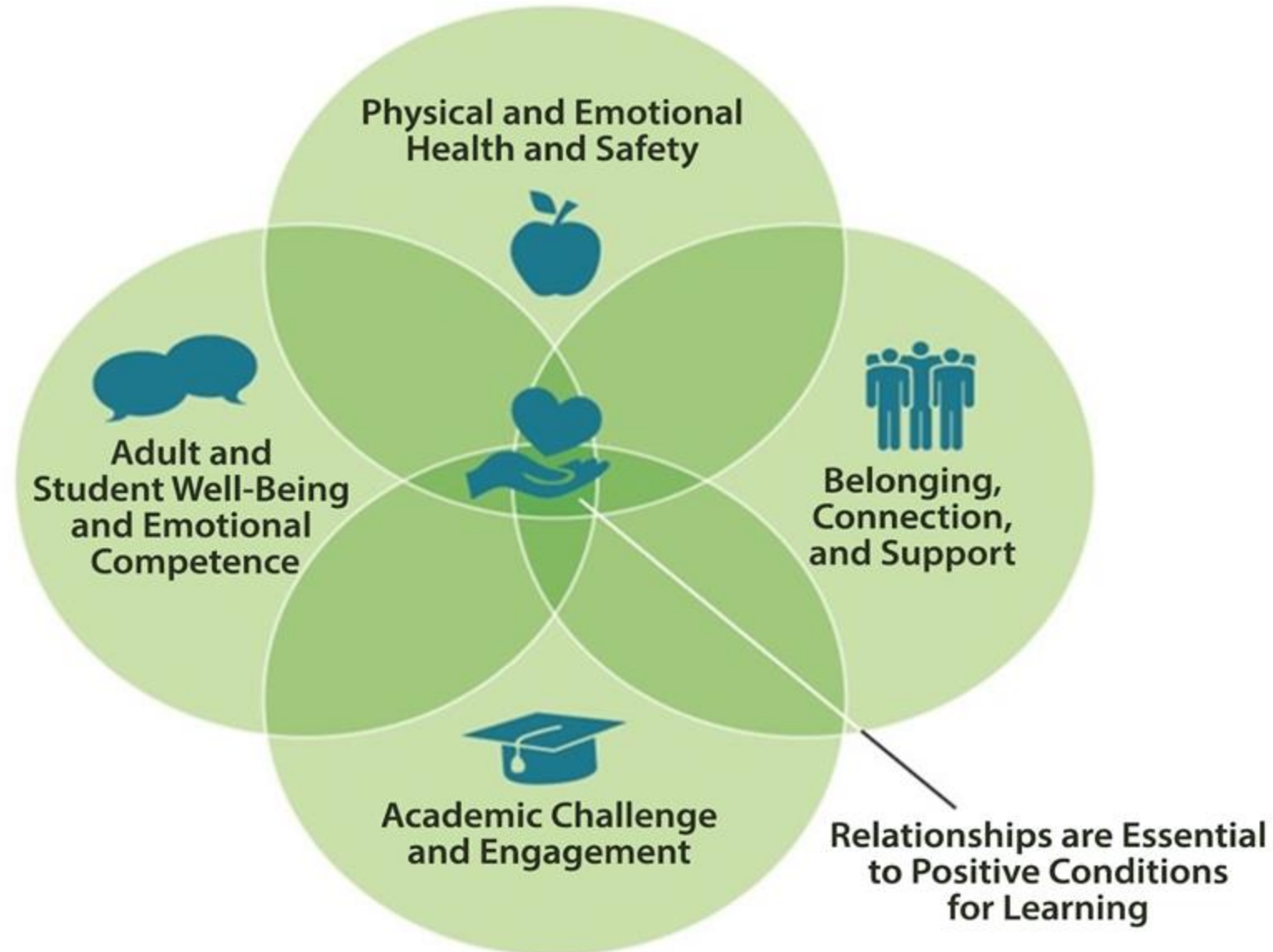
www.attendanceworks.org



Attendance, family engagement, and digital equity are interconnected



Family Engagement & Digital Equity Contribute to Positive Conditions of Learning That Motivate Regular Attendance





Why should housing agencies care?

