

MTSS & Attendance

April 8, 2024

Jess Anderson (she/her)

Count ME In



www.countmeinmaine.org

Land and Tribal Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the lands and waters of what is now called Rockport while recognizing that we exist in the unceded homelands of Penobscot. The place we now call the State of Maine is the ancestral territory of the Wabanaki, or the People of the Dawnland. The Wabanaki Confederacy comprises 4 member nations, the Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Maliseet, and Mi'kmaq.

Today, each community maintains its own tribal government, community schools, cultural centers, and manages its respective lands and natural resources.

We make this acknowledgement aware of violations of water, territorial rights, and sacred sites across Wabanaki homelands. The uncomfortable truth of settler colonialism is that the Wabanki were often forcibly removed from their homes and their land. Harm from physical and cultural genocide implemented by the State of Maine continues to be felt by the Wabanaki to this day. Indigenous peoples of Maine continue to protect and remain in relationship with the land and waters and will do so until the end of time. They will continue fighting for the recognition of their inherent rights and self determination to regain their rights as sovereign nations. It is vital to honor these beginnings and recognize the ongoing dedication and importance of Indigenous culture within our communities and within the spaces that we gather, live, learn, and work on.



www.countmeinmaine.org

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MAINE COUNSELING ASSOCIATION

A State Branch of the American Counseling Association



Labor and Slavery Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that much of what we know of the United States today, including its culture, economic growth, and development, has been made possible by the forced labor of enslaved Africans, and their descendants, who suffered the horror of the transatlantic trafficking of their people, chattel slavery, Jim Crow, and other harms that continue today. We are indebted to their labor and their sacrifice, and we must acknowledge the tremors of that violence throughout the generations and the resulting impact that can still be felt and witnessed today. We collectively acknowledge that, onboard some of the earliest European vessels to reach the shores of the Dawnland were skilled African mariners.

Though the early presence and longstanding legacy of African-descended peoples have largely been effaced from our dominant narratives and from the collective consciousness, these people have been part of the story of this land going back over 450 years. We honor the memory of the many generations of Africans and African Americans whose labor was exploited to help establish this economy and to build the very foundations of our present communities.

We hold in our hearts and in our highest esteem, these resilient forefathers and foremothers who resisted dehumanization and enslavement, who emancipated themselves, and who never ceased to exhibit the fullness of their inspired humanity by inventing new modes of creative survival and new ways to thrive, despite the oppressive conditions in which they lived. We honor them, their resilience and fortitude.

We acknowledge that the descendants of these brave African enslaved builders of this great country continue to endure disparities untold. The system continues to disenfranchise them and the entire African American communities in all aspects of living and thriving.

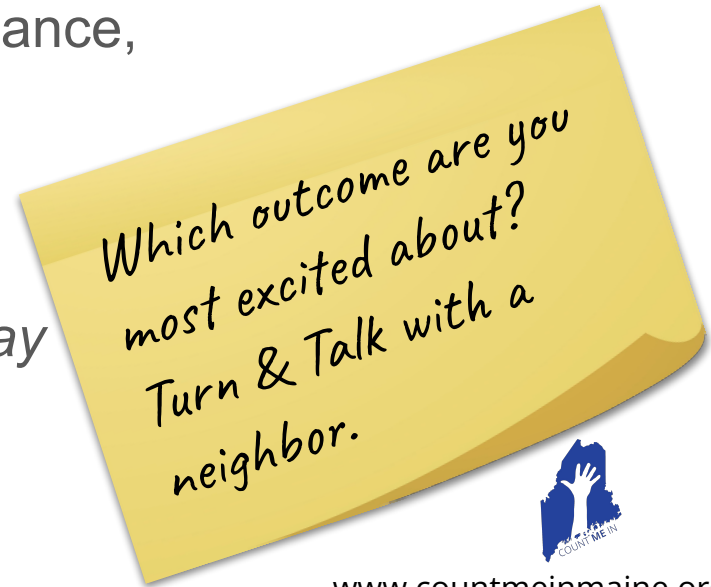


Goals

- View attendance in an MTSS framework
- Share supports and resources for improving daily attendance, including Count ME In
- To learn strategies for supporting school attendance that schools and districts can use *every single day*



