

# Mississippi Education & Technology Innovation Symposium Chronic Absenteeism

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## VISION

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To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens

## MISSION

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To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community

1. **All** Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas
2. **Every** Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career
3. **Every** Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program
4. **Every** School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders
5. **Every** Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes
6. **Every** School and District is Rated “C” or Higher

# Session Norms

- Silence your cell phones



- Please check and/or reply to emails during the scheduled breaks



- Be an active participant

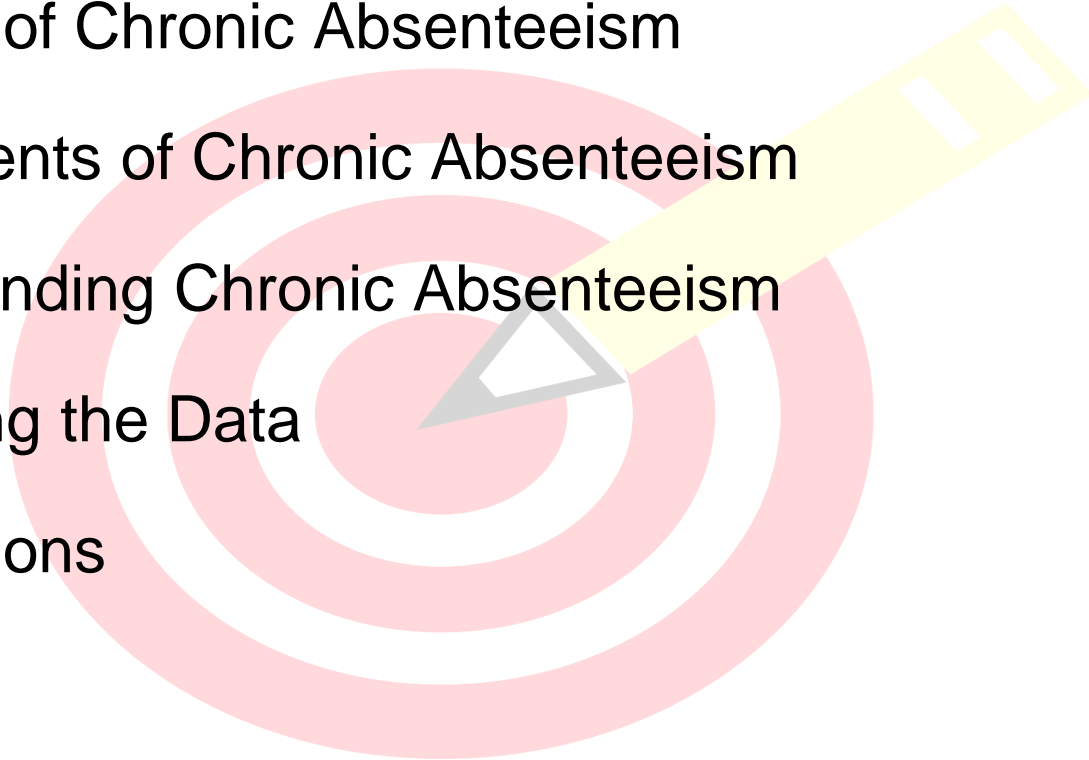


- Do not hesitate to ask questions



# Learning Target

- Meaning of Chronic Absenteeism
- Components of Chronic Absenteeism
- Understanding Chronic Absenteeism
- Unpacking the Data
- Interventions



