



K-12 Attendance Intervention Toolkit



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Why Attendance Interventions Matter



Introduction

When students attend class, they're more likely to succeed. In fact, attendance is one of the most important factors in student success. Students in your physical or virtual classrooms benefit from the learning plans, instructional materials, and education software.

Improved attendance rates directly connect to better academics and graduation rates.¹

The problem is that the rate of chronic absenteeism—students missing 15 or more school days each year²—is growing.

- Before the COVID-19 pandemic, around eight million students, or 15% of the U.S. student population, were considered chronically absent. **In most states, the rate of chronic absenteeism was over 15%**, with rates in 12 states over 20%.³
- Absenteeism rates more than doubled in some parts of the U.S. during the pandemic.⁴
- **One in seven** U.S. students struggles to attend school consistently.⁵
- Graduation rates have dropped for the first time in 15 years; attendance is the leading indicator of graduation.⁶

"(After the COVID-19 pandemic), I think for students who are coming to school who don't want to come to school, it's because they're far behind," says Bernadette Scheetz, Instructional Resource Teacher, St. Mary's County Public Schools, MD. "We're seeing that more in secondary schools than anything else. Students who are struggling to come to school are having difficulties catching up with that learning loss. Once they're so far behind, they've given up and now they're just in a perpetual holding pattern until they either age out of the system or something clicks with them—or somebody clicks with them."

Missing just two school days a month can negatively impact academic performance.⁷ Attendance can influence whether a student can read proficiently by the end of third grade⁸, which has a series of significant repercussions of its own. For example, students who cannot read at grade level by the end of third grade are four times more likely than proficient readers to drop out of high school.⁹

Additionally, chronically absent students are less likely to graduate on time compared to their peers.¹⁰

Several factors can help reduce absenteeism and get students back in the classroom. Attendance interventions based on data and research, intervention teams, and family engagement are all critical components that can help.

In this toolkit, we'll highlight ways that each can be enhanced with a modern, comprehensive attendance intervention and management tool that uses data and communication with the home to reduce absenteeism.

This toolkit will provide you with the information you need to:

- 1 Better understand attendance interventions
- 2 Know what to look for in a software tool to meet your needs
- 3 See what a best-in-class attendance intervention and management tool can offer your school or district

What Are Attendance Interventions?

Schools use attendance interventions to proactively improve student attendance through actions appropriate to the level of a student's absenteeism. A three-tiered approach, called the "Tiers of Intervention" model, has been established as the national standard for attendance data management by Attendance Works. This non-profit organization collaborates with education organizations to ensure that everyone recognizes that chronic absence is a serious issue that can be addressed using a positive, problem-solving approach grounded in an understanding of educational inequities.



Attendance Works' tiered approach "starts with foundational supports for the whole school. These foundational supports are followed by prevention-oriented supports for attendance (**Tier 1**), more personalized outreach or early intervention (**Tier 2**), and intensive intervention (**Tier 3**)." ¹¹

Attendance interventions can include:

- Early warning systems to identify students who are at risk of poor attendance
- Positive reinforcement providing incentives or rewards for good attendance
- Family engagement to address attendance issues and provide support to help overcome barriers to attendance
- Counseling and mentoring to students who are struggling with attendance
- Education campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of attendance



Why Do Attendance Interventions Matter?

As previously stated, absenteeism impacts student success. School attendance is tied directly to student achievement and is a strong predictor of outcomes and success when it comes to college and career readiness. Students who miss 15 days of school, the minimum threshold for chronic absenteeism, miss out on 8% of the standard 185-day school calendar. Two percent of chronically absent students miss 45 days or more, or 25% of the school year.¹²

Here's what happens when students are chronically absent:¹³

- Lower test scores (particularly in math)
- Delayed or atypical social and emotional development
- Increased inequities across racial groups
- Increased inequities across vulnerable populations:
 - Students from historically disinvested communities
 - Students for whom English is not a first language
 - Students who are neurodivergent or experience learning and development challenges
 - Students with disabilities
 - Students who are houseless or in the foster care system
- Increased risk of dropping out of school¹⁴
- Increased likelihood of interaction with law enforcement and the criminal justice system¹⁴
- Increased risk of adverse physical and mental health¹⁴
- Increased risk of poverty in adulthood¹⁴



Get the Resource!