Link to MTSS
brainstorm

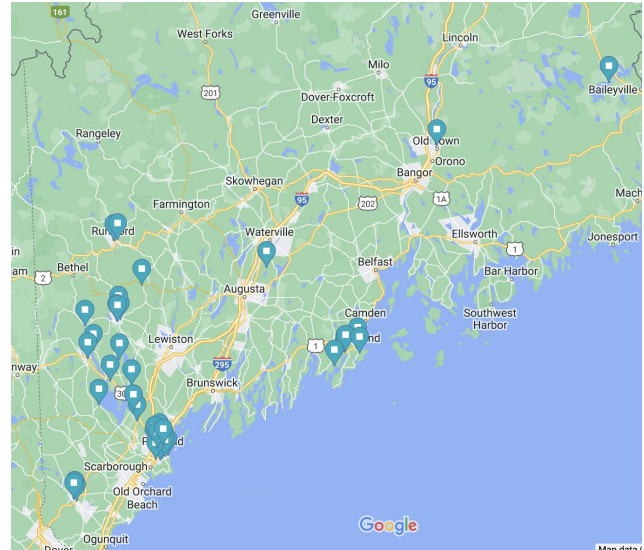


About Count ME In

- Established in 2013
- Community of Educators and Youth Serving Organizations
- Data-driven
- Focus on Whole-School and Whole Community Approach

140+
Schools

40+
Districts



What is Chronic Absenteeism?

Chronic absence is missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at risk. Maine defines chronic absenteeism as **missing 10% or more of school for any reason.**



The 10% threshold is used because that is when students are likely to see academic and social emotional impacts of missing school.



Why Attendance Matters

Early Grades

Students who are chronically absent are **less likely to read on grade level by third grade** than students who are not chronically absent.



High School

A student who is chronically absent any year between 8 and 12 is **7 times more likely to drop out.**



Middle School

Students who are not proficient readers are **4 times more likely to drop out of school.**

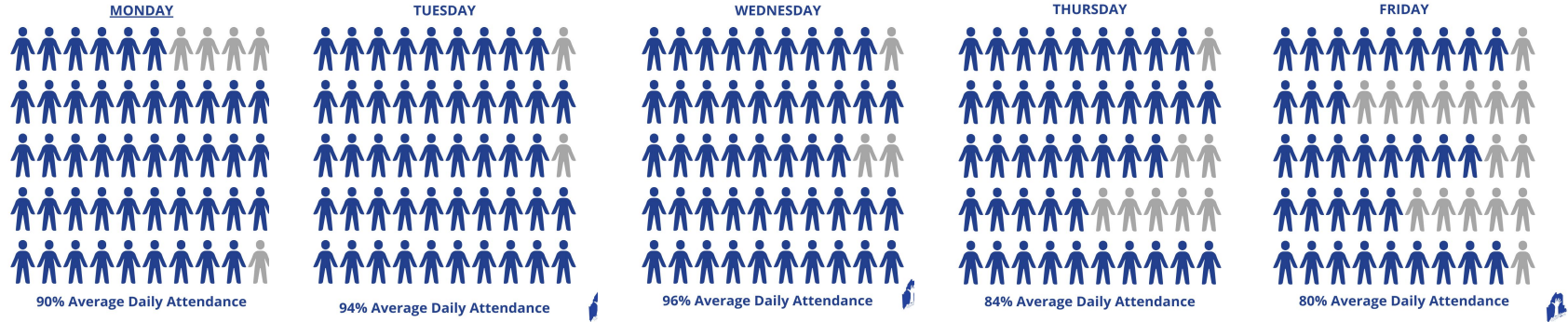


Lifetime

A student who drops out of high school **lives 9 years less** than a college graduate.

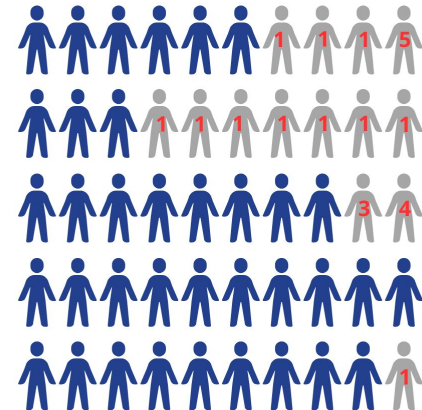


How is **chronic absenteeism** related to **average daily attendance**?



