

Disclaimer



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WestEd 
Western Educational
Equity Assistance Center

Pathway to Re-Engagement: Summer Opportunities

May 8, 2024



Technical Assistance Professional Learning

- By request: school boards, governmental agencies, etc.
- Through equity-centered capacity-building to better serve students who have experienced ongoing inequities in our educational system because of their race, national origin, sex, or religion

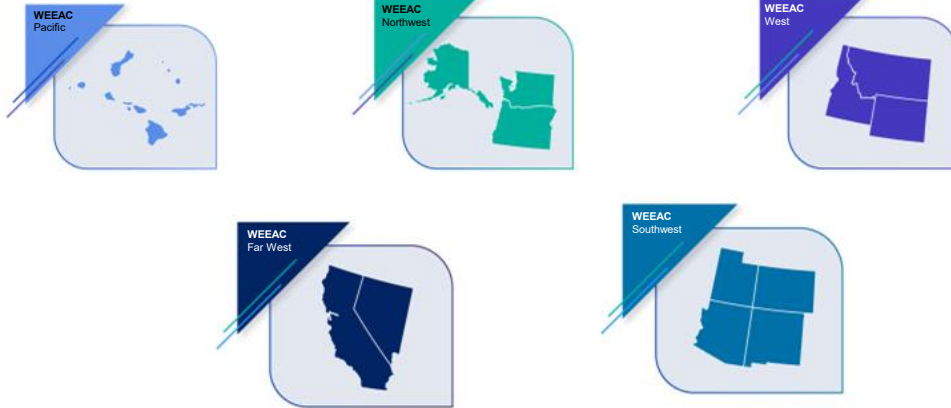


Western Educational Equity Assistance Center (WEEAC) Objectives

- Reduce chronic absence
- Reduce bullying and harassment
- Improve high school graduation rates
- Strengthen high school course enrollment
- Improve discipline equity
- Address disproportionality of students served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Address discrimination cases and desegregation orders



WEEAC Subregions



Pacific

American Samoa, the
Commonwealth of the Northern
Mariana Islands, Guam, and Hawai'i

Northwest

Alaska, Oregon, and Washington

West

Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming

Far West

California and Nevada

Southwest

Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico,
and Utah

Learning Goals for Session



Participants will:

- identify key opportunities for engagement during the summer months;
- use chronic absence data to inform re-engagement of students who are disproportionately impacted;
- identify reasons why students are disengaged; and
- learn from practitioners about what works in different settings to engage/re-engage families and students.

Audience Poll: Getting to Know You



What type of organization do you represent?

- State education agency (SEA)
- Tribal government
- District
- School
- Community organization
- Other (*Please describe in chat box.*)

Welcome!