[BLOG >](#)

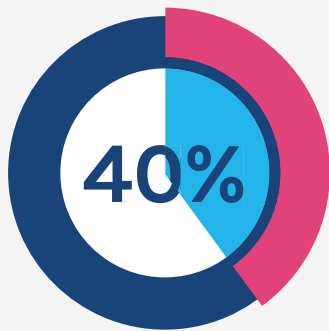
[Effects of Chronic Absenteeism](#)

[BLOG >](#)

[Chronic Absenteeism is Not Just Truancy](#)

Family Involvement Impacts Student Success

Families within your school or district can significantly influence their student's academic and overall success. Student absenteeism is reduced by 40% when schools foster family connections and build stronger relationships with families.¹⁵ In a supportive and caring home environment with engaged parents, students are "less likely to become involved in substance abuse, violence, and other problem behaviors," according to an American Psychological Association article.¹⁶



decrease in student absenteeism

when schools foster family connections and build stronger relationships with families



Additional proof of parents' impact on student success includes:

- Students earn higher grades and do better on tests when parents are involved¹⁶
- Meaningful family engagement has a positive impact not only on academic achievement but also on mental and behavioral health¹⁷
- Teachers report significant changes in their classrooms around student motivation, behavior, and attendance when families help ensure students attend class, encourage and support learning at home, and regularly communicate with school staff¹⁷

Engagement can take many forms. At its core is the fundamental principle that regular, ongoing contact through two-way conversations between schools and families builds a relationship where each relies on the other as a valuable resource.



TIP:

Encourage regular, ongoing family contact through two-way conversations

 **Get the Resource!**

EBOOK >

Guide to Family-School Partnerships

BLOG >

Overcoming 5 Challenges to Engaging Families

INFOGRAPHIC >

Better Engagement Between Home and School

BLOG >

The Secret to Reaching a Student's Greatest Influencers

Guide to Impactful Attendance Teams

Rather than taking a punitive approach with chronically absent students, schools are finding increasing success by implementing attendance teams. These committees identify students with excessive absences and use all available resources to help those students develop a consistent routine for getting to school.

Working from a place of empathy rather than judgment facilitates movement toward the ultimate goal: getting students to school. A lifetime of serious consequences becomes more likely with each absence, but an empathy-first approach that seeks to understand and help rather than judge and punish is better for everyone.



TIP:
Work from
a place of
empathy rather
than judgment



Think about the student who just doesn't get to class. What obstacles might be standing in their way? What resources and positive messaging might help that student work to minimize absences? When students know you care about them—not because they've missed a certain number of school days, but because you miss and value their presence—you're better able to connect and can make incremental steps toward reducing chronic absenteeism and protecting students from the effects of missed school.

Getting every student to every class every day is a collaborative effort. An attendance team is a group of staff members and others focused on monitoring and improving student attendance. The team's job is to create school- or districtwide attendance goals and strategies, and to ensure the school has the appropriate resources to support those goals and address any challenges that arise.



Here are key elements to your Attendance Team:

Meetings

Meet consistently
at a realistic cadence
for your school culture

Agenda

- Review data
- Brainstorm and review interventions
- Attendance culture development
- Discuss successes

Members

Consider the following roles:

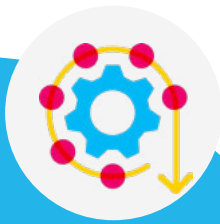
- A leader
- Data guru
- Social worker or counselor
- Teacher
- Parent and student
- Nurse
- School secretary or attendance clerk
- Nonprofit or community organization leader



What to Look for in an Attendance Intervention Tool

How Technology Is Essential for Successful Attendance Interventions and Reducing Chronic Absenteeism

An attendance intervention and management tool **can help automate and streamline fundamental tasks** like reliably monitoring attendance, automatically sending attendance notifications home, and automatically generating official attendance letters and send via text or email.



TIP:

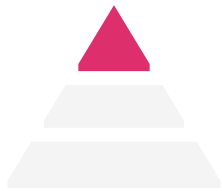
Technology can automate your tasks and communication to make sure no student slips through the cracks

Additionally, a robust system can help you with the following:

- **Ensure** students come to school by automating easy-to-understand data-driven attendance interventions and attendance communications
- **Use** research-informed practices proven to specifically improve attendance at schools and districts
- **Provide** everyone in your school community with equal ability to spot early warning signs and determine appropriate interventions by seamlessly integrating with your SIS to sync and visualize attendance data by tiers
- **Automatically deliver** easy-to-understand visual nudges of attendance behavior to families to encourage improvement through incentive and positive reinforcement
- **Shift** to a more inclusive, empathetic, and personalized two-way family engagement approach that creates partnerships with families, regardless of home language
- **Increase** the amount of attendance-based state funding your district receives by improving attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism



Attendance interventions should be based on the three-tier approach established by Attendance Works. Here are ways that an attendance intervention and management tool can help within each of the tiers.



