

Addressing Chronic Absence

KENAN GINSBERG- K-8 ATTENDANCE SPECIALIST

BARB KIENLE- DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES

FLORENCE PROTOPAPAS- STUDENT SERVICES COORDINATOR



Menlo Park Elementary Attendance

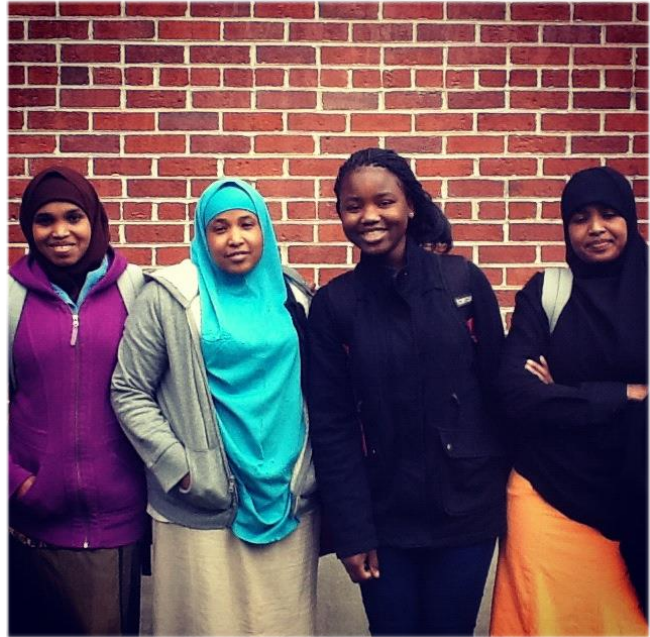


Objectives

- ❑ Understand effective structures for responding to chronic absence at the individual and universal levels, with an awareness of racial/ethnic disparities
- ❑ Roles of community schools
- ❑ Tools and resources for chronic absence efforts
- ❑ Understand the critical role of culturally responsive youth and parent engagement in effective attendance and engagement efforts
- ❑ Think about an initial action plan to respond to chronic absence in your local community school

Agenda

-
- What is chronic absenteeism
- School district protocols
- Tools
- Small group discussions





*"Could someone help me with these?
I'm late for math class."*

Seeing The Cause

Why Chronic Absenteeism?

KEY DEFINITIONS & NATIONAL RESEARCH

A solid green horizontal bar at the bottom of the slide.

Definitions

Average Daily Attendance: the percentage of enrolled students who attend school each day

Satisfactory Attendance: missing 5% or less over the course of an academic year

Chronic Absence: missing 10% or more of school in an academic year for any reason (excused or unexcused)

Severe Chronic Absence: missing 20% or more days of school per year – approximately two months of school

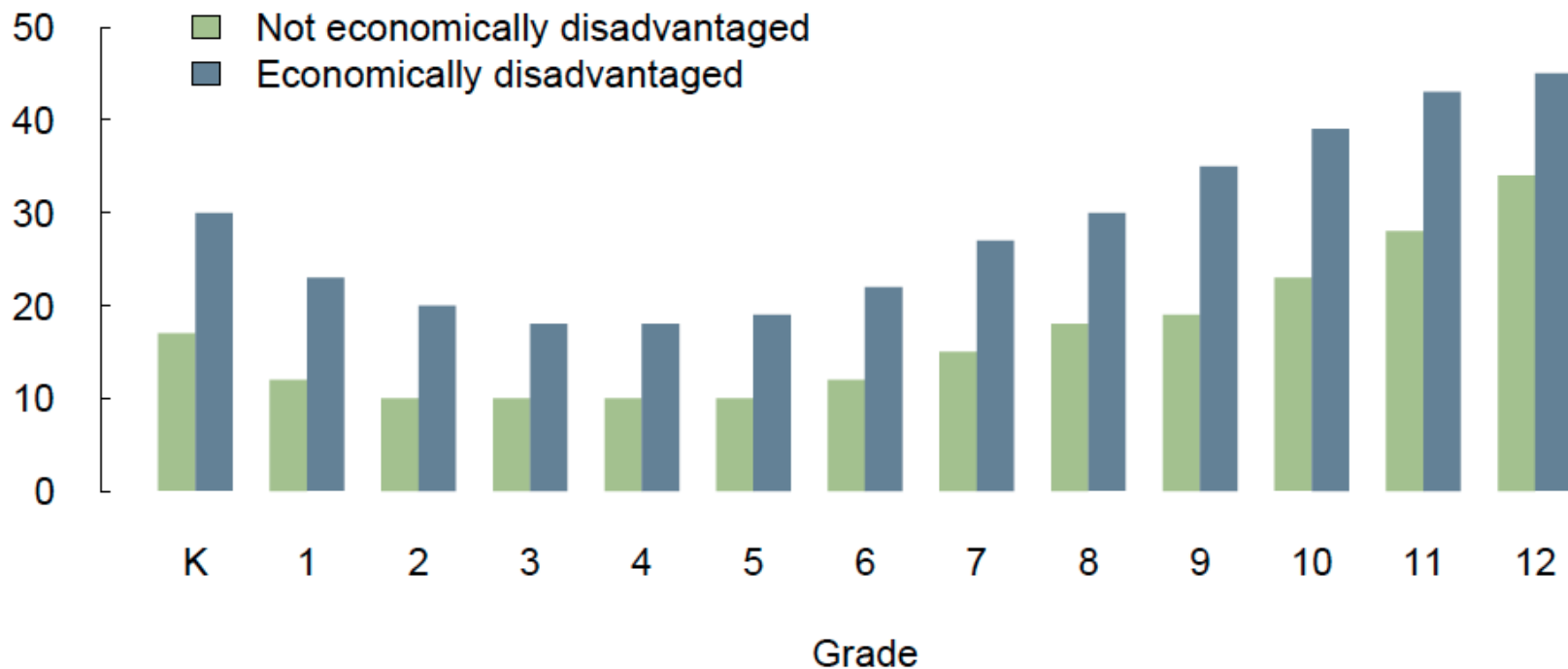
Truancy: refers only to unexcused absences and is defined by each state, according to NCLB.