Average daily attendance is the **percentage of students present on any given day**. So if 95 of 100 students are present, the average daily attendance would be 95% and that tells you that 5% are absent. Those 5% however could be absent just one day or many days.

NUMBER OF DAYS EACH STUDENT **MISSED** IN ONE WEEK



28% OF STUDENT CHRONICALLY ABSENT THIS WEEK

Truancy vs. Chronic Absence

TRUANCY

Counts only unexcused absences

•

Emphasizes compliance with
school rules

•

Relies on legal and
administrative solutions

VS.

CHRONIC ABSENCE

Counts all absences: excused, un-
excused, and suspensions

•

Emphasizes academic impact of
missed days

•

Uses community-based,
positive strategies

*Truancy is defined by unexcused absences, which are defined locally.
Chronic absenteeism is defined by all absences, regardless of reason.*



CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RATES in MAINE

During the 2022-2023 school year, the following percentages of all Maine public school students were chronically absent:

25.5% → of all students in Maine

36.3% → of economically disadvantaged students

33.9% → of students with disabilities

ACCORDING TO THE MAINE DOE ESSA DASHBOARD



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Attendance as a spectrum



(Kearney, Gonzalez, Graczyk & Fomander, 2019)



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Incorporate
Partners

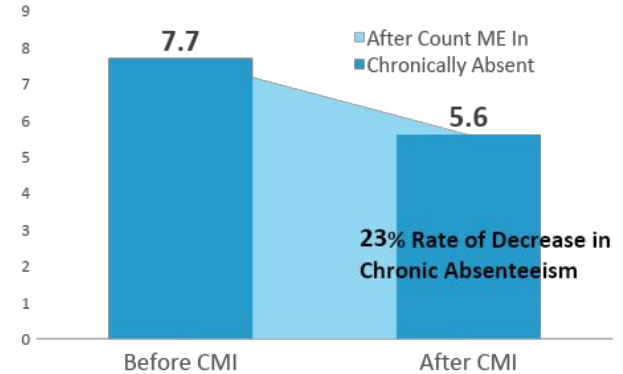
Implement Data-
Driven Interventions

Establish a Review
Structure

Implement an Early Warning
& Response System

Universal Messaging &
Positive Engagement

Count ME In
Steps to
Success



threshold:

Tier 3:
Intensive Interventions & Supports

- Student Engagement
- Family Engagement
- SEL
- Relationships
- Mental & Behavioral Health
- Physical Health
- Academic Support
- Basic Needs

threshold:

Tier 2: *Targeted Interventions & Supports*



Tier 1: *Universal Prevention & Supports*

Foundational Supports:

Data Monitoring Details:
(Who? What?When?How?)

Promising & Evidence-Based Foundational Practices

Physical and Emotional Health and Safety

- Healthy learning environments
- Welcoming, safe school climate
- Access to food and other basic needs
- Provide safe transportation to school
- Restorative circles

Belonging, Connection and Support

- Threshold Greetings
- Home Visits
- Enrichment and clubs
- Positive peer connections
- “Rethink Recess”
- Active student and family engagement
- Advisories/meetings to build community

Threshold greetings



Rethink Recess



Academic Challenge and Engagement

- Access to tech and internet
- Learning supports
- Project-based learning
- Credit recovery opportunities
- Internships/community service
- Alternative scheduling options

Adult and Student Well-Being and Emotional Competence

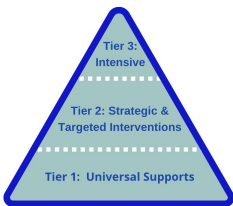
- Access to health care and mental health supports
- Trauma-informed practice
- Staff self-care
- Restorative check-ins



CONNECT

CONNECT: Encourage a welcoming and engaging climate built on strong interpersonal relationships that promotes safety, belonging, alongside great teaching and learning.