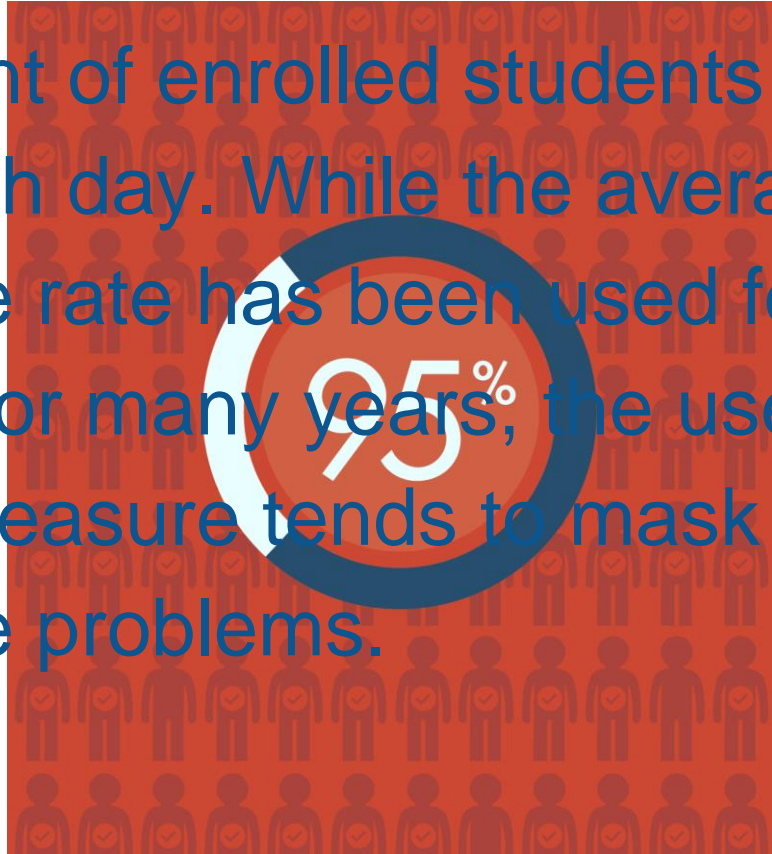
## Chronic Absenteeism

**IS NOT**



# Average Daily Attendance

The percent of enrolled students who attend school each day. While the average daily attendance rate has been used for reporting purposes for many years, the use of a single average measure tends to mask significant attendance problems.



# Chronic Absenteeism vs Compulsory School Attendance

## Chronic Absenteeism

- Incorporates all absences: excused, unexcused and suspensions of enrolled students.

## Compulsory Attendance

- The law that mandates any minor between the ages of 6 -17 (age 5 if enrolled in a full-day kindergarten program) to be enrolled in a private, public or home school.



# Truancy vs Chronic Absenteeism

## TRUANCY

Counts only  
**UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

**EMPHASIZES COMPLIANCE**  
with school rules and compulsory  
attendance law

Relies on **LEGAL AND  
ADMINISTRATIVE** solutions

## CHRONIC ABSENCE

Counts **ALL ABSENCES**: excused,  
unexcused, and suspensions

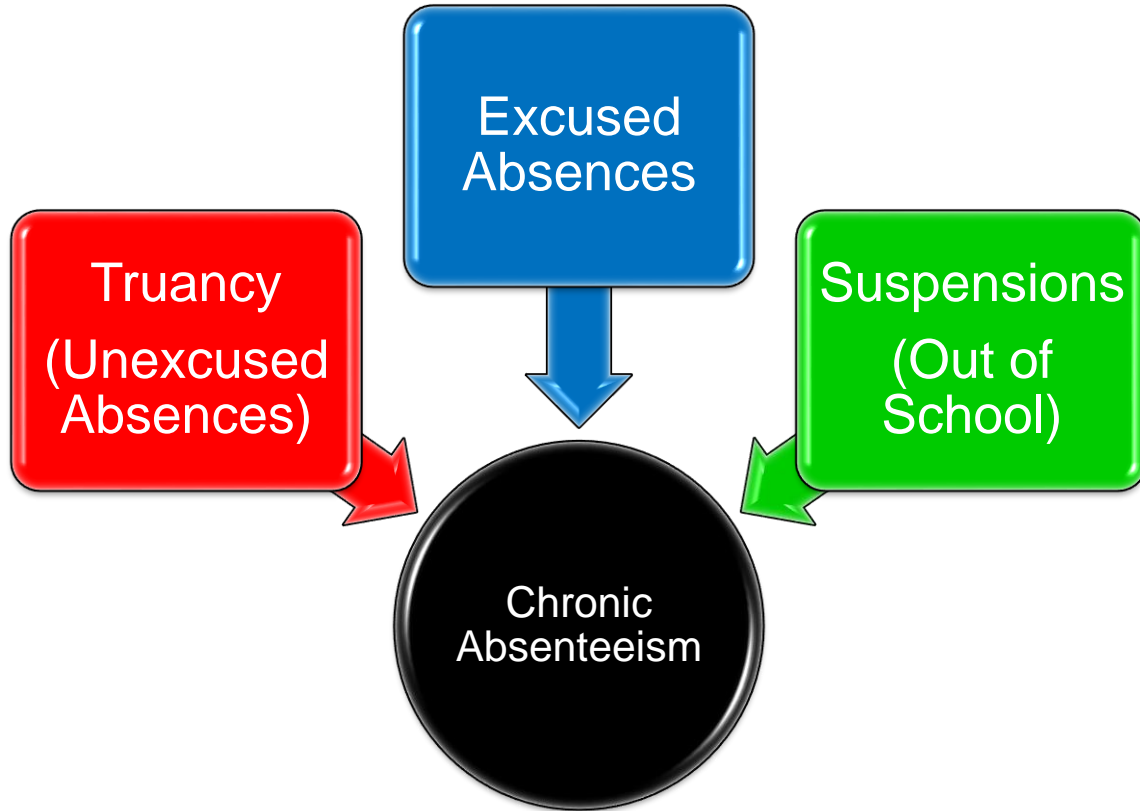
**EMPHASIZES ACADEMIC IMPACT**  
of missed days