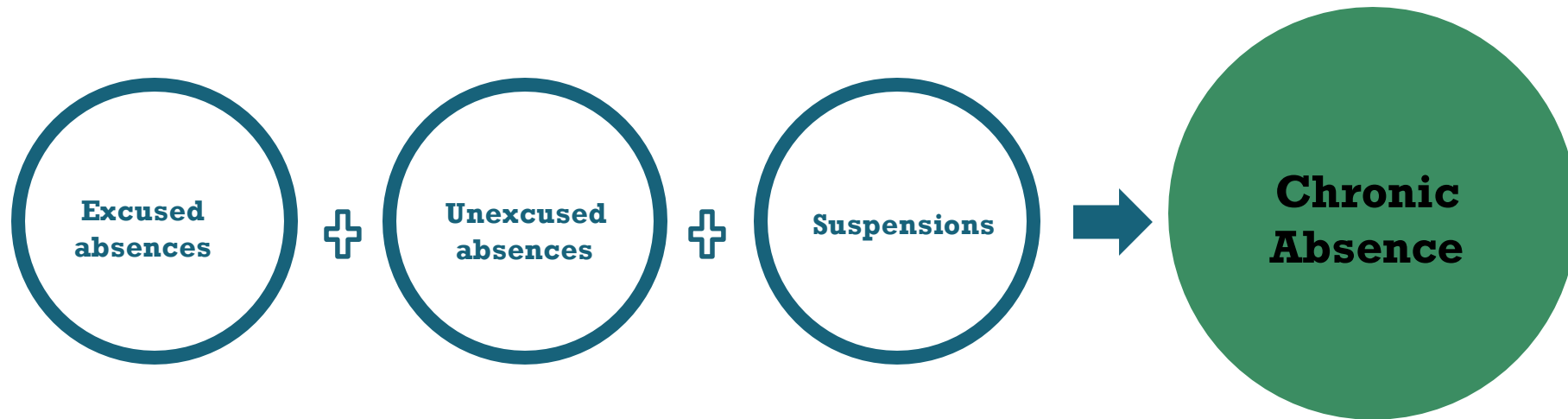
Reactions?
What would you add?

1. School attendance and success helps children and families attain long term economic stability.
2. Regular school attendance, family engagement & digital equity promote child safety and involvement in productive activities.
3. Engaging around attendance and access to technology can help housing agencies build relationships with residents around their children's success.
4. Housing agencies are uniquely positioned to reach out and address the challenges families may face to getting their children to school and gaining access to technology and digital learning resources.



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).

Key Attendance Terms to Know

Average Daily Attendance

- ▲ School level measure (not student level)
- ▲ Notice aggregate attendance at certain points in time (e.g., half-days, holidays, bad weather)
- ▲ Masks individual student chronic absences

Truancy

- ▲ Counts ONLY unexcused absences
- ▲ Emphasizes individual compliance with school rules
- ▲ Uses legal, typically more blaming and punitive, solutions