	Not Present 0	Emerging 1	Progressing 2	In Place 3	Exceeds 4
A. Positive contact with students	Greet students every morning and when they leave in the afternoon. Little to no visible evidence of student contributions to the school community.	Students greeted by name, or with genuine personalized greetings. Evidence of student contributions throughout the building.	Students provide input to classroom rules and norms. Expectations written in positive language. Consequences are non-punitive. Checklist used to introduce new students to school and community.	Positive language used by most staff. Students & teachers co-create school norms. Curriculum is relevant to students' lived experiences. Restorative practices are encouraged. Students actively engaged in welcoming new students.	Positive language consistently used by all. Students are actively involved in creating or refining school norms throughout the year Restorative practices are the norm. Multiple means for collecting student input & their feedback is part of school-wide decision-making.



Tier 1: Universal Attendance Supports



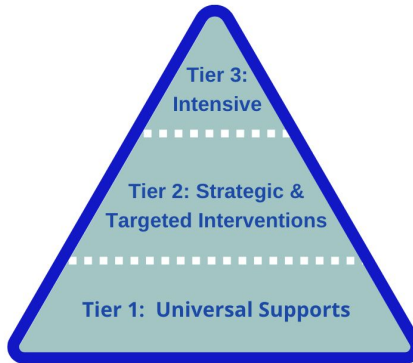
- Clear, concise and consistent communication about schedules and expectations
- Routines, rituals and celebrations related to attendance and engagement
- Personalized communication to families when students are absent
- Recognition of good and improved attendance
- Impact of attendance on whole child widely understood
- Connection to a caring adult in the school.



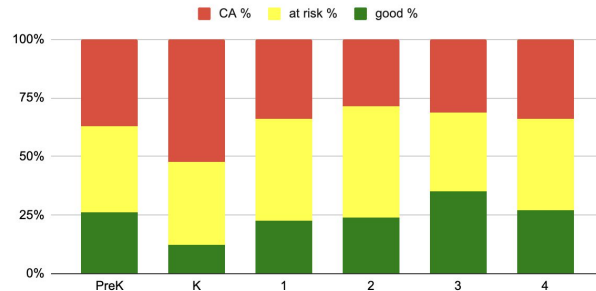
Data Driven Intervention: How do you determine needed interventions and supports at other levels?

Intervene: Utilize a collaborative, multi-tiered, and adaptive approach to improving attendance.

	Not Present 0	Emerging 1	Progressing 2	In Place 3	Exceeds 4
C. Data-driven intervention	Interventions introduced based on assumed need.	Team uses data to design and pilot at least one tier 1 or tier 2 intervention to target a documented need.	School focuses on two tiers of intervention and occasionally monitors effectiveness of interventions.	School focuses on all three tiers of intervention, introduces new interventions based on need and occasionally monitors effectiveness of interventions.	Team has a well established multi-tiered attendance plan and routinely monitors effectiveness of interventions using data.



Current Rates By Grade Level

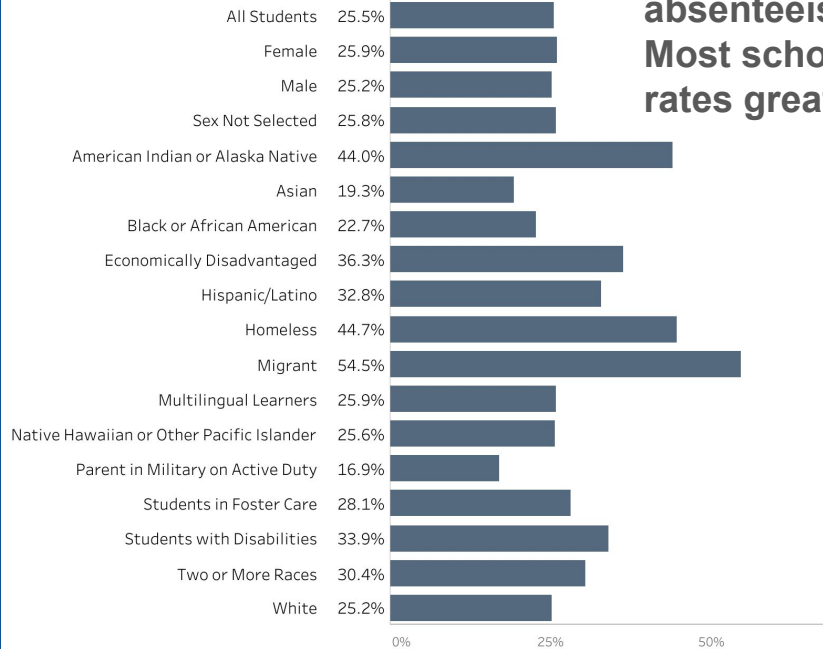
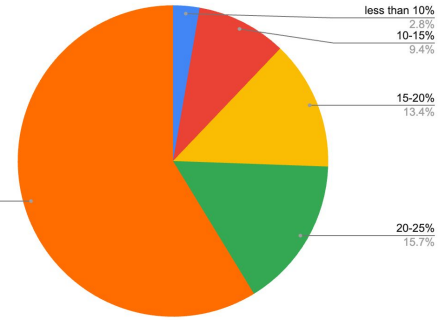