Uses **COMMUNITY-BASED** positive  
strategies

VS

# Chronic Absenteeism

# Chronic Absenteeism



Truant – a student that has accumulated five (5) or more unlawful absences in a school year, excluding suspension and expulsion days.

Habitually Truant – a student who has accumulated twelve (12) or more unlawful absences, excluding suspension and expulsion days, in a school year, which shall result in the filing of a petition in a court of competent jurisdiction by the school attendance officer.

# Referral Process

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- Student misses five (5) cumulative unexcused days
- Report to School Attendance Officer
- School Attendance Officer will attempt to secure enrollment (i.e., letter, home visit, or phone call)

# Referral Process

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- Student misses ten (10) and twelve (12) cumulative unexcused days
- Report to School Attendance Officer
- School Attendance Officer will attempt to secure enrollment (i.e., letter, home visit, or phone call)
- Once all attempts have been made, the School Attendance Officer may file a petition in a court of competent jurisdiction.

# Unexcused Absences

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Days missed from school due to disciplinary suspension shall not be considered as an “excused” absence.

However, suspensions and expulsions will not be utilized in the truancy calculations.



# Excused Absence

Legislative or administrative release from school.

<b>ADMISSION SLIP</b>	
<b>EXCUSED</b>	
_____	
Has made explanation of the	{ TARDINESS ABSENCE }
listed below:	
Date _____	Period _____
Remarks: _____	
Re-Admitted to Classes.	
Date _____	Teacher _____
FORM 21	SCHOOL SERVICE, INC. (800) 747-9549



# Suspension

Suspension (also known as temporary exclusion) is a mandatory leave assigned to a student as a form of punishment that can last anywhere from one day to ten days, during which time the student is not allowed to attend regular school lessons.



## In-School Suspension

A temporary change in placement from the regular classroom setting to a special classroom monitored by a district employee.