WestEd
Western Educational
Equity Assistance Center



Cecelia Leong
Vice President of Programs
Attendance Works

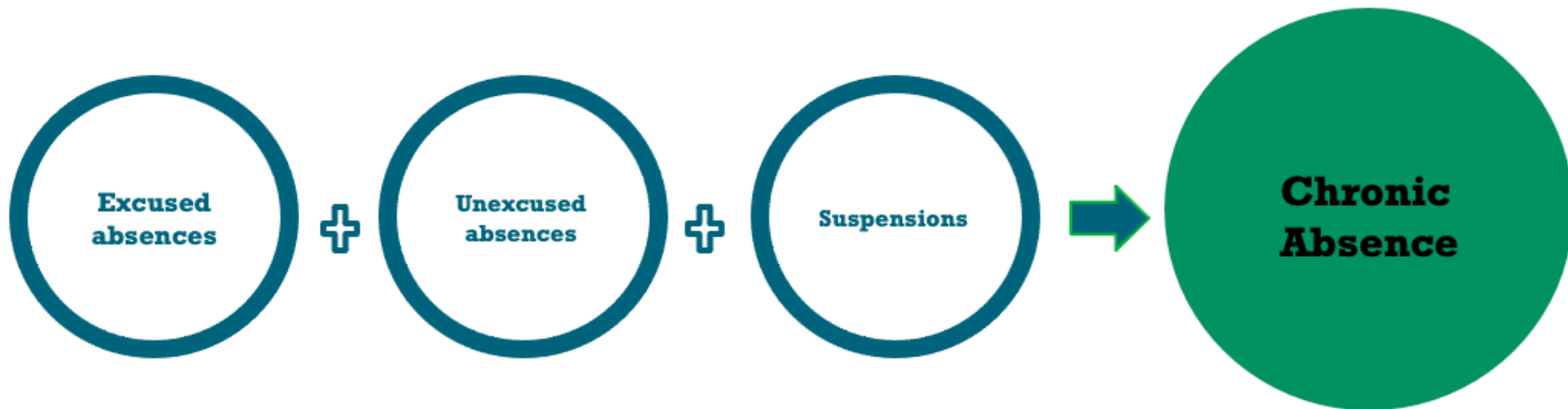


Helen Duffy
Senior Fellow
Attendance Works



What is Chronic Absence?

Chronic absence is missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at risk. Chronic absence is defined as missing 10% or more days of school for any reason.



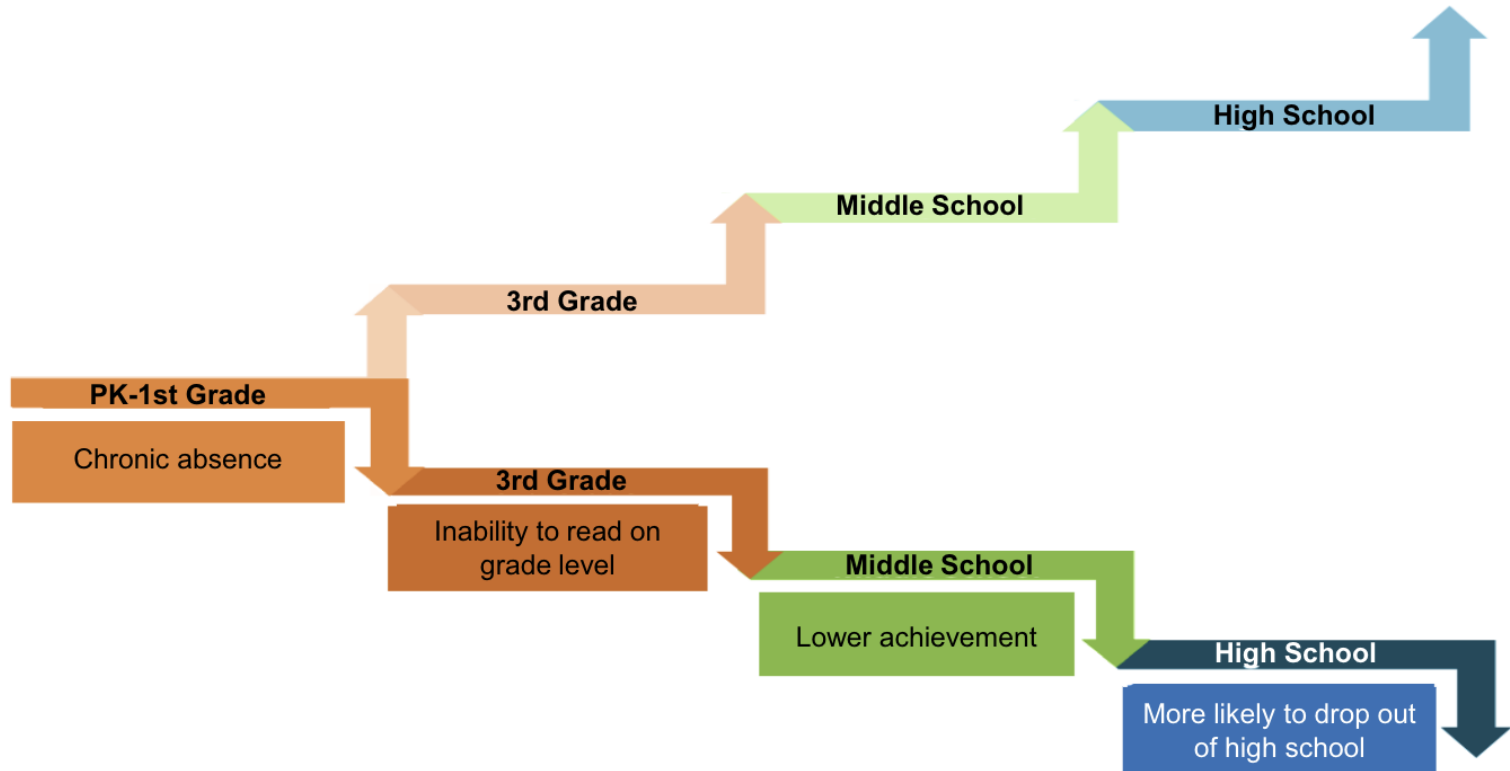
Chronic absence is different from truancy (unexcused absences only) or average daily attendance (how many students show up to school each day).