health	NC	mom,	NC	
health	19	health	20	health
vacation, approved	15	health	16	health
family	23	mom,	24	on going, kim
	21	homeschooled as of january 18th	X	
health	15	health	18	health
child refused to come, plan in place with Kim	26	death in the family	29	bereavement
mom's issues, communication with Kim	35	margaret sent letter	37	on going hospital
	12	hospital	16	hospital
	NC		NC	
	23	health, immunization	NC	

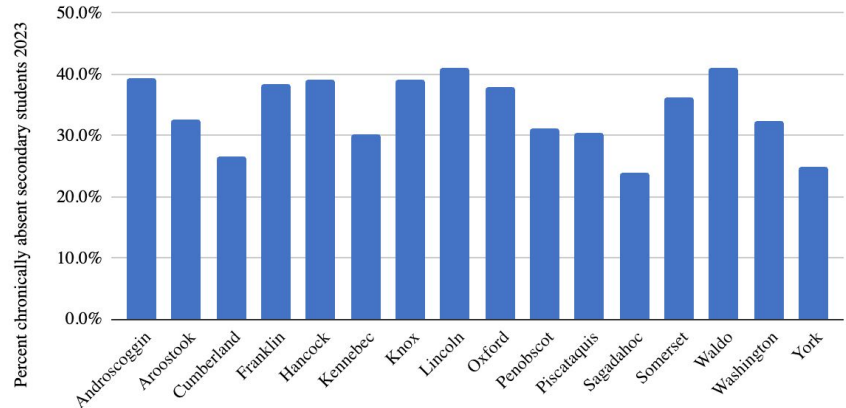


2022-2023 Data

In the 2022-2023 school year, only 17 Maine Schools reported chronic absenteeism rates less than 10%. Most schools chronic absenteeism rates greater than 25%.



Chronic Absence by County 22-23



Who is most likely to be impacted by chronic absenteeism?

4X

*more likely to be
chronically absent*

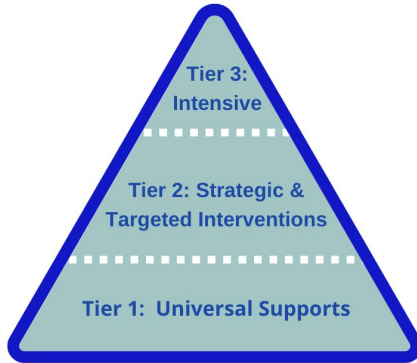
- Youth from **low income backgrounds**
- **Youth of color**
- Youth who have experienced **trauma or Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**
- Youth with **disabilities**
- Youth who **experience homelessness or transience**
- Youth who have been in contact with the **juvenile justice system**



Monitor

Matters: Promote a community-wide, positive culture of attendance.