Chronic Absence

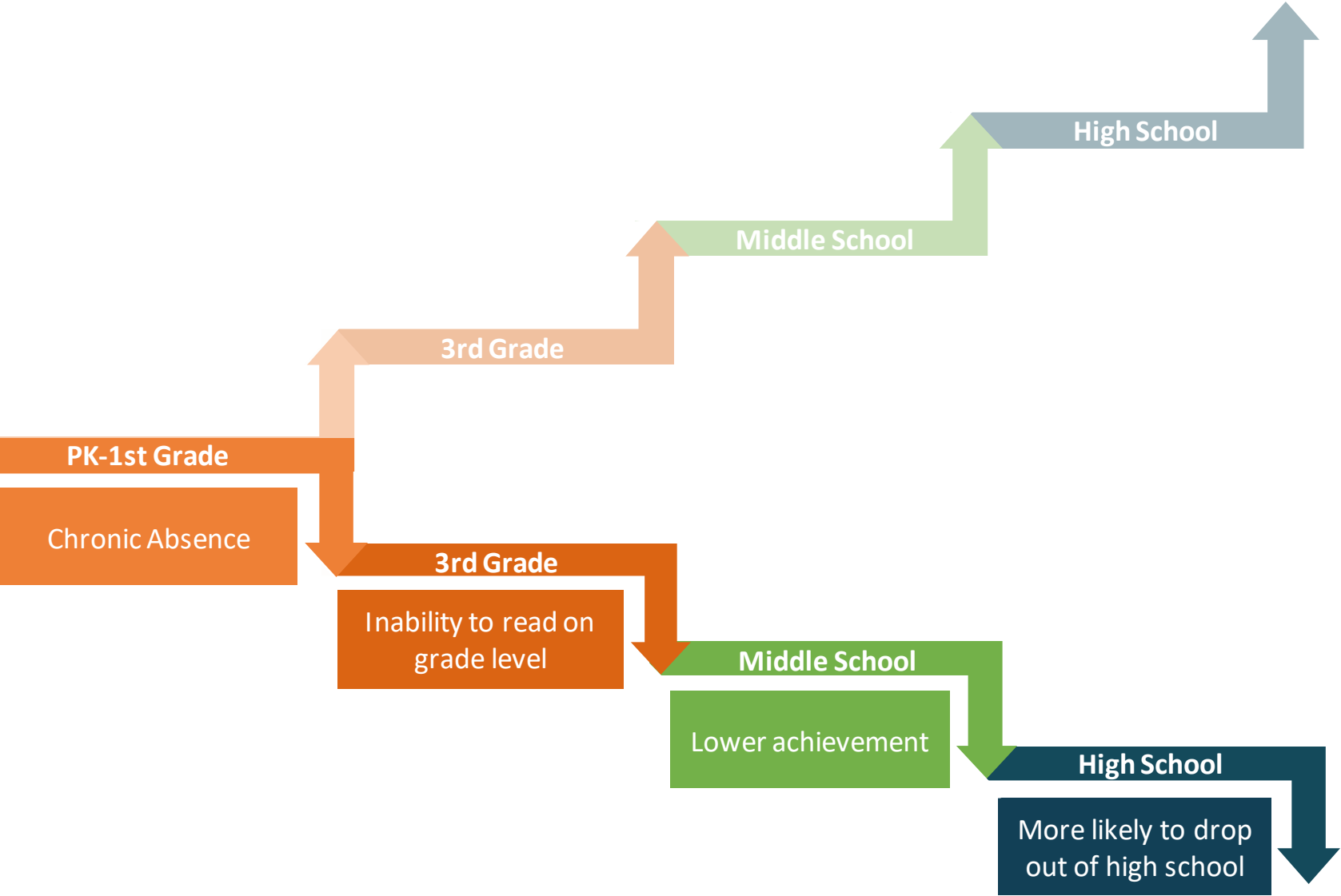
- ▲ Counts ALL absences (excused, unexcused & suspensions)
- ▲ Emphasizes impact of missed days
- ▲ Uses preventative, problem-solving, trauma-sensitive strategies
- ▲ Cultivates family & student engagement starting in K/PK