Chronic Absence and Equity

**Chronic absence *reflects* and
exacerbates existing inequities.**

Improving Attendance Matters



Our Nation Faces an Attendance Crisis

- **Prepandemic: 8 million (16%) students were chronically absent** (*missing 10% or more of school for any reason: excused, unexcused, or suspension*)
- **Chronic absence nearly doubled.** By the end of school year (SY) 2021–22, chronic absence affected 14.7 million (nearly 30%) students. Data from districts and states show rates remained high in SY 2022–23.
- **English language learners, economically disadvantaged** students and families, as well as **Native American, Black, Latine/Hispanic,** and **Pacific Islander** students are **disproportionately affected.**
- **Chronic absenteeism is higher than ever, especially in early elementary and all throughout high school.**

Defining Terms

Average Daily Attendance (ADA)

- School-level measure (not student-level)
- Notices aggregate attendance at a certain point in time (e.g., half-days, holidays, bad weather)
- Masks individual student chronic absences

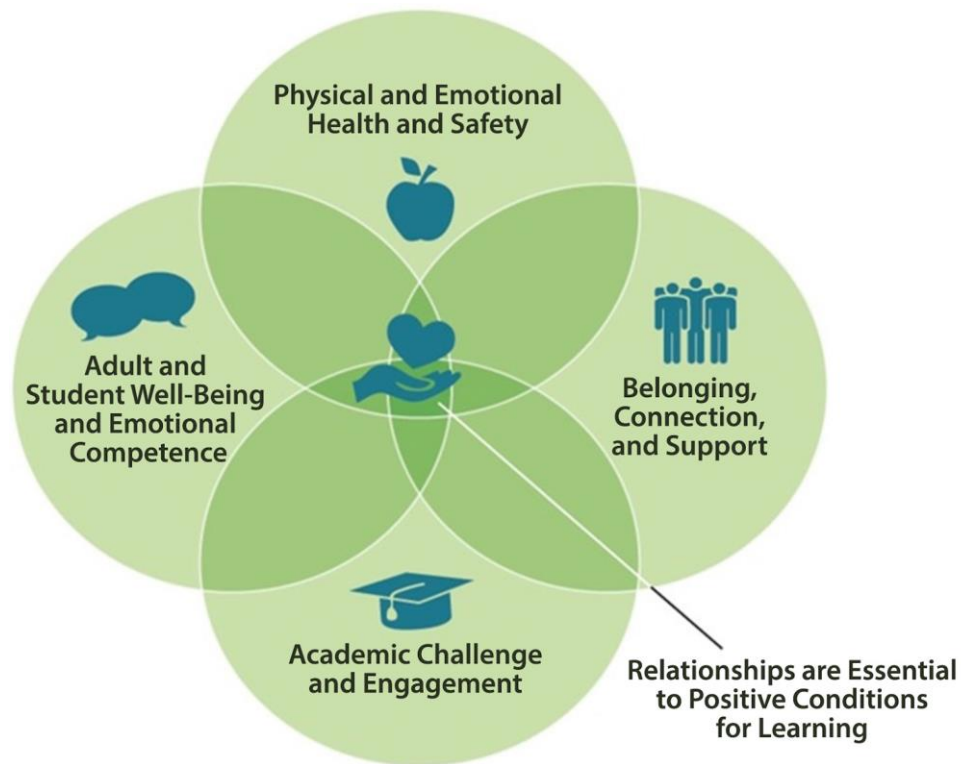
Truancy

- ▲ Counts **ONLY** unexcused absences
- ▲ Emphasizes individual compliance with school rules
- ▲ Uses legal, typically more blaming and punitive, solutions

