

District Systems Diagnostic Tool

To increase student engagement, belonging, and regular attendance

A growing body of evidence suggests a strong relationship exists between a student’s rate of attendance and social-emotional and academic outcomes. Chronic absenteeism is disproportionately experienced by students whom the school system has not served well. Creating the conditions where “every day matters” requires a nuanced understanding of student, educator, family, and community experiences. Efforts to address the root causes of chronic absenteeism need to avoid perpetuating narratives that a student missing school is an expression of students and families not valuing education.

Tackling the root causes of chronic absenteeism involves the whole system – ESDs, districts, schools, families, communities, community-based organizations, state agencies, and more. The Chronic Absenteeism (CA) Diagnostic Tool is designed to assist school districts in their efforts to reduce chronic absenteeism, and alongside increasing regular attendance, increase student belonging and engagement. The tool uses both quantitative and qualitative data to:

- Understand local drivers of chronic absenteeism within the school, district, and community
- Survey school district policies and practices that are in place to support regular attendance
- Survey school district policies and practices that are in place or may be needed to decrease and address the root causes of chronic absenteeism and improve regular attendance
- Assist the school district in selecting strategies that are culturally sustaining, inclusive and equitable
- Identify the resources needed to support effective implementation of identified strategies to reduce chronic absenteeism
- Prioritize strategies that will best meet the needs of students based upon data that emerges as a result of using this tool

The chronic absenteeism diagnostic tool can be used in conjunction with, and in response to, the comprehensive and [integrated needs assessment](#) process by districts, as outlined in the [Aligning for Student Success: Integrated Guidance for Six ODE Initiatives](#). This diagnostic tool will help districts to identify barriers to attendance and highlights several different systemic areas within an educational system that may impact student attendance. Use of this diagnostic tool is anticipated to promote district efficacy in addressing attendance barriers that affect students at the local level.

A district level team may use this tool during one or multiple settings, depending on the structure of the district team and access to data relevant to each area. The amount of time needed to complete this diagnostic will vary from one district to the other and will be impacted by:

- Background/expertise of district team members
- Availability of data, including data from students/caregivers/community members
 - a. Including intentional engagement with focal student groups and their families as well as authentic student, family and community voice

District Name:

Present at the Meeting:

Does your district have a [team to address attendance](#)? If so, how often do they meet?

Percentage of schools in the district that have an attendance team?

Data Review¹

The Oregon Department of Education publishes Regular Attender Data annually in October of each year. This data includes the following:

- State Level Regular Attender and Chronic Absenteeism rates by grade and population
- District Level Regular Attender and Chronic Absenteeism rates by grade and population
- School Level Regular Attender and Chronic Absenteeism rates by grade and population

Questions for consideration:

What pattern does your data show over the past year/past three months? What do you know about this pattern? What does this pattern make you wonder? What additional data do you need to understand this pattern better (if any)? Does data show that chronic absenteeism is a systemic problem, or a problem for specific groups of students? **What characteristics typify your struggling students?**

How might these patterns impact your intervention development or systemic changes?

For example, is there a population of students who celebrate specific religious holidays or participate in cultural events that account for approximately X days of missed school a year? If so, would calendar adjustments meet student and family needs better?

For this section, please use current district data, if available. If no local data is available, the ODE accountability reporting page for most recent regular attender data may be useful:

<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/reports-and-data/students/Pages/Attendance-and-Absenteeism.aspx>

Districts and schools can securely view and validate chronic absenteeism data through the [Achievement Data Insight \(ADI\)](#) application. Data is available for each school year beginning in Spring/Summer, and remains available for all prior school years. ADI data is secure and unsuppressed, and includes individual student-level attendance determinations. For help accessing ADI, please contact your Accountability Support [Regional ESD Partners](#).

What is the Chronic Absenteeism rate of each of these populations? *Identify all populations that have moderate (10-20%) or high (20%+) chronic absenteeism rates in the most recent school year. (Note that ODE does not provide data for all of these populations - you may need to use local data or leave some disaggregations blank.) If you complete this chart using secure data, please make sure to handle the chart securely. *indicates focal student groups in the Integrated Guidance*

Student populations	% of Total Population	% Chronically Absent
Asian*		
American Indian/Alaskan Native*		
Black/African American*		
Hispanic/Latino*		
Multi-Racial*		
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander*		
White		
Students with Disabilities (IEPs)*		
Students Navigating Poverty*		
Students who are Emerging Bilinguals*		
Students Experiencing Houselessness*		
Students Experiencing Foster Care*		
Students Recently Arrived*		
LGBTQ2SIA+ Students*		
Migrant Students*		
Students who are pregnant or parenting		
Students with Experience of Incarceration or Detention*		
Talented and Gifted		
Students receiving Section 504 accommodations		
Other population(s) identified at the local level:		

Disaggregate data by grade level for each school in the district. What patterns do you observe?