**What is the relationship
between absences & equity?**

**Chronic absenteeism is a *leading*
indicator and a *cause* of
educational inequity**

Improving Attendance Matters



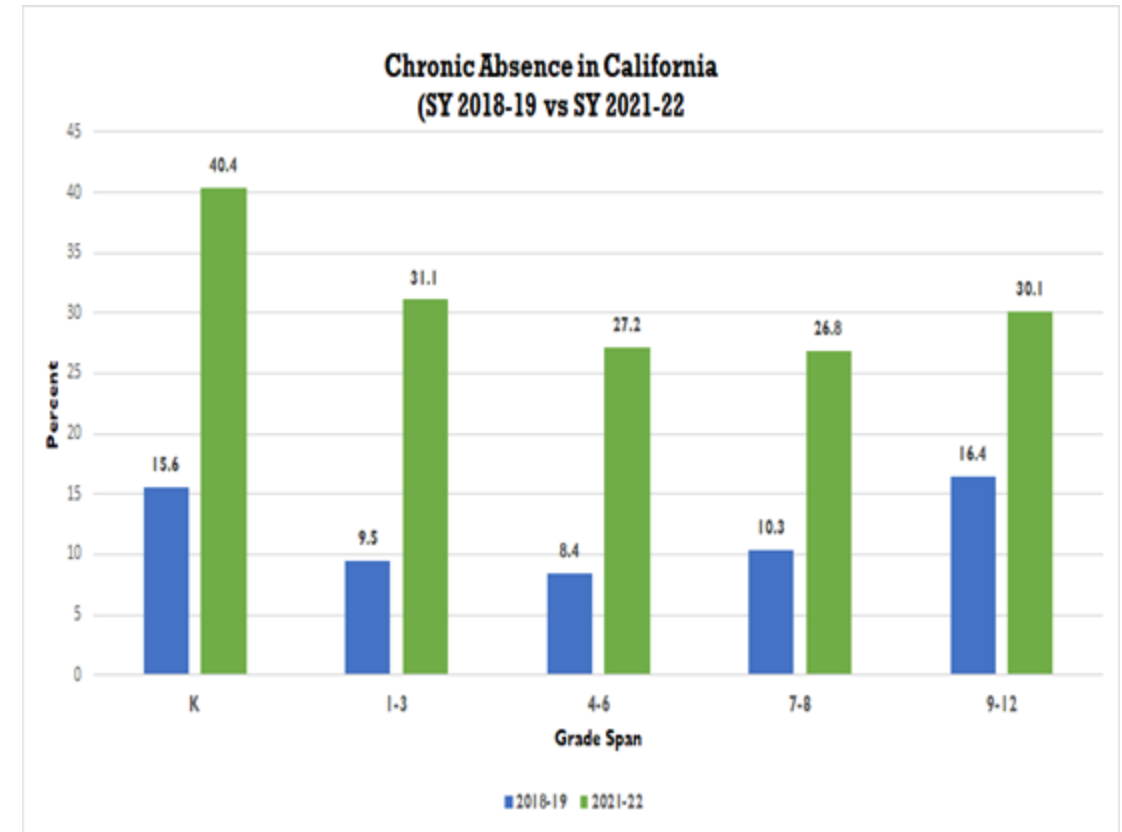
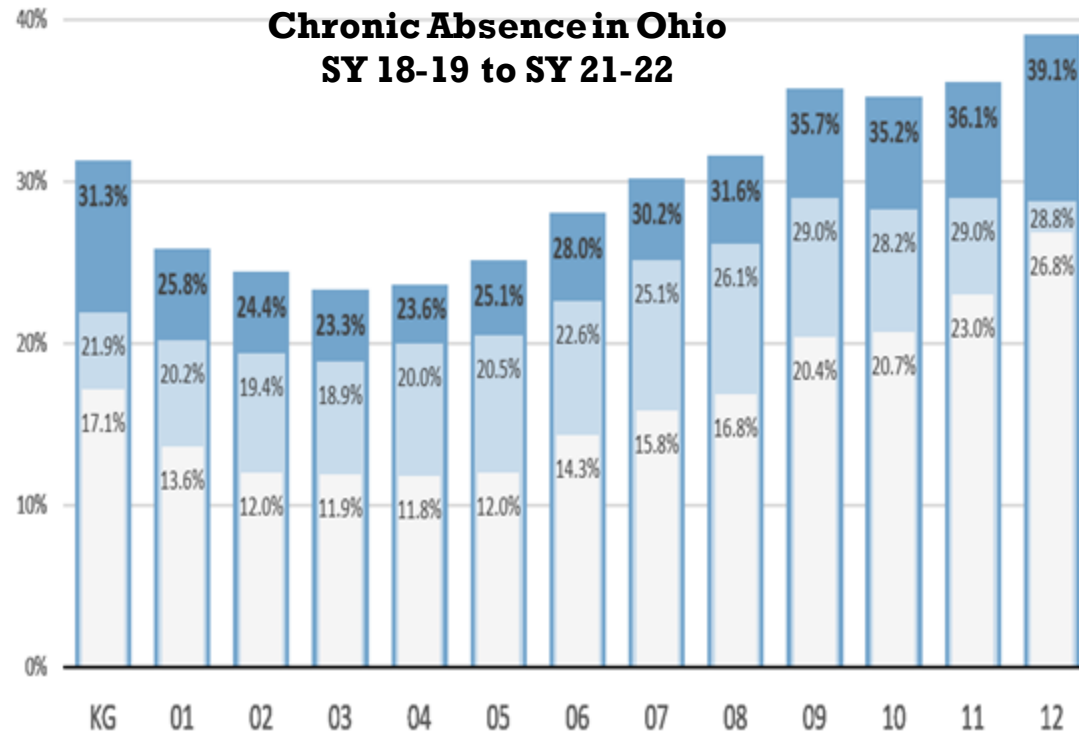