Chronic Absence

- Missing 10% counts **ALL** absences (*excused, unexcused, & suspensions*)
- Emphasizes impact of missed days and the benefits of being present
- Uses preventative, problem-solving, trauma-sensitive strategies
- Cultivates family and student engagement

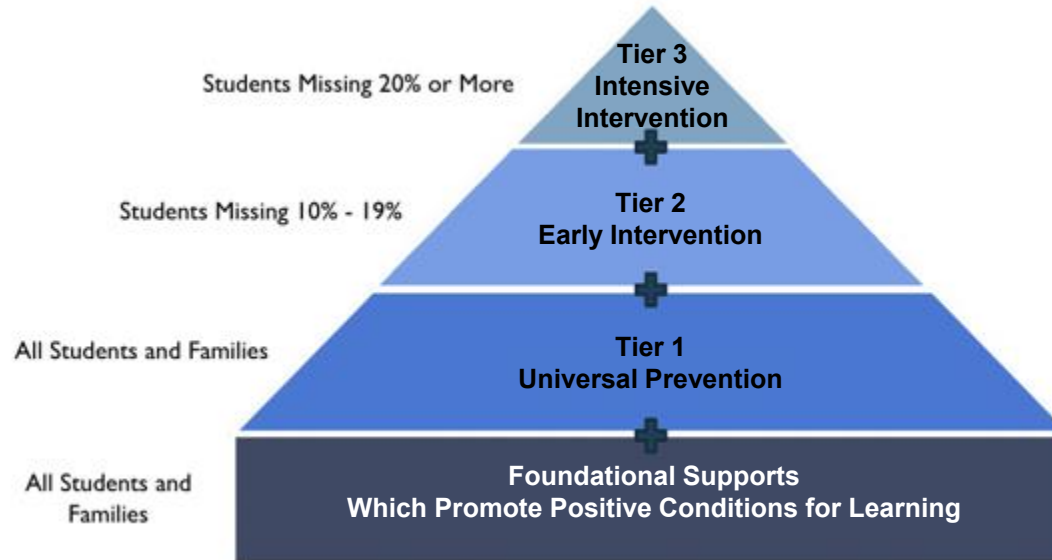
High levels of absence reflect an erosion in positive conditions for learning





We Must Redouble Our Investments in a Multitiered System-of-Supports Approach

Working across silos is essential!



<https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/>

Interventions to Address Underlying Challenges

Barriers	Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic and acute illness • Family responsibilities or home situation • Trauma • Poor transportation • Housing and food insecurity • Inequitable access to needed services • System involvement • Lack of predictable schedules for learning • Lack of access to tech • Community violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggling academically and/or behaviorally • Unwelcoming school climate • Social and peer challenges • Anxiety • Biased disciplinary and suspension practices • Undiagnosed disability and/or lack of disability accommodations • Caregivers had negative educational experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of challenging, culturally responsive instruction • Bored • No meaningful relationships with the adults in the school (especially given staff shortages) • Lack of enrichment opportunities • Lack of academic and behavioral support • Failure to earn credits • Student needs to work; earning money conflicts with being in high school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused • Missing 2 days per month does not affect learning • School loses track and underestimates total absences • Assume students must stay home for any symptom of illness • Attendance only matters in the older grades • Suspensions do not count as an absence

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/root-causes/>



We Must Tap Into the Expertise of Students and Families

- ❖ Students have **untapped** expertise and knowledge that can bring renewed relevance and authenticity.
- ❖ Addressing the challenges students experience requires considering their **specific** realities.
- ❖ Understanding **when** many students and families experience similar challenges allows for scalable solutions.
- ❖ Ensure that the engagement strategies you create are **inclusive** of students' and families' cultural norms.



Expanded Learning and Opportunities to Reignite Joy in School Communities

- After-school clubs, sports, and other enrichment activities
- Art shows, theatrical and musical performances
- Capstone presentations
- Community service
- Student–staff sports competitions
- Summer resource fair with community partners
- Summer bridge programs
- Family BBQs as part of orientation/registration



Resources to support attendance

- Take an intradistrict approach
 - Allows for cross-department problem-solving
 - Draws on a broader array of resources
- Look beyond ESSER funding for long term solutions
 - Title I: Support for high poverty schools and students
 - Title II: Funding for Teacher Training
 - Title IVa: Safe and healthy school grants for data and school climate
 - Title IVe: Family engagement grants
 - Title IVf: Community Schools grants
 - The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Stronger Connections Grant Program
 - Medicaid billing to pay for school clinics and staffing
 - IDEA and McKinney-Vento money

Welcome!