Tier 3

Students missing **20% or more** (severe chronic absence)

- Wraparound intervention support
- District-level communication
- Expert consultation to appropriately act on the data



Tier 2

Students missing **10-19%** (moderate chronic absence)

- Automated reminders and nudges
- Digital attendance postcards/letters
- Personalized communications



Tier 1

Students missing **5-9%** (at risk) and **less than 5%** (satisfactory)

- Two-way, translated text, email, and auto call to the student's home and other designated caregivers
- Positive outreach

Difference between Basic Communication Tools and More Robust Attendance Intervention Tools

While communication tools are useful for many purposes, they fall short of meeting the needs of targeted, intentional efforts at reducing absenteeism, implementing support, and notifying families of missed classes. Many attendance tools have communication functionality, creating the most robust tool for staff to meet the needs of their students. To solve an attendance problem, start by using the right tool.

TIP:

When deciding between tools for attendance interventions, make sure it will meet your primary goal: reducing absenteeism



Communication Tool

A communication tool strengthens and simplifies communications and notifications between schools and families while increasing family engagement. Depending on their varying capabilities, these tools enable teachers and administrators to send text messages, emails, and phone calls so families can receive critical updates and information such as classroom events, policy changes, and more.

Attendance Tool

An attendance tool also facilitates communications between schools and families, but this communication is much more customizable for personalized interventions depending on a student's behavior and attendance patterns. Attendance tools can inform families about daily and period attendance, send automatic absence notifications, and collect student attendance data for analysis and intervention.

5 Key Differences

Between School Attendance and Communication Tools

| ATTENDANCE TOOL | COMMUNICATION TOOL |
|--|---|
| Features | |
| <p>The typical features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance tracking• Recording reasons for absenteeism• Customizable and personalized interventions• Automated alerts• Support for changing attendance behavior• Proactive attendance analytics to reveal absenteeism patterns | <p>The typical features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Texting, file sharing, and video conferencing• Task management• Notifications about attendance after the behavior has happened* <p>*These notifications tend to be reactive and punitive, unlike an approach that identifies students with worrisome absenteeism patterns and allows schools to intervene and provide support before a student becomes chronically absent.</p> |
| Users and Audience | |
| <p>Attendance intervention tools are typically used by student services or attendance support team members working specifically to improve attendance or prevent chronic absenteeism by engaging and providing actionable attendance data to schools and families.</p> <p>Families can receive real-time notifications to address absenteeism with their student in the moment.</p> | <p>Communication tools are typically used by administrators responsible for communicating with families, regardless of whether attendance is a primary concern.</p> <p>Communication times may be pre-determined, delaying families from accessing information they might need sooner.</p> |

| ATTENDANCE TOOL | COMMUNICATION TOOL |
|--|--|
| <h2>Purpose</h2> | |
| <p>Attendance intervention tools are designed to track and boost attendance.</p> | <p>Communication tools are designed to promote collaboration and communication between families and schools.</p> |
| <h2>Timeframe</h2> | |
| <p>Attendance intervention tools can deliver notifications in live time. They track attendance over designated periods (a month, a semester) and deliver appropriate and timely interventions based on this data.</p> | <p>Communication tools are used continuously, often at a cadence pre-determined by the administration.</p> |
| <h2>Security</h2> | |
| <p>Attendance intervention tools gather sensitive information about students that requires robust security and meets student privacy laws.</p> | <p>Communication tools may have less robust security as they primarily store contact information, messages, and shared files.</p> |

 **Get the Resource!**

BLOG >

Choosing Between an Attendance Intervention or Communication Tool

BLOG >

Using Data Proactively to Attend to Declining Enrollment and Chronic Absenteeism

CASE STUDY >

Reaching All Families at Adam Clayton Powell Elementary—Regardless of Internet or Housing

What to Look for in a Modern Attendance Intervention System

A Complete Attendance Management System

Look for a comprehensive tool that allows your school or district to analyze attendance trends and enables more effective interventions with equitable communication.

Attendance Data Analytics and Visualizations

You should be able to track attendance analytics that will help inform data-driven interventions.