Chronic Absence is Especially Challenging for Low-income Children

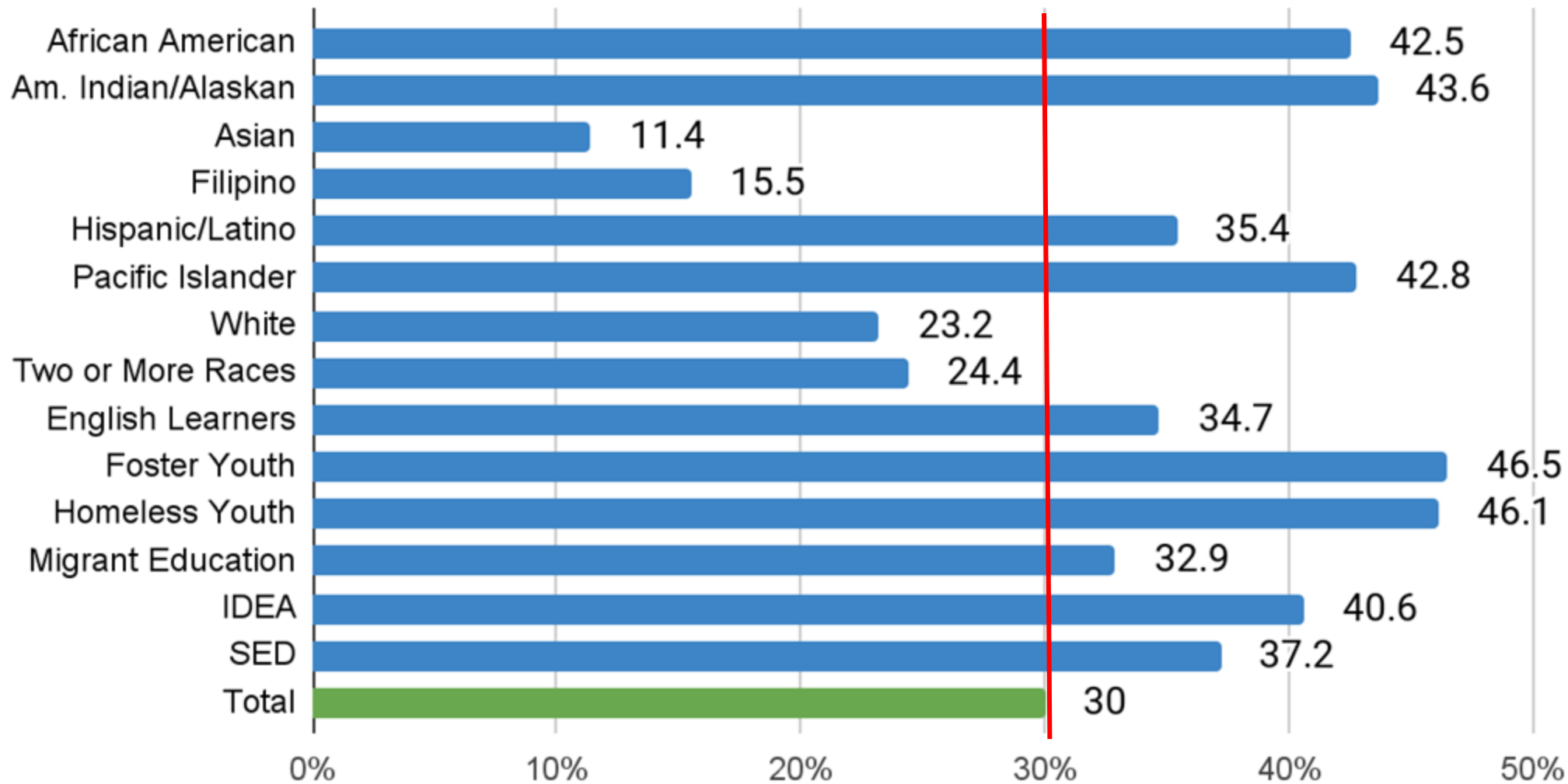
- ✓ Poor children are **4x** more likely to be chronically absent in K than their highest income peers.
- ✓ Children in poverty are more likely to lack basic health and safety supports (health care, transportation, stable housing, food, clothes, etc.) that ensure a child is more likely to get to school.
- ✓ The adverse impact of absenteeism on literacy development is **75% greater** for these children than for their middle-class peers.

Sources: M. Romero and Y.S. Lee, A National Portrait of Chronic Absenteeism in the Early Grades, The National Center for Children In Poverty, Columbia University, October 2007. ; Ready, Douglas D., Socioeconomic Disadvantage, School Attendance, and Early Cognitive Development, The Differential Effects of School Exposure, Sociology of Education, October 2010.

Alarming Increases Seen in Kindergarten Chronic Absence



California Chronic Absence Rates by Student Subgroup 2021-22



Tips on Finding Chronic Absence Data in Your State Report Card

Chronic absenteeism is often not a "headline measure" and finding this data can require searching through state report card websites for a detailed view of the state, district, and school level data. If you need help finding your state report card website, the Department of Education includes links to each state report card on their website. <https://oese.ed.gov/families/reportcards/>

Chronic absenteeism data can go by many names. This requires understanding the definition of chronic absenteeism to see if the state definition for attendance tracking aligns with chronic absenteeism. Some names include:

- o Attendance
- o Absenteeism
- o Chronic Absenteeism
- o Consistent Attendance
- o Proportional Attendance
- o Regular Attendance
- o Good Attendance

Chronic Absenteeism data can often be found in the non-academic indicator section of school reports. Specifically, attendance data are frequently listed under school climate or environment categories.