Nancy Hauth
Early Learning Hub Coordinator,
Department of Early Learning
and Care, State of Oregon



Lee Martinez
Principal, A. L. Conner
Elementary School, Kings
Canyon Unified School District



Melissa Peña
Director of Student Support
Services, Green Dot Public
Schools - California

We Are Proud to Serve

10,000 students across 18 schools

11 High Schools, 6 Middle Schools, 1 Span School (6–12)

93%



of our scholars qualify for free/reduced lunch

17%



of our scholars are Emergent Bilinguals

15%



of our scholars have a disability

5%



of our scholars experience homelessness and/or are in foster care

13%



of our scholars are African American/Black

Green Dot
Public

schools



Chronic Absenteeism Rates Pre- and Post-Pandemic (All Students)

Based On Our
Data, We Are
Aiming For A

5
percentage
point

Reduction
This School
Year

Chronic Absenteeism Rates Pre and Post Pandemic (ALL Students)



Student Attendance Survey



Top 2 reasons why all students attend school:

- Education
- Friendships

Top factors that would bring students to school more often:

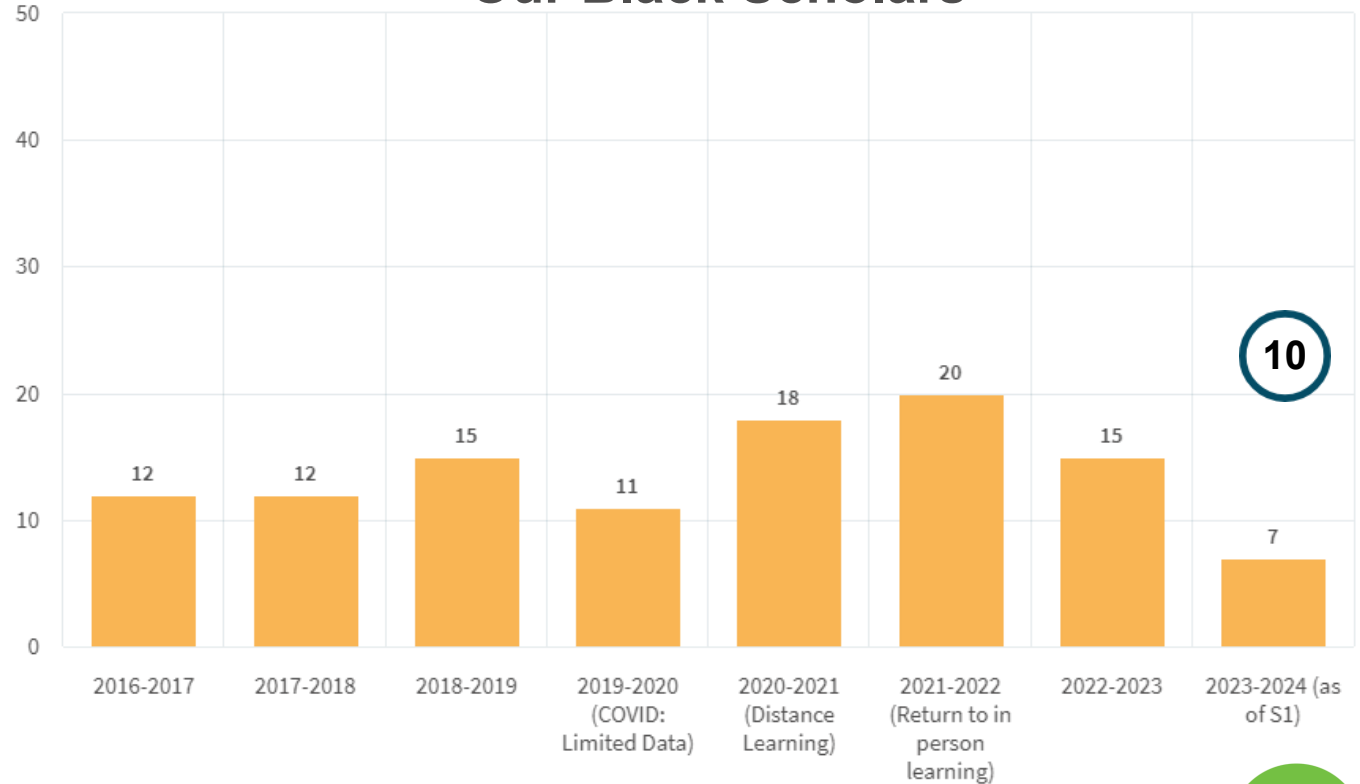
- Teach Me Stuff I Want to Learn
- Make School a More Friendly and Fun Place