Grade	Low (<10%)	Moderate (10-19%)	High (20%+)
K			
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			

Which grade levels have high levels of chronic absenteeism in your district?

Questions for consideration:
What might you know about these grade levels in your district? What might explain these levels of CA for these grade levels?

Climate & Culture²

This section intended to gather information around policies for student engagement with the school. The [Community Engagement spectrum](#) (p. 100 from the Integrated Guidance for Six Initiatives) may be a useful tool to reference as the district is determining the level of engagement with community members in each of these areas.

What evidence does the district have for the following assertions?

- ❖ The district/school ensures every Family/Caregiver/Student experiences a warm, safe and welcoming environment:

- ❖ [Inclusive practices](#) are an observable and integral to the district/school culture:

- ❖ [Culturally responsive practices](#) are an observable and integral to the district/school culture:

- ❖ Every student can identify at least one adult in the school building they trust:

In reflecting on these questions, how is the district and how are schools tending to inclusive practices that center focal student groups and their families?

Family Engagement³

Evaluate family engagement from the [Integrated Needs Assessment](#) process (Engaged Community) as it relates to and specific to attendance. How is the school/district actively developing family engagement in the following areas, as well as identifying and addressing barriers to family engagement:

- Diversity, equity and inclusion

- Family Centeredness

- Family Strengthening

- Community Strengthening

How are district attendance policies communicated to students, their families/caregivers and the community? *Check all that apply.*

- Student Handbook
- District/School Website
- Handout (paper/sent home to students/families/caregivers)
- Email (paper/sent home to students/families/caregivers)
- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Other)
- Personalized communications: explain below
- Other:

What is your district's tardy policy?

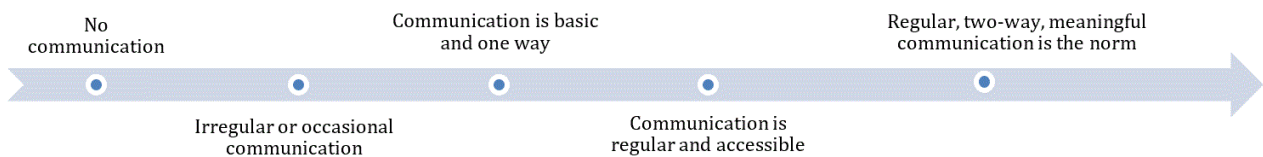
How often are district attendance policies reviewed?

What is the process for this review and who is involved?

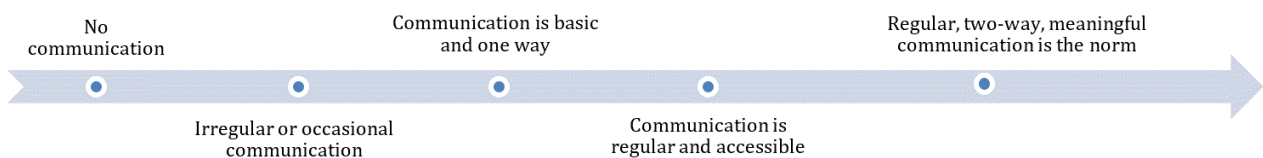
How are parents/caregivers notified when a student is absent? *Check all that apply.*

- Robo-Call
- Phone Call
- Text Message
- Email
- Other:

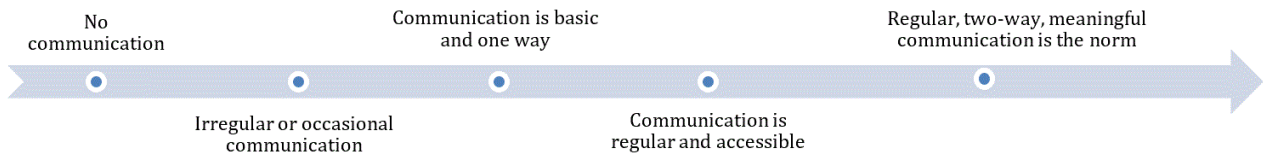
How would family members/parents/caregivers rate the effectiveness of district communication about attendance?