In some states, the only way to identify chronic absenteeism rates is to download spreadsheets and search through the individual tabs.

When reviewing websites or spreadsheets, using the find command (CTRL+F) will allow you to search for a word or phrase and quickly identify relevant absenteeism data. Or, to quickly identify relevant attendance data, search for common words like attendance or absenteeism when reviewing websites or spreadsheets by using the find command (CTRL+F).



Reducing chronic absence requires addressing the challenges that keep students from getting to school

What do you know about the major factors affecting the attendance of students in your housing complexes?

Barriers

- Chronic and acute illness
- Family responsibilities
- Trauma
- Poor transportation
- Housing and food insecurity
- Inequitable access to needed services
- Cultural and linguistic challenges navigating schools
- System involvement
- Lack of predictable schedules & routine
- Lack of access to tech
- Community violence
- And others!

Aversion

- Struggling academically and/or behaviorally
- Unwelcoming school climate
- Social and peer challenges
- Anxiety
- Biased disciplinary and suspension practices
- Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations
- Parents had negative educational experiences

Disengagement

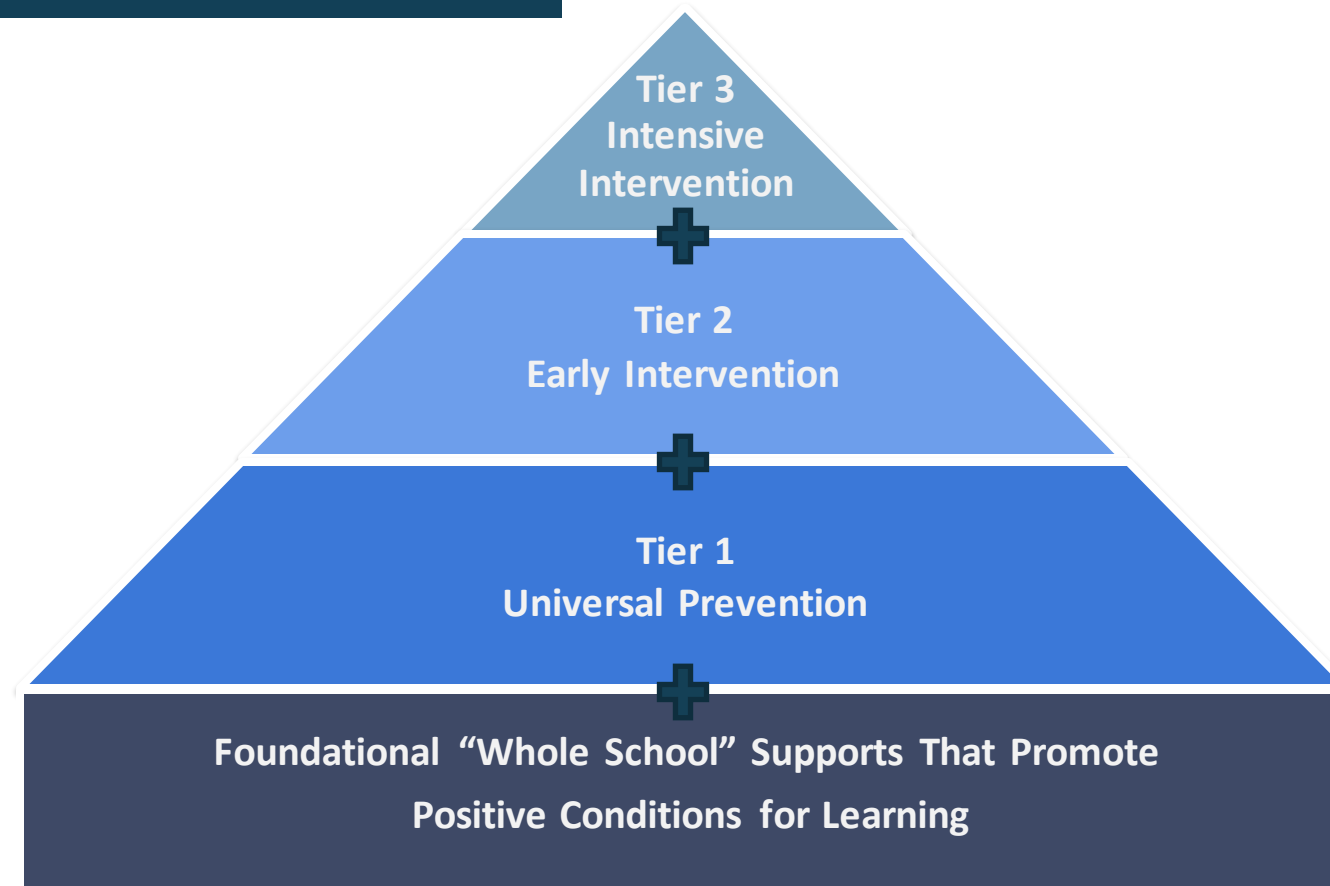
- Lack of challenging, culturally responsive instruction
- Bored
- No meaningful relationships to adults in the school (especially given staff shortages)
- Lack of enrichment opportunities
- Lack of academic and behavioral support
- Failure to earn credits
- Drawn to low-wage job vs. being in high school