*This data was derived from two student attendance surveys (2019 and 2022)

**This data was supported in our interviews of 30+ Black students across 5 schools (2023).

Historic Equity Gap in Chronic Absenteeism Rates for Our Black Scholars

Our Efforts Are Helping to Close the Gap Over Time For Our Black Scholars



● SIZE of Equity Gap for Black Scholars

Student Attendance Survey



Top 2 reasons why all students miss school:

- **Appointments (medical, court, etc.)**
(e.g., students miss an entire day of school for a dental appointment)
- **Short-term illness (flu, cold, COVID, etc.)**

*This data was derived from two student attendance surveys (2019 and 2022)

**This data was supported in our interviews of 30+ Black students across 5 schools (2023).



A. L. Conner School

Kings Canyon Unified School District

Orange Cove, California is an agricultural community located along the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada. Located within a 4 hour-drive of the San Francisco Bay and Los Angeles areas. Approximately 10,000 people live in Orange Cove.

- 320 students enrolled (Transitional Kindergarten thru 5th grade)
- 99.69% unduplicated rate (qualify for free/reduced lunch, foster care, or homeless)
- 46% Emerging Bilinguals
- 11.5% qualify for Special Education services (Special Day Class, Individualized Education Plan, Speech, or 504)



A. L. Conner School

Kings Canyon Unified School District

Assets

- Strong and positive district and school culture focused on quality of teaching and learning
- District and school personnel resources dedicated to decreasing Chronic Absenteeism

Culture

- Shared responsibility at the district and school levels – Examples like Student Family Clinician and KCUSD Attendance Liaison
- Tiered approach
- Removing obstacles, relationships, expectations, shared responsibility, 3 tenets of KCUSD (Support, Support, Support, Weave-Don't Stack, and Take It To The Next Level)

Challenges

- How parents determine when it's medically appropriate to keep their children home due to illness
- Social and emotional needs of students
- Awareness of the impact of absences on students' learning time



A. L. Conner School

Strategies and Interventions

Interventions

- Winter Session
- Incoming Kinder night for new families
- Summer Learning – 16 days of intervention and enrichment
- Kinder Jumpstart – August for 2 weeks



ADA Over Time

K-12	Before COVID	21-22	22-23	Decrease from 21-22	Decrease From Pre- COVID Average	Day 117 2022-2023 March 3, 2023	Day 117 2023-2024 March 1, 2024	Change from 2022 to 2023
A. L. Conner	96.00%	95.30%	94.10%	-1.20%	-1.90%	95.20%	96.60%	1.40%

Current ADA by Grade Level

Name	TK	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
A. L. Conner Elementary	94.9%	95.9%	97.0%	97.3%	97.7%	96.5%	96.4%

- Parent Survey results
 - Overwhelmingly positive feedback about quality of staff and communication
- Parent engagement opportunities
 - At least 10 a year with average of 20 families attending
- Basic Phonics Skills Test
 - 79% of Kindergarten students have already mastered end-of-the-year proficiency levels



Kings Canyon Chronic Absence Rates: A Bright Spot

	2018–2019	2022–2023
California Statewide	15.6%	36.3%
Kings Canyon Unified	9.6%	26.7%
A. L. Conner	7.9%	10.5%

Targeted Outreach Calls

Proactive personalized phone calls to chronically absent students ahead of the first day back from school breaks (summer, winter, spring) to mitigate absences the first week of school and first days back from break.

Outreach is focused primarily on our Black students.