Ability To Implement Research-Based, Data-Driven Interventions

You need access to accurate, timely data to ensure effective attendance interventions.

Communication Tools with Multiple Ways to Connect with Families

Equitable communication with robust language translation capabilities is vital to communicating with families and involving them in the process of getting students back in class.

Ability To Identify Early Warning Signs

Provide everyone in your school community with equal ability to spot early warning signs and determine appropriate interventions.

Integration with Other Core Edtech Products in Your Ecosystem

Your attendance intervention tool should connect with your student information system (SIS) and other edtech ecosystem tools to understand attendance trends better.

Inspire Behavioral Change

A flexible tool should give you features that help encourage attendance improvement through incentives and positive reinforcement.



Why PowerSchool

PowerSchool Attendance Intervention

PowerSchool Attendance Intervention provides schools and districts with best-in-class analytics and family engagement tools to improve attendance and ensure all students can get to school and maximize their learning experience.

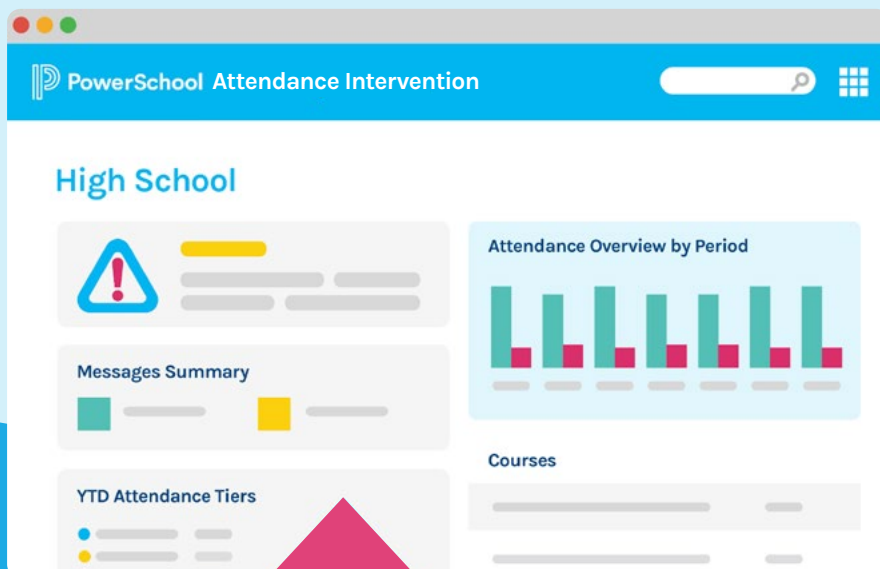
With automated engagement support and actionable attendance data, schools and families can partner to address the underlying causes of chronic absence and create strategies that resolve barriers to attending class.



Attendance Intervention provides:



- ✓ An all-in-one attendance improvement and communications solution
- ✓ The ability to perform data-driven, automated attendance interventions
- ✓ Efficacy-tested attendance interventions
- ✓ Equitable access to information for all parents and guardians
- ✓ Easier access to family engagement through two-way, translated, text-based communications
- ✓ Data-driven approach and research-backed family engagement strategies to drive impact



WITH POWERSCHOOL:

One Simple-to-Use System for Complete Attendance Intervention and Communication Needs

It allows schools to analyze attendance trends using visualizations, power interventions, and drive impact with inclusive communication, regardless of language spoken in the home.

 Get the Resource!

[LANDING PAGE >](#)