Why is Chronic Absence Important?

❑ Chronic absence in elementary school is associated with **negative outcomes** including **low academic achievement, school truancy, dropping out, delinquency and substance abuse.**

❑ The **educational experience of regularly attending children can be adversely affected** when teachers must divert their attention to meet the learning and social needs of chronically absent children when they return to school.

Economically disadvantaged students were consistently more likely to be chronically absent; by high school, two out of five were chronically absent



Percentage of Oregon students who are chronically absent, by grade and economic disadvantage

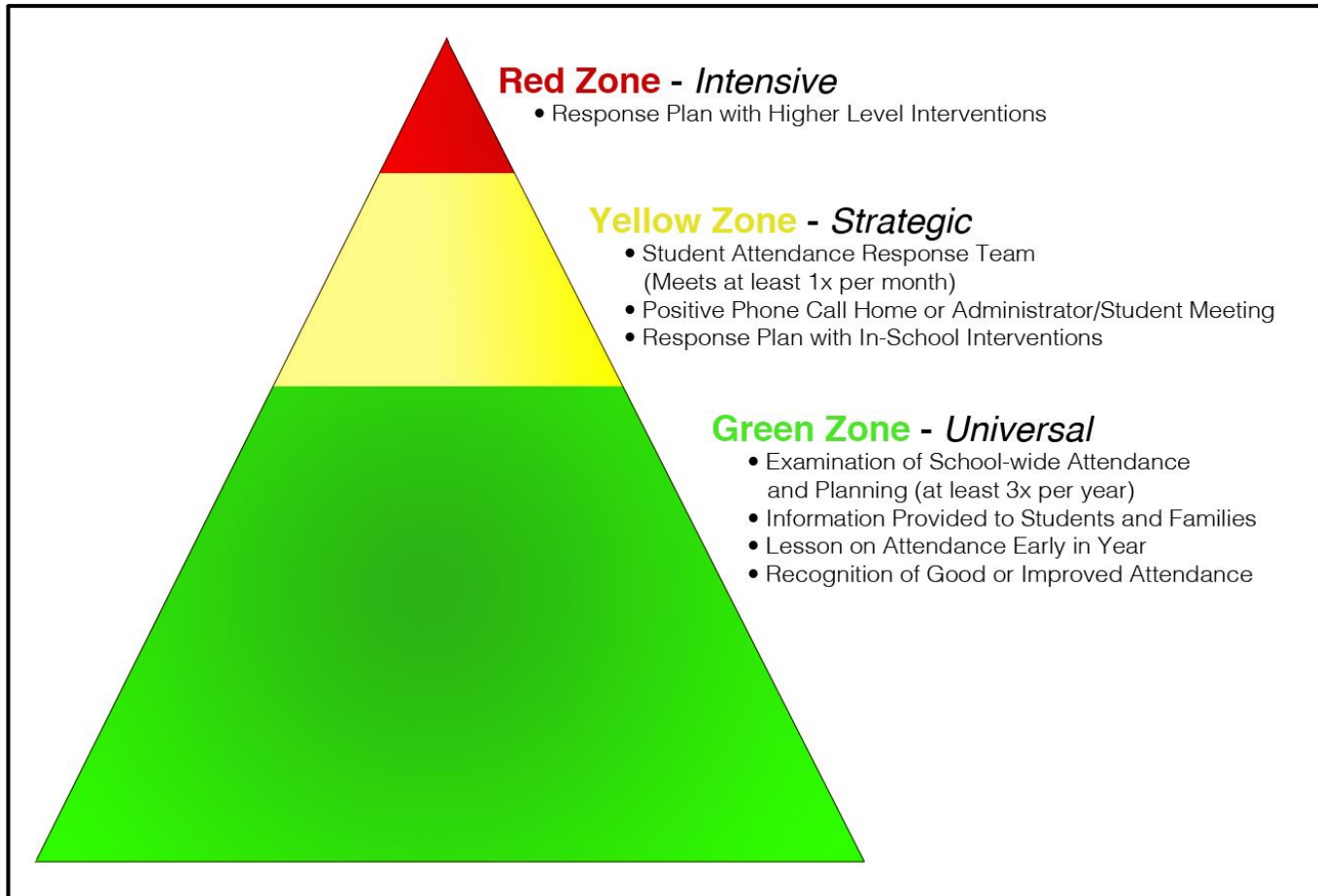
Source: ECONorthwest analysis of ODE data, 2009-10.