	Not Present 0	Emerging 1	Progressing 2	In Place 3	Exceeds 4
D. Review attendance data.	Inconsistent/inaccurate data and/or system not in place to obtain and/or track data	School only identifies truant students and/or tracks required steps.	School Identifies all chronically absent students monthly and has a system for reviewing data.	A list of students, by grade, who are absent 10% of the school year is reviewed at least once a month.	A list of students, by grade, who are absent 10% of the school year is reviewed at least twice a month.



s	# Days Absent DATE 10/21	Meeting Notes DATE 10/25	# D DA'
	7	just had SE meeting to address	
	0		
	6	D emailing teacher	
	8	D emailing teacher	
	0		
	14	Hunting, K to follow-up with case manager	
	1		
	3	sick	
	2		
	1		
	6	addressed with parent	
	2		
	0		
	5	injury in PE	



Tier 2: Early Interventions

- Common community and school barriers identified and addressed
- Individualized student success plan that includes attention to attendance
- Attendance strategies added to IEP
- Increased Family Contacts
- Check-In/Check-Out
- Mentoring
- Trusted adult matching
- Case management
- Home Visits (CT-LEAP)
- Personalized incentive system
- Small group interventions and supports
- Family Workshops
- Restorative alternatives to discipline and suspension
- Increased academic, social, emotional or behavioral support
- Community Partner referral
- Peer Group Connections
- Expanded learning opportunities



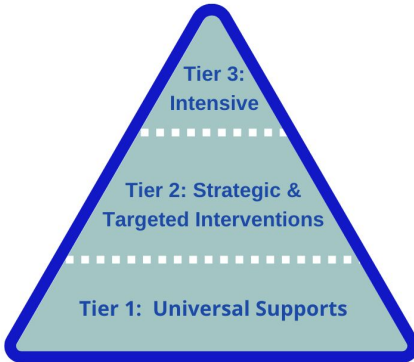
Home Visits



www.countmeinmaine.org

Intervene

Not Present 0	Emerging 1	Progressing 2	In Place 3	Exceeds 4
Team includes just two people and/or only meets to respond to crises.	Staff team meets infrequently and/or discusses only problems and challenges.	Team of 3 or more staff meets monthly, reviews tracked attendance data, and develops action steps to address student concerns.	Team meets at least twice a month to coordinate collaborative development of action plans including school staff, family, and students, based on student data, strengths, needs, and root causes for student's absenteeism.	Proactive development of action plans for students with a history of chronic absenteeism. Team regularly incorporates community resources into action and transition plans.



MY CHILD'S ATTENDANCE SUCCESS PLAN

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES TO REACH MY CHILD'S ATTENDANCE GOALS AND HELP MY CHILD GAIN THE SKILLS TO DO WELL IN SCHOOL, ASED TO READ BY 4TH GRADE.

- Keep an attendance sheet at home. Consider using the attached template. At the end of the week, I will recognize or celebrate my child's attending performance every day.
- Make sure my child is well-rested, fed, and has clean clothes and hair.
- Plan activities, social or religious events, and other activities that my child can help with on the days that I am not at home.
- Use calendar, social or religious events, and other activities that my child can help with on the days that I am not at home.
- Use calendar, social or religious events, and other activities that my child can help with on the days that I am not at home.
- If my child has a right to a court order, I will call the school to help.

To sign up _____, introduction, I commit to the following:

- _____
- _____

To sign up _____, introduction, the program consists to:

- _____
- _____

If I need help getting my child to school, I will call the following people to see how they can help:

Parent: _____

Teacher: _____

Program Signatory: _____

To learn more, please visit www.attendancesuccess.org

MY FAMILY'S HELP BANK

MY FAMILY

EVERYDAY HELPERS

OCCASIONAL HELPERS

POTENTIAL HELPERS

- No Family: Let who lives in my home.
- Everyday Helper: Identify who you can call on to help you every day. Who can you call on to help you every day? Who can you call on to help you every day? Who can you call on to help you every day?
- Occasional Helper: Identify people who can help you occasionally. Who can you call on to help you occasionally? Who can you call on to help you occasionally? Who can you call on to help you occasionally?
- Potential Helper: Identify people who can help you in the future. Who can you call on to help you in the future? Who can you call on to help you in the future? Who can you call on to help you in the future?

To sign up _____, introduction, I commit to the following:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

If I need help getting my child to school, I will call the following people to see how they can help:

Parent: _____

Teacher: _____

Program Signatory: _____

To learn more, please visit www.attendancesuccess.org



Root Cause



Collaborative Conversation Key Points

Who is connected with the student? or who has the potential to build a relationship with the student? Or family?