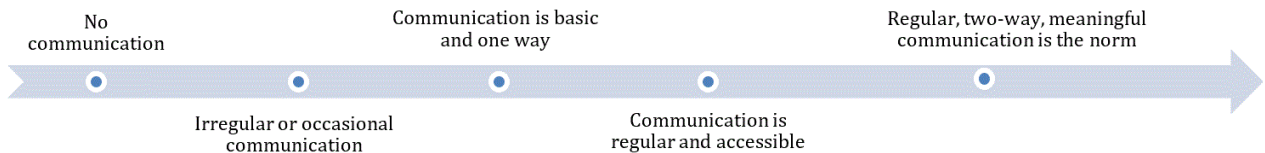
How would students rate the effectiveness of district communication about attendance?



How would community members rate the effectiveness of district communication about attendance?



How would your schools rate district communication about attendance?



Comments/observations/identified needs regarding district attendance communication system:

Health⁵

There is a strong, well-established link between health and learning. Students' health impacts attendance, test scores, and the ability to pay attention in class. Emotional, social and physical health problems can become barriers to learning, making it more difficult for students to be academically or behaviorally successful in school. Addressing the health and well-being of the whole child can go a long way to support achievement in school.

The Oregon Health Authority's (OHA) [Student Health Survey \(SHS\)](#) is a survey of youth conducted in the spring every two years. This report provides a glimpse into the health and well-being of 8th and 11th graders in Oregon. Previous years' reports and information on participating counties and districts can be found on the OHA [Healthy Teens Survey website](#).

Questions for consideration:

How does the district provide clear guidance to families on when a child is too sick for school? How do students access school nurses? How does the district support students with chronic illnesses (asthma, diabetes, etc.)? What information do parents have about respiratory illness, such as flu, COVID, and RSV?

What types of programs are in place to promote student health? What programs need to be put into place to address student health barriers to attendance?

Transportation⁶

This section is to gather information on district policies and procedures for student transportation to and from school.

Questions for consideration:

Does every student have a safe and reliable path to school? How do you know?
How often is bus discipline data reviewed to inform training opportunities? Have all bus drivers received training related to culturally responsive and inclusive practices?

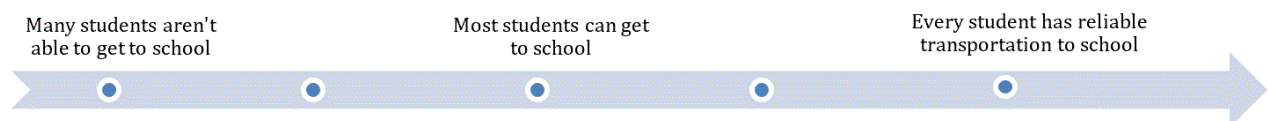
How does your district assess and review the transportation needs of students?

Does your district provide transportation for students who live less than one mile from school and are in need of transportation to attend school? What processes are in place to evaluate this need?

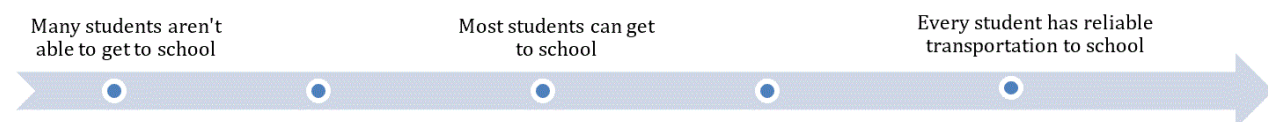
How does your district handle situations in which the parent/caregiver is not able to bring a student to school or does not pick up a student from school, especially regarding your most CA student populations?

Does the district/school have processes for evaluating transportation needs and providing support to Families/ Caregivers/Students to address transportation barriers?

How would you rate your transportation system in making sure all students have a safe and dependable means of getting to school on time?



How would families and students rate the district transportation system in making sure all students have a safe and dependable means of getting to school on time?



Comments/observations/identified needs on transportation policies and resources, including systems that support attendance if students miss the bus:

Attendance Data Procedures⁷

Questions for consideration:

How does the district ensure attendance quality? What student information system (SIS) do you use? How does this system provide systemic information to the district and school(s)? Is attendance entered from school classrooms directly into the district data system?

What attendance patterns are noted? What day(s), time of day or period of day are more absences noted?

If the district has a [district-level Attendance Team](#) (as reflected in section 1), who comprises that team? Are important staff members missing from the team or routinely unable to attend meetings?

What processes or protocols are used for team meetings? (ie, is there a specific agenda that is followed or processes for reviewing data and determining intervention strategies?)

Data is routinely disaggregated and analyzed for patterns and disparities for the populations outlined in Section 1, Data Review?

- Yes
- No

If yes, how often?

These questions are designed to dig deeper into how the district gathers and uses data for Chronic Absenteeism.