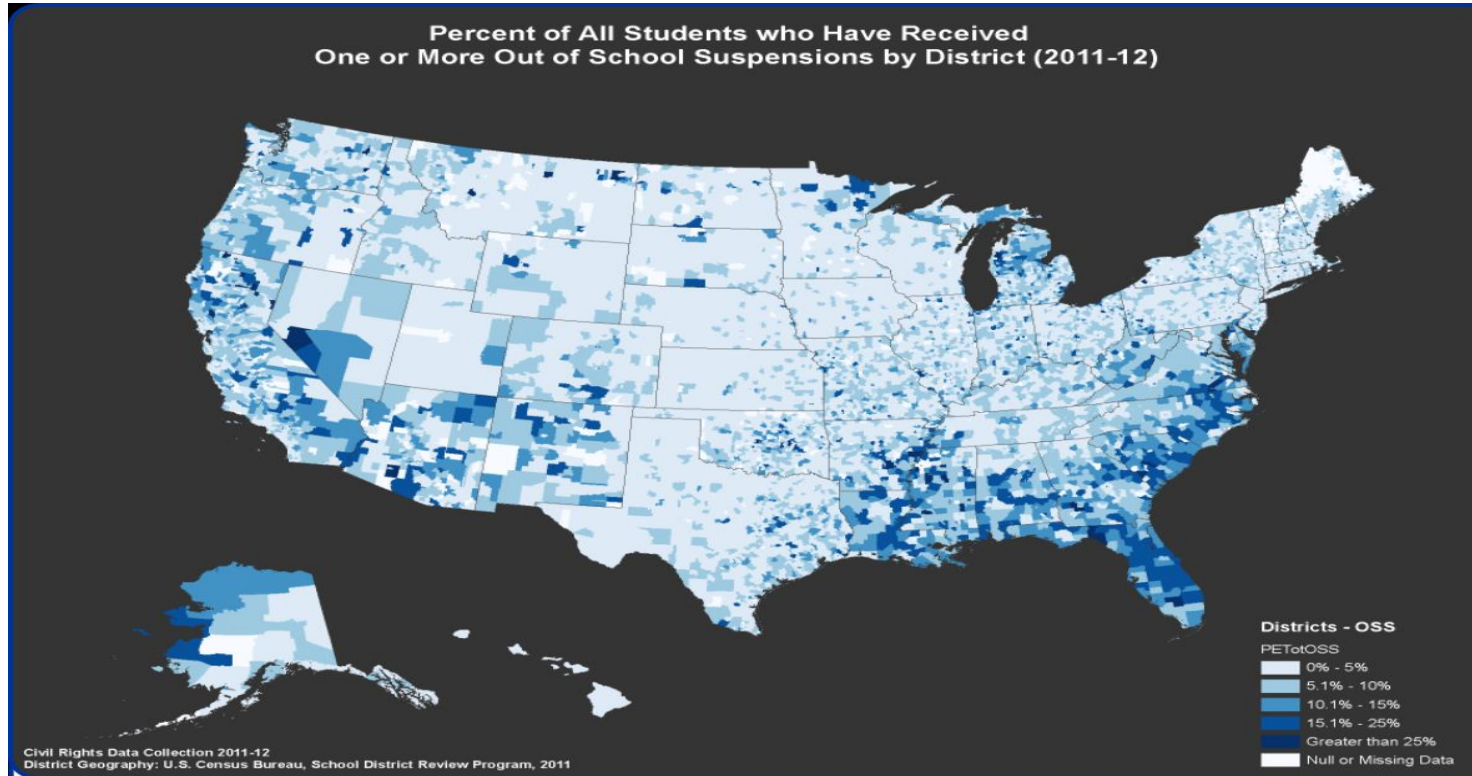
# Reporting of Suspensions

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The superintendent, or his/her designee, also shall report any student suspensions or student expulsions to the school attendance officer when they occur.



# Suspensions



# Three (3) Tardy Rule



# First Step

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Unpack attendance data contained within the district's student management system.



# What Do You Need?



# Epidemiology

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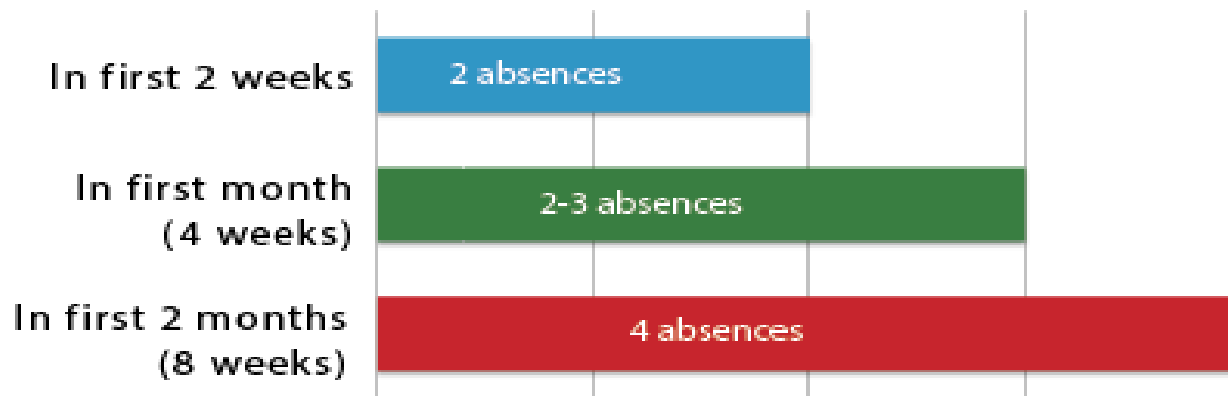
Epidemiology is the study and analysis of the patterns, causes, and effects of health and disease conditions in defined populations. It is the cornerstone of public health, and shapes policy decisions and evidence-based practice by identifying risk factors for disease and targets for preventive healthcare.