What are their interests, strengths, or talents? Where are they successful→ at school? Club? Sports? Community events?

Where are they challenged? What supports are already in place? 504? IEP? Health Plan?

Who has connected with their caregiver? Has there been a staffing? Should there be an IEP or 504 team meeting? Have they been referred to a Tier 2 or Tier 3 team?



Tier 3: Intensive Supports

- Work to ensure that the student is connected to positive supports and programs
- Educational support champions / advocates
- Interagency case management
- Housing stability supports
- Student attendance review board
- Community-based, non-criminal truancy court
- Individualized learning and success plan leading to graduation
- Legal Intervention (as a last resort)



Statewide Supports

Maine PBIS Advanced Tiers
Coaching Meeting (Quarterly)

Count Me In Think Tank (monthly)

Place Matters Regional Care
Teams (monthly)



Regional Care Teams



www.countmeinmaine.org

STATEWIDE PARTNERS
to support attendance

Why it Matters?
Schools can collaborate with community partners to promote student learning and to provide wraparound support for students and families experiencing hardship.

Who?

 supports child abuse prevention through parent support and community outreach via regional hubs.	 Supports children and families with special needs in accessing systems of care.
Maine Behavioral Health Youth Peer Support Through a simple online referral form youth age 14 and up can connect with virtual or in person peer support	 Provides parent-to-parent peer support and training for those raising children with behavioral health needs (no diagnosis needed)
 Advocates, promotes, and supports the work of the Maine Community Action Agencies, who support improved quality of life in their communities	 Links families and professionals to information about child development, pregnancy, and community resources for children all over Maine up to the age of eight years old.

 www.countmeinmaine.org

How do you improve attendance?

THE TOP 5!

- ❑ We have a welcoming and engaging climate that promotes safety, belonging, great teaching and learning, and interpersonal relationships with students, families, and staff.
- ❑ We promote a culture of attendance in year-round communication to families and students and regularly recognize good and improved attendance.
- ❑ A team meets at least every two weeks to: (a) monitor attendance data and trends; (b) coordinate our multi-tiered attendance strategy; (c) examine the reasons for absences using quantitative and qualitative data; and (d) ensure chronically absent students receive needed supports.
- ❑ We reach out to chronically absent students and families and engage them as partners in improving attendance.
- ❑ We partner with community agencies that offer resources that help engage students and remove attendance barriers.



More Slides!!



Additional Resources

www.attendanceworks.org

<https://www.future-ed.org/attendance-playbook/>

Research by Patricia Graczyk & Christopher Kearney

Contact and Feedback

Follow us on social media [@countmeinmaine](#)

Email Jess: janderson@countmeinmaine.org



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Additional Reflection Slides

The next eight slides have examples of supports and strategies that have been implemented at CMI schools. They link to additional research and resources. **Thank you to Jill Bartash for pulling them together as part of our MSMA presentation!**

Feel free to email janderson@countmeinmaine.org

for more information.



OXFORD HILLS >

Posted August 31

Photo: Warm welcome in West Paris



Agnes Gray Elementary School Principal Cathy Bickford greets bus driver Sarah Tripp on Wednesday as she delivers West Paris students Maine School Administrative District 17's first day of classes for grades kindergarten to seven and nine. Grades eight, 10, 11 and 12 will start classes Thursday. Prekindergartners begin Tuesday. *Nicole Carter/Advertiser Democrat*

How do you ensure students have reliable and safe bus stops, transportation, and walking routes that start their school days positively?



Universal Supports



Oxford Hills School District MSAD #17

August 31 · 🌐



9th Grade mentors wait for their mentees!! #learn17 #firstdayofschool



👍❤️ You and 52 others

1 Share

How do you ensure students feel welcome at school, even when they are late?