PowerSchool Attendance Intervention



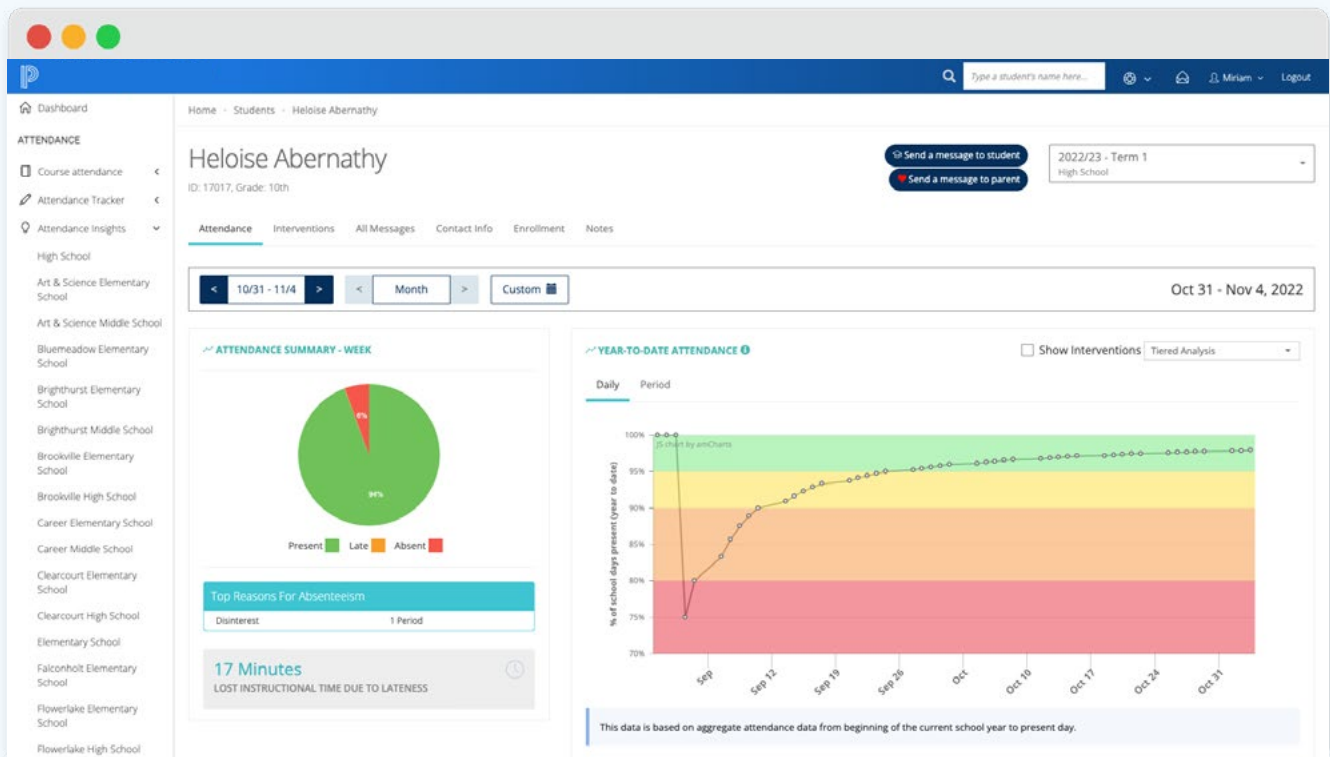
WITH POWERSCHOOL:

Access Useful Analytics and Visualizations

Track attendance analytics to inform data-driven interventions that improve attendance and reduce chronic absenteeism. Dashboards by student, class, grade, school, and district allow for timely communications and interventions and serve as a foundation for recovery efforts.

You gain access to:

- 1 Attendance data sync and visualization
- 2 Tiered data analysis and intervention
- 3 Attendance reporting and analysis



I can't imagine going back to not having attendance and communications together in the same software. Attendance Intervention enables us to send effective communications based on data-driven decisions.

REBECCA DELBARONE | Assistant Principal
Del Sesto Middle School, RI

WITH POWERSCHOOL:

Easily Implement Interventions Based on Accurate Data and Research

Implement research-based attendance interventions that increase effectiveness by encouraging change in attendance behavior and allow customization of your district/school brand, content, and attendance data.

You gain access to:

- 1 Customized digital attendance postcards
- 2 Personalized messaging
- 3 Automated daily/period attendance notices



WITH POWERSCHOOL:

Identify Early Warning Signs

Provide everyone in your school community with equal ability to spot early warning signs and determine appropriate interventions by seamlessly integrating with your SIS to sync and visualize attendance data by tiers. Track and view actionable attendance data and monitor attendance trends to identify early warning signs of chronic absenteeism.



WITH POWERSCHOOL:

Communicate Back and Forth More Easily with Families

Power interventions and attendance notifications with equitable communication that informs families of daily and period attendance, customizes interventions based on attendance tiers, and increases the amount of information you can send, including attendance certificates, policies, and other documents.

You gain access to:

- 1 Automated, two-way attendance notifications with language translation to 60+ languages
- 2 Multi-media messaging
- 3 Trackable PDF messaging



Attendance Intervention is a game changer for our school community in many ways, especially because of the multilingual communication features and user-friendly platform. It has also increased positive interactions between school and home.

NICHOLAS BERNARDO | MTSS Cultural Specialist
Providence Public School District, RI



We are overwhelmed with the level of family engagement, in a good way. Families have responded to the text-based letter in nearly real time. They have asked questions about how they can access support and services for their children.