How often is attendance taken in elementary school(s)? (select all that apply)

- Daily
- Morning
- Afternoon
- Each period of the day

Is attendance taken consistently (on the same schedule every school day)? Are students ever automatically marked present because attendance was not taken?

Comments/observations:

How often is attendance taken in middle school(s)? (select all that apply)

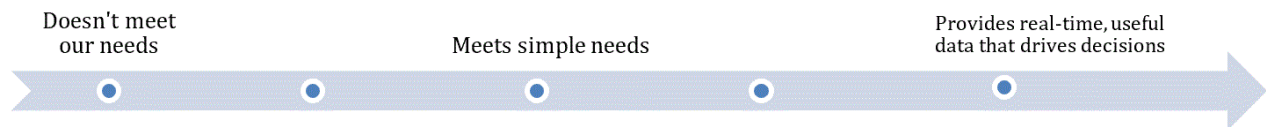
- Daily
- Morning
- Afternoon
- Each period of the day

Comments/observations:

How often is attendance taken in high school(s)? (select all that apply)

- Daily
- Morning
- Afternoon
- Each period of the day

How would you rate the district attendance data collection and reporting system? (The system that the district uses to collect, monitor, and review student attendance--whether it's through a SIS or other method.)



How often is school-level aggregate attendance data updated at the district level?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Semi-Annually
- Annually

How often is district data reported or available to schools (disaggregated)?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Semi-Annually
- Annually

Is attendance data readily available to assess interventions and identify vulnerable students? Can recent changes in a student's attendance be easily detected to assess interventions and identify students in sudden need of additional supports?

Comments/observations/identified needs regarding district attendance system:

Support and Interventions for Students Experiencing Chronic Absenteeism⁸

Early Indicator & Intervention Systems (EIS)⁹ provide educators a quality and customizable tool to monitor data points and analyze key indicators of student progress, attendance and behavior. The tool also aims to allow educators to monitor the effectiveness of interventions. An EIS uses predictive data review to identify students early in their school careers and coordinate systems of care to steward the student towards successful, on-time graduation and transition into post-high school education and careers. A Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) provides tiered support to students in areas such as social-emotional, academic, behavior and attendance.

With this system, student data from each school district's student information system is uploaded nightly and accessed through a Dashboard. The Dashboard offers a platform for staff to review the information in a way that's easy to understand, so teams of teachers can come together to put interventions in place.

Does your district have an Early Indicator and Intervention System (EIS)?

If yes (we have an EIS), what data is collected? *Check all that apply.*

- Attendance
- Behavior
- Course Credits
- Grades
- Other (SEL, relationship-mapping, etc)

Who reviews attendance or EIS data?

How often is attendance data or EIS data reviewed? *Select all that apply*

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Semi-Annually
- Annually

Describe the training that has been completed by staff using this system: (who was trained, on what aspects of the system, by whom, etc.)

How has your district developed an MTSS or other tiered system that addresses attendance?

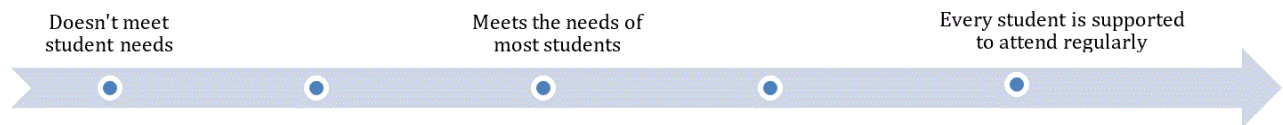
How is the tiered system serving students who are chronically absent?

What systems are in place to review supports/interventions and to update the district's tiered model?

Describe the district's response to students who experience chronic absenteeism:

- Are interventions differentiated for student needs?
- How is the effectiveness of interventions evaluated?
- What interventions have demonstrated to be the most effective?
- What additional supports are needed that have yet to be developed?

How would you rate your district's support to students who experience CA?



Evaluation

Use this section to review the information and insights gathered during the use of this tool to determine what areas to focus on for future work and identify the support your district needs from your ESD liaison and ODE. Ideally, these will also inform district goals and the Continuous Improvement Process, as part of the Integrated Planning and Application Process. Using the Oregon Equity Lens, how will the district ensure that students are represented and supported in district priorities to support equitable outcomes?

After reviewing the questions above, what is the district’s order of priority for addressing the root causes of chronic absenteeism, based upon information from the Integrated Needs Assessment, this Diagnostic Tool, and the input of local families and communities? *Mark only one per row.*

Category	<i>MOST IMPORTANT</i>				<i>LOWER PRIORITY</i>		
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Attendance Data Review</i>							
<i>Family Engagement</i>							
<i>Absence reporting</i>							
<i>Climate and Culture</i>							
<i>Health</i>							
<i>Transportation</i>							
<i>Support and Interventions</i>							
<i>Data procedures</i>							

How will addressing these priorities reduce chronic absenteeism and achieve regular attendance for students?