Universal Supports



Rumford Elementary School

★ Favorites · September 1 · 🌐

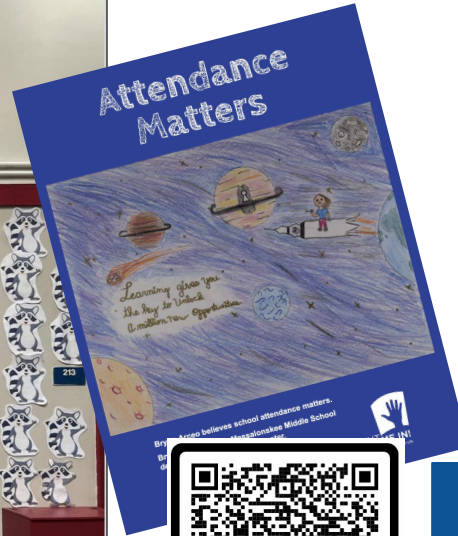
Something happened today that NEVER has (that Penny and I can remember): ALL of our kids who can be at school are HERE!! Way to show up!
Look at all the Roccos that came back to school!!!



👍❤️👏 J.j. Bartash, Larissa Wing and 148 others

14 Comments 1 Share

How do you impart positive messaging about the importance of attending school?

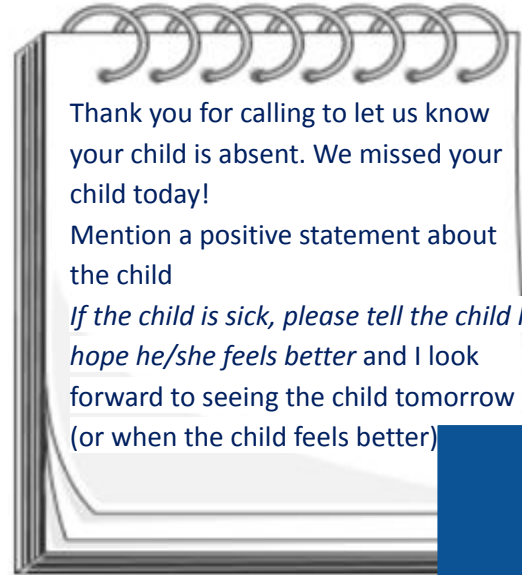


Universal Supports

How do you accurately record and monitor attendance, and catch and address markers of attendance issues as soon as they start?

# of days absent 10/8 (remote)	# of days absent 10/19	# of days absent as of 11/1	Meeting Notes 11/4/21
		3	
3	3	3	
1	4	4	5
			Did not engage remote. Amy will check in with teacher via email.
4	4	4	9
			Did not engage 3 remote days. Sue will check in with teacher via email.
5	5	5	8
			Did not engage remote. Ben will check in with teacher via email.
2		5	9
0		0	1

the template



an article



Universal Supports

How do you recognize good or improved attendance?



Rumford Elementary School

March 16 · 🌐

We got to celebrate Perfect Attendance and HUGE improvements in attendance today with a lunch field trip to [McDonald's](#)! Jacob said it best: "This is my second favorite best place in the world. RES is my first favorite best place!" ❤️

Be on the lookout for an upcoming attendance incentive for all students!!

Thanks you, McDonald's, for always being a fantastic partner in this work!



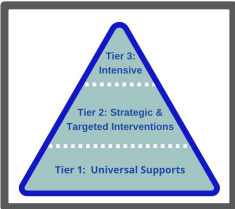
Universal
Supports




How do you involve the community and make good attendance everyone's commitment?



Universal Supports



How do you foster a collaborative approach to reviewing attendance data and addressing issues?



Attendance Meeting Best Practices

- Identify roles at meeting. At each meeting, determine which team member will take responsibility for one role such as facilitating, note taking, contacting teachers, and checking SMS for data on individual students.
- Time to brainstorm strategies. If a student's absence has increased after a strategy has been implemented, take time during the meeting to ask questions and brainstorm additional ideas/strategies to implement. It is beneficial to utilize the team's expertise as well as staff/resources in the school and community. Use the [Root Cause Worksheet](#) from AW.
- Increase staff's role to address attendance. Staff can contact families if the student has missed 3-5 days with a positive call letting the family know what the student does well in class. The purpose of the phone call is to build connections with the family.



team practices

Universal Supports

How do you form strong relationships with families and involve them in decision-making related to their child, as well as school-wide policies and procedures ?



“I have never met a parent who didn’t care about their children or value education — but they may not show it in ways that white, middle-class people would expect.”



the strategies



the video



the research

**Universal
Supports**