# Identifying Who Needs Extra Support

Chronic absence (missed 10% or more of school) in the prior year, assuming data is available.

And/or during the beginning of the school year, student has:



# Understanding Chronic Absenteeism

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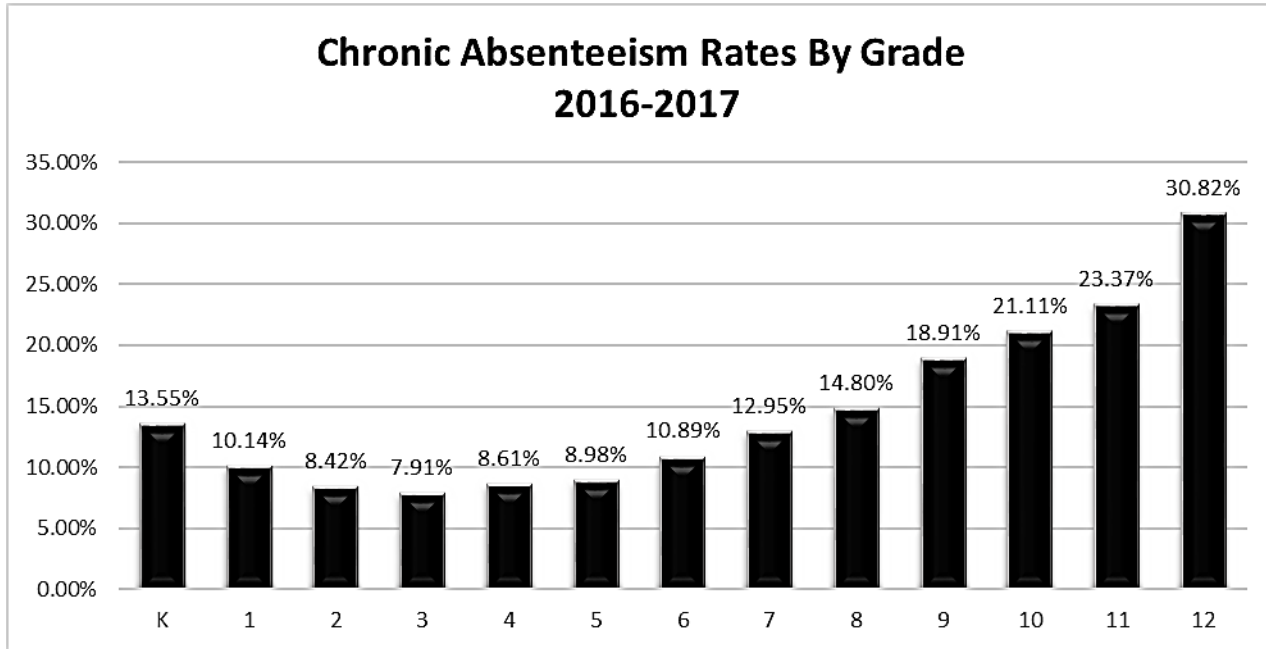
- Districts and schools have access to rich attendance data that can be monitored throughout the school year, serving as an invaluable early indicator of changes in the student's relationship with school.
- Chronically missing school is reflective of conditions at school and/or barriers at home or in the community that can be successfully addressed.