Misconceptions

- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Missing 2 days per month doesn't affect learning
- Lose track and underestimate TOTAL absences
- Sporadic absences aren't a problem
- Attendance only matters in the older grades
- Suspensions don't count as absence

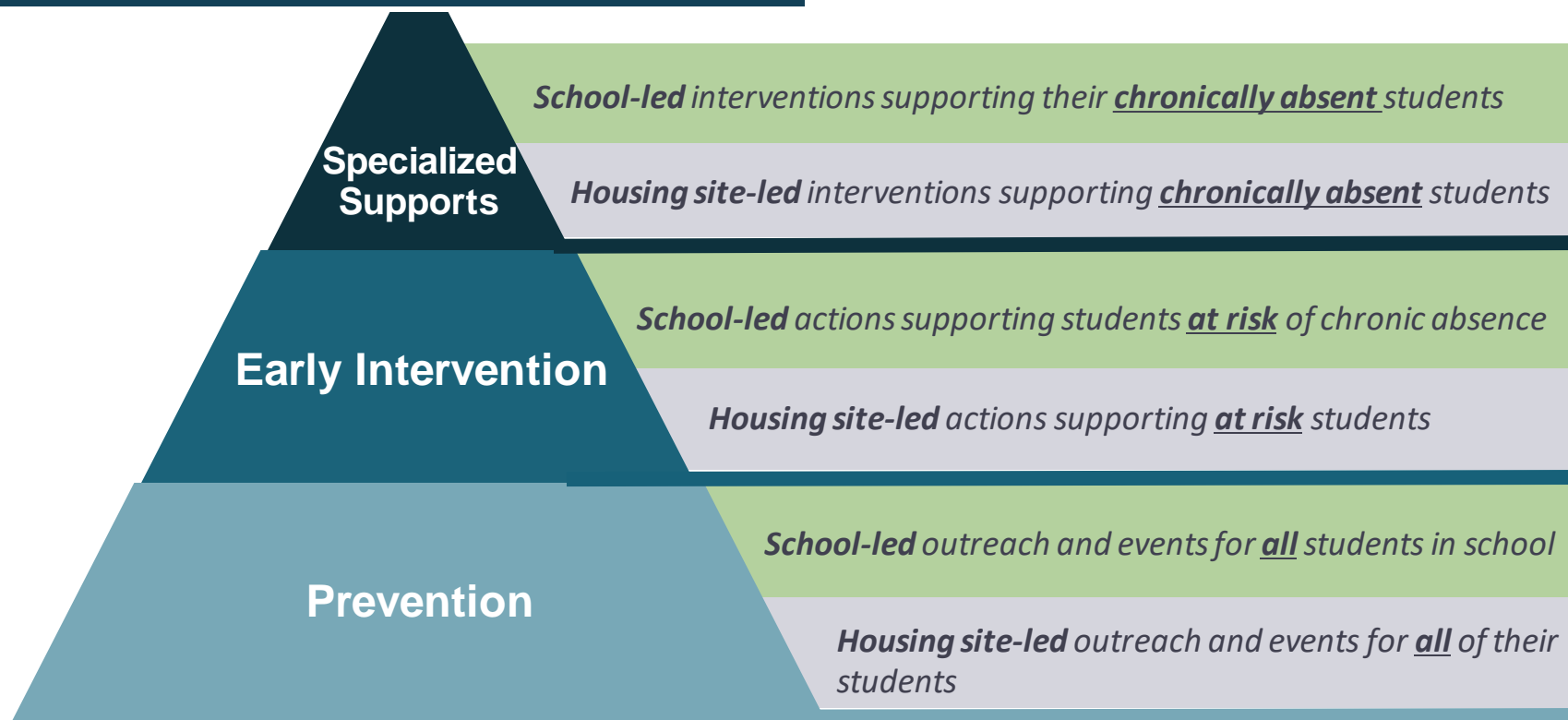


Solution: A Tiered Approach to Engagement and Attendance





Housing Agencies Can Partner With Schools To Make A Difference



Building relationships is always a critical first step.