What does it look like?

- ❑ District Attendance Protocol
(critical minimums & other district specific practices) & Roles
- ❑ Teams (or functions)
 - ❑ School-Wide Attendance
 - ❑ Student Attendance Response
 - ❑ Community Engagement Team
- ❑ Practices
 - ❑ Culturally responsive lens
 - ❑ Family and community engagement
 - ❑ Data points & use of planning/tracking tools
 - ❑ Tracking of student level data and response



Critical Minimums

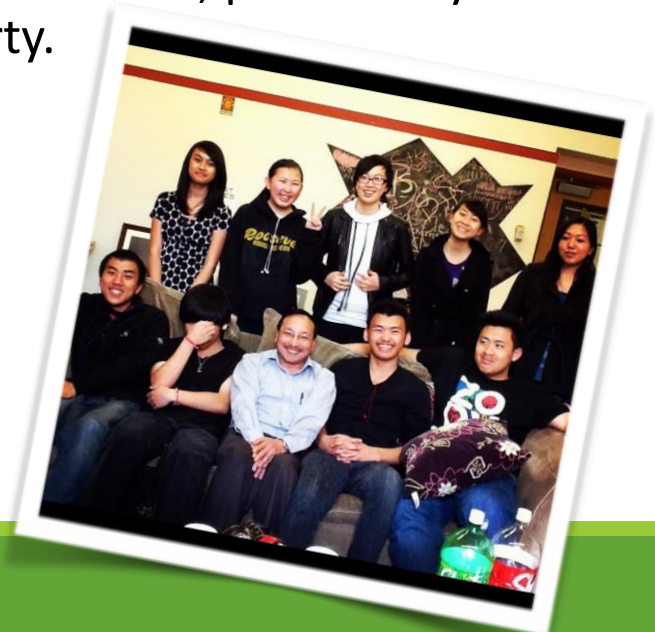


Critical Minimums in Detail

Critical Minimums	Notes/Definitions
<p>Universal (Green Zone)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Information</u> on the importance of attendance and school process to parents and students at beginning of the year • <u>Lesson</u> on attendance early in school year • <u>Recognition</u> of good or improved attendance. • <u>Examination of school-wide attendance</u> and development/monitoring of action plan at least 3 times a year 	<p>All students, School-wide efforts</p> <p><u>Information</u> should be included in school packets, Back to School nights, orientations, etc.</p> <p><u>Lesson</u> could be a PBIS lesson or other classroom or school-wide learning experience.</p> <p><u>Recognition</u> examples include incentives, awards, inclusion in newsletters/assemblies, etc.</p> <p><u>Examination of school-wide attendance</u>: this role could be taken on by an existing team (PBIS, Site Council, SUN Community School Advisory Committee, etc.).</p>
<p>Strategic (Yellow Zone)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Student Attendance Response Team</u> meets at least once per month to review attendance reports and respond to individual student attendance issues. • <u>Positive call home</u> by teacher or administrator meets with student (high school) at 1st report of 10% or more days missed. • <u>Response plan</u> with in-school interventions. 	<p>Students with average daily attendance of 89% or lower</p> <p><u>Student Attendance Response Team</u> role can be played by existing team (Data Team, Building Screening Committee, etc). It is recommended that attendance be reviewed more regularly than once a month. The team reviews reports of students who missed 10% or more cumulative days (yellow zone) and 20% of more cumulative days (red zone).</p> <p><u>Positive call home by teacher</u> is a proactive call home to encourage and support attendance.</p> <p><u>Response plan</u> for Mid and East County high schools would include Attendance Matters protocol.</p>
<p>Intensive (Red Zone)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Response plan</u> with higher-level interventions. 	<p>Students with average daily attendance of 79% or lower</p> <p><u>Response plan</u> for Mid and East County high schools would include Attendance Matters protocol.</p>

Culturally Responsive Lens

- ❑ Continually examining ourselves and our behavior to determine how our attitudes and feeling influence our actions and decision making
- ❑ Employing practices in which the students and families see their cultural values, norms and input reflected.
- ❑ Consistently reflecting on our structures to determine what barriers and pathways they create for students and families, particularly students of color and those living in poverty.