# Attendance and Discipline Data

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- ✓ How do chronic absenteeism rates differ across schools, grades and subgroups within the district?
- ✓ How many of the absences can be attributed to excused, unexcused or disciplinary reasons?
- ✓ Are there periods within the school calendar that are particularly problematic?

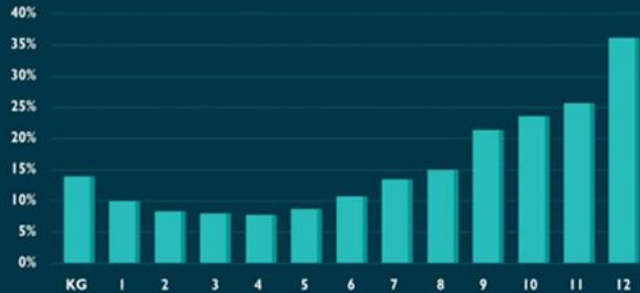
# Mississippi Rates by Grade



# Chronic Absenteeism Comparison

## Mississippi's Chronic Absence Rates by Grade Mirror Those of Other States

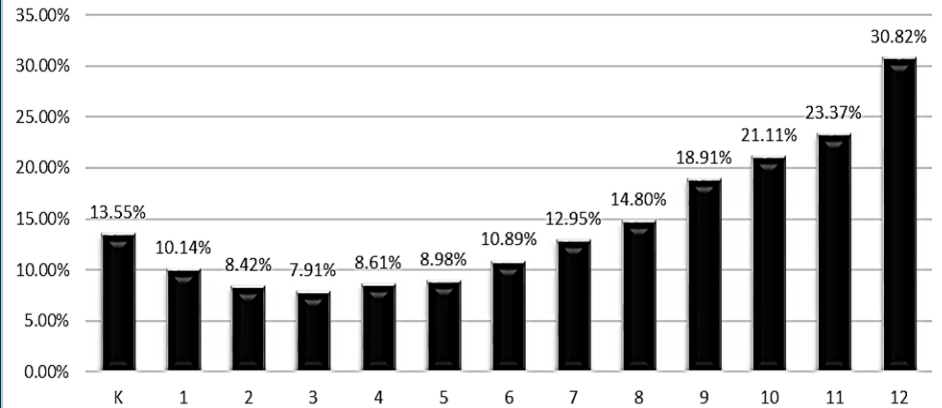
Chronic Absence Rates in Mississippi by Grade, 2013/14 SY



Source: Analysis of MDE data by P15 KIDS COUNT



## Chronic Absenteeism Rates By Grade 2016-2017



# It All Adds Up:

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Absent **3 days** in September

Absent **5 days** in December

+ Absent **3 days** in January

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**55 Hours of Direct Instruction**

# According to Research:

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- When teachers are absent **10 days**, the decrease in student achievement is equivalent to the difference between having a brand new teacher and one with two or three years more experience.
- A number of studies have found there to be a disproportionately high rate of **teacher absenteeism** in schools serving **low income and minority students**, providing yet another obstacle to closing the achievement gap.

*Source: National Council on Teacher Quality*

# Chronic Absenteeism Calculation Changes

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The United States Department of Education (USDOE) released new reporting standards for calculating chronic absenteeism beginning with the 2016-2017 school year (data reporting for 2016-17 was submitted in December 2017).



# Federal Calculations Include:

- Students enrolled in more than one school will be included in the report.
- Any student enrolled in a school for at least 10 days must be included in the calculation.
- Any student absent 10% or more of the time that he/she was enrolled in any school will be included in the report.
- Any student who misses 50% or more of a school day will be counted as absent starting with the 2018-2019 school year.

# Example

- Student was enrolled in School A for 20 days and absent 3 days. The student transferred to School B and was absent for 8 days.
- School A:  $3/20 = 15\%$       Chronically Absent in School A
- School B:  $8/160 = 5\%$       Not Chronically Absent in School B

*It is important to note, data will be reported to the USDOE at the school*

# Data Conclusions

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- ✓ A solid Tier 1 foundation for all students is essential and will ultimately reduce students moving into Tiers 2 and 3.
- ✓ Effective, engaging instruction for all students is THE most important factor relative to improving attendance and ultimately supporting student success.
- ✓ Recognizing good and improved attendance can and should be more encompassing than perfect attendance awards.