SCOTT RANDOLPH | Director of School Attendance
Ector County Independent School District, Odessa, TX

WITH POWERSCHOOL:

Integration with Edtech Products in Your Ecosystem

Streamlined integration with your SIS and other core products makes it easy for campus leaders to access attendance trends and **send customizable automated messages about:**

- 1 Daily or period attendance
- 2 Consecutive or total absences
- 3 Attendance tiered interventions

WITH POWERSCHOOL:

Impact Positive Change in Behaviors

Automatically deliver easy-to-understand visual nudges of attendance behavior to families. By doing so, you can encourage improvement through incentives and positive reinforcement.





Features:

- Track and view actionable attendance data and monitor attendance trends to identify early warning signs of chronic absenteeism
- Deploy customized, automatically-generated digital attendance postcards—research-backed, data-driven interventions proven to reduce chronic absenteeism
- Send automated and personalized attendance messages by attendance tier, grade level, and more—directly to a desired group

Equitable, Easy Access:

- Easy for families—they send and receive text messages without requiring an app or login access
- Bridging the digital divide—families do not need to be connected to the internet to communicate with teachers
- Families can engage in two-way translated text messaging in more than 60 languages

Efficacy-Tested Attendance Interventions:

- Aligned to Attendance Works Tiers of Intervention model, the national standard for attendance data management
- Proven effective based on three third-party research studies



Attendance Intervention empowers us to know exactly who we need to reach out to, and what we need to say to make the biggest impact.

TROY BROCK | Director of Pupil Personnel
Paducah Public Schools, KY



**This morning, 21 kids were absent.
After (automatically messaging absent students' contacts),
which took three minutes, 14 kids showed up!**

KIM LEIMER | Principal
Raices Dual Language Academy, RI



How PowerSchool Attendance Intervention Helps Each School and District Role Address Attendance Issues



District Leader

- Automated attendance interventions

Why They Love This:

- Quick view of how many students are in each tier in an easy-to-read dashboard
- Efficiency of interventions



Principal

- School-wide oversight
- Compliance management
- School-wide attendance and general communications

Why They Love This:

- Better picture of the entire school, including trends and insights to inform decisions
- Peace of mind in meeting requirements and ensuring proper funding based on attendance



Teacher

- Real-time attendance data
- Instant communication with contacts

Why They Love This:

- Timely insights to take appropriate action to address student absenteeism or tardiness



Counselor

Social Worker

Attendance Clerk

- Automated attendance interventions
- Notes and attendance data in one place

Why They Love This:

- Confidence knowing actions are taking place to ensure students aren't slipping through the cracks
- Ensured accuracy and collaboration with one source of truth for attendance information

K-12 School and District Results

Here are **results of customers** using PowerSchool Attendance Intervention:

A 2021 Institute of Education Sciences (IES) study¹⁸ that looked at the implementation of attendance supports in the Providence Public School District—including nudges, text messages, automated calls, and emails sent through Attendance Intervention (formerly KiNVO)—found that increased use of the product’s attendance-related text messaging **reduced chronic absenteeism year over year** and was more effective than phone calls or mentorship programs. It was especially impactful for schools with high numbers of multilingual students and families.

The results of a 2020 study¹⁹ conducted by The Lab @ D.C., published in the spring of 2021, found that Attendance Intervention **helps schools maintain consistent connections with families**. In a randomized controlled trial, when the pandemic closed schools, families that received text messages from Attendance Intervention remained engaged despite location, internet access, and language barriers. Families without Attendance Intervention tended to fall out of communication.

In alignment with the research findings, PowerSchool partner schools have seen a **continued decrease in absence rates over the last year**. For example, New York City Department of Education partner schools saw a 7% reduction in chronic absenteeism compared to all NYC DOE schools.

After implementing Attendance Intervention, attendance increased and chronic absence rates dropped for New York City and Connecticut customer districts surveyed.

11% increase
in graduation rates over 3 years

10% increase
in attendance within 6 months

22% reduction
in chronic absenteeism
for English learners

13x increase
in average daily attendance
compared with
non-partner schools

Addressing Chronic Absenteeism

Watch the on-demand webinar with K-12 attendance directors to learn how to address chronic absenteeism and improve attendance with research-backed family engagement strategies and tools.

 Watch Now!

WEBINAR >

Addressing Chronic Absenteeism



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Personalized Education for Every Journey

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