How might the ODE Every Day Matters team support the district/school with this priority?

How can the ESD liaison support the district with these priorities?

Endnotes

These notes provide additional context for how this Diagnostic tool supports and aligns with the Integrated Guidance for Six Initiatives and provides additional context and research for the structure of this document.

1. Data review section aligns with focal student groups in the Integrated Guidance (IG) (identified with an asterisk) and groups included in the Regular Attender report of the Statewide Report Card.

2. Climate and Culture: Aligns with **Equity Advanced**

*Examine and address systems, structures, practices, behaviors, and mindsets related to power, privilege, and oppression.

*Utilize and re-allocate financial resources and clear calls to action to create school climates, communities, and curriculums that see and sustain each and every child.

*Collect and analyze state, regional, and local data while engaging communities to drive improvement efforts.

*Address the root causes of chronic absenteeism.

*Promote a focus on closing long-standing opportunity and achievement gaps.

Aligns with **Engaged Community**

*Tend to long-standing harm or impact that marginalized communities have experienced.

*Listen and respond to community-driven needs and knowledge.

*Deepen schools' connections with communities through intentional, authentic, and frequent engagement of students, families, educators, school staff, advocates, tribal partners, community-based organizations, business/industry partners, and elected leaders (inc. school board members).

*Cultivate and strengthen connections between community organizations, businesses, Education Service Districts, tribal partners, community colleges, professional associations, and support service agencies to create a thriving educational ecosystem.

*Sustain ongoing engagement and consultation

3. Family Engagement: Aligns to **Engaged Community** and **Equity Advanced**

*Is aligned to Step 3 in the Planning and Application Process

*Family engagement focus is aligned to the Education Innovation and Improvement's office-wide focus of community and family engagement as a core value of all 6 initiatives.

4. Absence reporting to families: Aligns with **Engaged Community**

*Tend to long-standing harm or impact that marginalized communities have experienced.

*Listen and respond to community-driven needs and knowledge.

*Deepen schools' connections with their communities through intentional, authentic, and frequent engagement of students, families, educators, school staff, advocates, tribal partners, community-based organizations, business/industry partners, and elected leaders (inc. school board members).

*Cultivate and strengthen connections between community organizations, businesses, Education Service Districts, tribal partners, community colleges, professional associations, and support service agencies to create a thriving educational ecosystem.

*Facilitate meaningful engagement with licensed, classified, and unrepresented staff including district and school administrators.

*Sustain ongoing engagement and consultation

Aligns with **Equity Advanced**

*Address the root causes of chronic absenteeism.

*Promote a focus on closing long-standing opportunity and achievement gaps.

5. Health: Aligns with Equity Advanced

*Address the root causes of chronic absenteeism.

*Promote a focus on closing long-standing opportunity and achievement gaps.

Aligns with **Well-Rounded Education**

*Well-rounded education... This means student mental and behavioral health.

6. Transportation: Aligns with Equity Advanced

*Address the root causes of chronic absenteeism.

*Promote a focus on closing long-standing opportunity and achievement gaps.

7. Attendance Data Procedures: Aligns with Strengthened Systems and Capacity

*Support strengths-based reporting, monitoring and evaluation practices in service to a continuous improvement process, including how we collect, analyze, use, and share data.

8. Supports for Students: Aligns with Strengthened Systems and Capacity

*Leverage continuous improvement practices to redesign for educational processes that center care, connection, and relationship.

*Grow and utilize district, school, region, and community assets to coach towards culturally sustaining pedagogy and practice.

*Foster financial stewardship that accepts responsibility for the use of state and federal funds with integrity and purpose, while also centering student and community voices in resource allocation.

*Support strengths-based reporting, monitoring and evaluation practices in service to a continuous improvement process, including how we collect, analyze, use, and share data.

*Apply data-informed decision-making routines to review progress and goals at both district and school levels.

*Use data to describe systems health, perceptions, disaggregated student outcome data, transition points, staff evaluation feedback, educational community and partner input.

9. EIIS: Aligns with Strengthened Systems and Capacity

*Support strengths-based reporting, monitoring and evaluation practices in service to a continuous improvement process, including how we collect, analyze, use, and share data.

*Apply data-informed decision-making routines to review progress and goals at both district and school levels

*Use data to describe systems health, perceptions, disaggregated student outcome data, transition points, staff evaluation feedback, educational community, and partner input.