# Data Conclusions

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- ✓ Monitoring attendance and discipline trends on an ongoing basis is key to intervening on a timely basis. Consider poor or worsening attendance patterns to be an early warning indicator.
- ✓ Best practice indicates that Tier 2 students generally require some level of individualized attention. Depending upon the number of students and staff resources, external assistance may be in order.

# Data Conclusions

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- ✓ Parents and caregivers respond best to personalized, positive messaging delivered by someone with whom they have an existing relationship. Automated attendance calls lose their effectiveness as absences increase.
- ✓ Attendance messaging is most effective when delivered early in the school year and before poor attendance patterns develop.

# Health Conditions

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- ✓ Student health, including seasonal as well as chronic conditions such as asthma or diabetes, can be a significant factor in student absences.
- ✓ Coordinated school health directors and school nurses are an excellent source of data on district and building-level chronic health conditions of students.
- ✓ These same professionals can be an excellent source of suggestions and practices in reducing health-related absences.

# Interventions

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- Awareness
- Attendance Monitoring - Monitoring activities should provide schools with accurate and timely information to effectively identify students who are most at-risk of becoming chronically absent
- Cause Determination-Physical, Mental Health, School Environment, and/or Academic Concerns

# Interventions

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- Create an Early Warning Process
- Utilize Counselors
- Classroom Management
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
- Restorative Justice
- Wrap Around Services



# Interventions

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- Analyze student-level variables which should include student's physical and mental health, perceptions of school, as well as the availability of family and community resources.
- Check number of suspensions by grade, race, and gender.

# Interventions

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- Check number of excused absences and rationale to determine patterns by grade, race and gender.
- Check number of unexcused absences by grade, race and gender.
- Study the culture and climate of the school, particularly as it relates to teacher-student relationships.

# Interventions

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- Evaluate the conditions of the school, such as, carpet, curtains and particularly the school's ventilation system which could impact student wellness and attendance.
- Encourage schools to pay attention to attendance trends by month, year, and subgroups so that interventions can be implemented for students at-risk for chronic absence before it becomes problematic.

# Interventions

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- Create school attendance awareness campaigns to inform education professionals, parents, and students why attendance matters.
- Cultivate community involvement in increasing school attendance through community-wide campaigns.
- Develop clear and concise attendance policies.
- Understand and monitor attendance trends.

# Interventions

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- Organize a schoolwide attendance strategy.
- Engage students and families.
- Address attendance barriers.
- Set goals and develop an attendance plan.
- Implement a System of Tiered Supports.

# Interventions

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- Create a school climate that encourages students to come to school every day; and
- Provide engaging curriculum that draws students to school.

# Next Steps

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- Inform data reporting staff and other district personnel of these changes
- Continue reporting attendance data accurately
- Follow attendance best practices using resources such as Attendance Works <http://www.attendanceworks.org/>

# YOU ARE A MANDATED REPORTER



As school employee, you are a mandated reporter of child abuse. If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, it is your legal obligation to report it. Reporting to a principal, superintendent, counselor or other teachers does NOT meet your mandated responsibilities and is punishable by law.

In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 43-21-353(7): Any attorney, physician, dentist, intern, resident, nurse, psychologist, social worker, family protection worker, family protection specialist, child caregiver, minister, law enforcement officer, public or private school employee or any other person having reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a neglected child or an abused child, shall cause an oral report to be made immediately to the Department of Child Protection Services.

## CALL NOW

Mississippi Centralized Intake

# 1-800-222-8000

OR SUBMIT A WRITTEN REPORT TO:

[www.msabusehotline.mdhs.ms.gov](http://www.msabusehotline.mdhs.ms.gov)



Call your local law enforcement agency or 911  
if the situation is a life-threatening emergency.



Sometimes the thing your  
students need **MOST**,  
right now,  
has **NOTHING**  
to do with what's on  
your **LESSON PLAN.**



The Classroom Key

# Questions & Closing Thoughts



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