Schools + Communities Can Make a Difference

Characteristics of Effective Strategies

- ❑ Partner with community agencies for parents to carry out their responsibility to get children to school.
- ❑ Make chronic absence a priority, set a target and monitor progress over time.
- ❑ Examine factors contributing to chronic absence, especially from youth & parent perspective
- ❑ Combine universal and targeted strategies.
- ❑ Offer positive supports before punitive action.
- ❑ Underlying causes of absenteeism should be addressed

Family Engagement



- ❑ How can family voice be included? (Student voice too!)
Community Engagement Teams
- ❑ Consider barriers in either our approach or structures, and where we create pathways
- ❑ Relationship building/ Trust building
 - ❑ Assertive Engagement Skills

What is Assertive Engagement?

- ❑ AE is an approach to working with people.
- ❑ AE keeps the client centered and respected as the expert on their family and their situation.
- ❑ AE guides the worker in how to develop a healthy and trusting relationship.
- ❑ AE focuses our work on drawing out and exploring the client's wishes, desires, challenges and abilities.
- ❑ Rather than focusing on fixing the client's problems for them, AE allows the client to be the agent of their own change and their own success.

Who we are in charge of...

- ❑ Focus on our own actions and how they affect our clients
- ❑ Our actions can decrease reactivity and other negative responses
- ❑ See every interaction as an opportunity



But I care...

- My families are in need...
- I have knowledge and insight...
- My families could benefit from my knowledge and insight...



...So why should I be careful before I share?

The Case for Caution

- The Ravine
- Hierarchy
- Tunneling

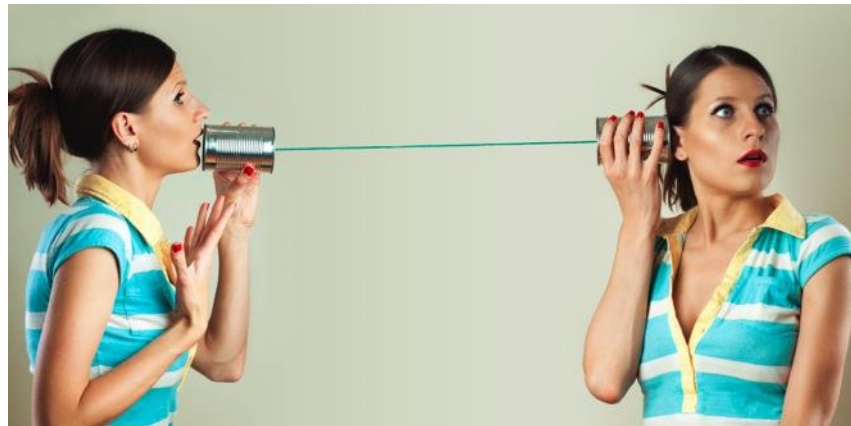


The Ravine Leads Us to...

- The Importance of Relationship
- Client as Expert
- Listening
- Ask- Offer- Ask
- Non- Judgement
- Arguing One Side of Ambivalence
- The “Righting Reflex”

Listening

- ❑ Why Listen? (AKA- The Power of Listening)
- ❑ Activity



How to Give Information

ASK - OFFER - ASK

1. Ask what they already know
2. Ask permission to provide new information
3. Offer the information
4. Ask what they think



Non-Judgment

- The Flatscreen TV
- The Doctor who Drinks
- Where else do we struggle with Judgment?



Tools Available

- ❑ CSY Toolkit
<https://multco.us/file/8299/download>
- ❑ Self assessment tool:
building-level
- ❑ Cultural Responsive Lens
- ❑ Action Plan
- ❑ Attendance Works Website
❑ www.attendanceworks.org
- ❑ Roles
- ❑ Attendance Specialist Overview

Communities Supporting Youth Attendance Toolkit



Turn and Talk

- ❑ School-level data (school-wide, individuals, trends) questions
- ❑ Juncture of partners and chronic absence work
 - ❑ Collaboration
 - ❑ Family work
- ❑ Family engagement & voice, culturally responsive practices & strategies

Thank you...

KENAN GINSBERG- K-8 ATTENDANCE SPECIALIST

BARB KIENLE- DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES

FLORENCE PROTOPAPAS- STUDENT SERVICES COORDINATOR