Outreach and Early Intervention are ongoing and incorporate both school and housing site staff.

Housing Agencies		Schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrap-around Supports for Families/ Inter-agency Case Management • Direct Connection to Health and Other Services 	<p><i>Tier 3 Specialized Supports</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interagency Case Management • Direct Connections to Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Workshops on Student Success & Using Technology & Digital Learning Resources • Help Schools Develop Individual Action Plans • Ensure Families Access School Supports (e.g., IEP or Parent Teacher Conferences) 	<p><i>Tier 2 Early Intervention</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Visits/Meeting with Family • Student Success Plan That Addresses Barriers and Increases Engagement • Caring Mentor • Personalized Recruitment into School-based Family Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Events Engaging Families in Academics & Attendance • Attendance Messaging Campaign • Home Visits • Walking School Bus • Access to Digital Learning Resources & Affordable Internet • Health Resources & Guidance 	<p><i>Tier 1 Prevention</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming, Positive School Climate • Find out Families Hopes and Dreams • Breakfast in the Classroom • Clothes and Food Bank • Family Literacy Program/ Parent Education Workshops • Clear Expectations for Academics and Attendance including • Health Resources & Guidance

How and why did your housing authority begin to engage with your local school districts and support their efforts around attendance, family engagement and digital equity?

- It began with a concern over truancy and chronic absenteeism
- Needed to see attendance data
- School boards are reluctant to share data with other organizations (fear)
- Utilize your own board and any relationships they have with SB
- Convince them you want to partner not just consume their data
- Know what data you want (attendance, grades, state assessment tests)
- Enter into an MOU that spells out the partnership incl. data sharing



Strategic Initiatives Workforce Development Unit

Campaign For Grade Level Reading
Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles

2023



Campaign For Grade Level Reading Approach/Strategies

- Organized institutional partners: Mayor's Office, Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles Public Library, Internet Service Partners, Community Organizations & Resident Advisory Council Reps
- Focused on third grade reading; supplemental supports, book access, book events/book clubs, safe passage & attendance, food give aways, restructured third party contracts to include literacy goals
- Developed a 25 Year Vision Plan with a focus on Cradle to Careers

www.buildhopeinc.org www.hacla.org



What have been your most effective strategies for advancing attendance and engagement?

- We meet monthly with school (not district) personnel to discuss housing students with attendance concerns.
- We then coordinate with school staff to do home visits TOGETHER to address.
- We drive kids to school who miss their bus (tardy vs unexcused absence).
- We track report cards for grades and attendance.
- Truancy is a lease violation, which only becomes an issue when parents refuse to cooperate with HA or school personnel to address attendance issues.
- We have never filed an eviction but have issued several curable notices.



What was the impact of the pandemic on those strategies and your broader efforts? Have you found ways to address those impacts?

- During the pandemic we completed hundreds of technology equipment (laptops, hot spots, etc.) forms for parents and also coordinated for them to take delivery at distribution points not convenient for most parents.
- We also offered space in our on-site computer lab for kids without internet access.
- We also coached families on computer and internet literacy so they could access their child's online instruction.



Questions & Discussion

Upcoming GLR Learning Tuesdays Webinars:

GLR LEARNING TUESDAYS: PARTNER WEBINAR

Nurture Connection: The Movement for Early Relational Health
Tuesday, June 13, 3:00-4:30 p.m. ET/12-1:30 p.m. PT

FUNDER TO FUNDER CONVERSATION

Kindergarten as a "Sturdy Bridge": Place-Based Investments
Tuesday, June 20, 12:30-2:00 p.m. ET/9:30-11:00 a.m. PT

GLR LEARNING TUESDAYS: PARTNER WEBINAR

Strengthening Kindergarten to Improve Children's PreK-3rd Grade Experiences
Tuesday, June 20, 3:00-4:30 p.m. ET/12-1:30 p.m. PT

GLR LEARNING TUESDAYS: LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE WEBINAR

Technology-Assisted Teaching and Learning: Continuing the Conversation
Tuesday, June 27, 3:00-4:30 p.m. ET/12-1:30 p.m. PT

Please Join Us

gradelevelreading.net @readingby3rd #GLReading #LearningTuesdays #GLRKeepers


GLR WEEK 2023

BRIGHT SPOTS AND SILVER LININGS

SAVE THE DATE

JULY 17-21