**This year, 86% of students
contacted attended
the first day of school.**

Resources





Strategies for Attendance

Share in the chat:

What summer strategies are you using in your community to re-engage your students and families?

Jump Start Kindergarten: A Summer Bridge Program

Equity-Based Components

- Children flourish and learn best in the context of **strong and supportive relationships**.
- Children succeed when families, **schools, and communities work together** during the transitioning year.
- Families thrive when they have access to **culturally affirming and inclusive environments**.

Minimum requirements

- Half-day classroom experience for 2 weeks
- 10 hours of culturally responsive family engagement
- Partnerships with community-based organizations
- Evidence-based practices: [Jump Start Kindergarten Toolkit](#)
- Priority enrollment for families historically underserved in education systems

Intentional Family Engagement Activities

Culturally Affirming

- *Charla entre padres* meeting for Spanish-speaking families with children experiencing disabilities
- Culturally specific partner organizations facilitate meetings
- Care Coordinator model

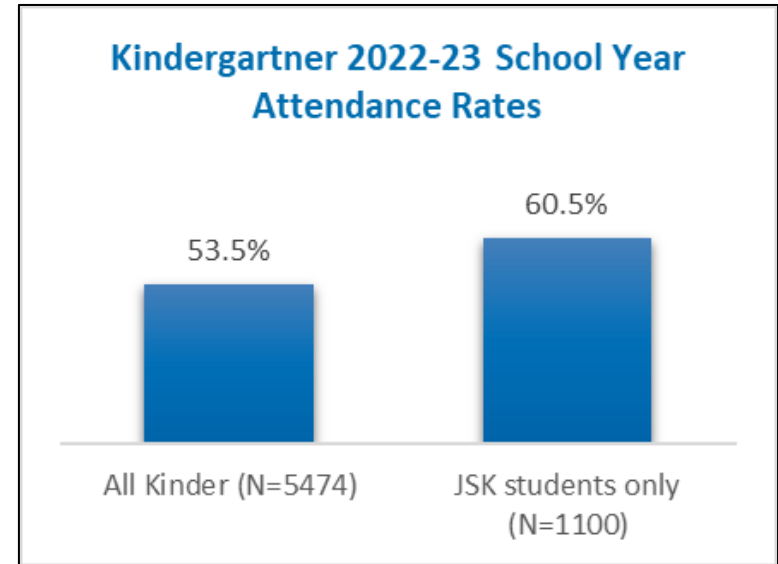
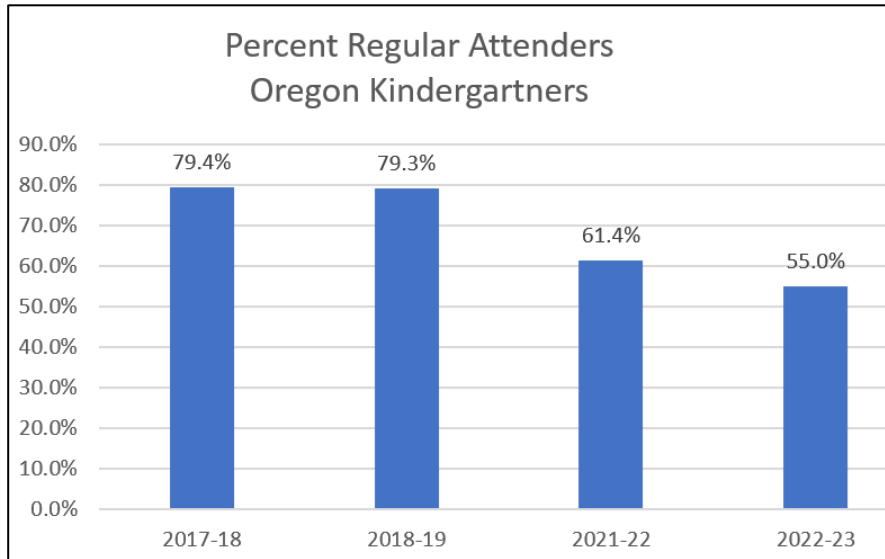
Relationship Building

- Home visits – “hope and dream” model
- Caregiver activities mirror classroom activities
- CAFÉ style family events

Planning and Outreach Collaborations

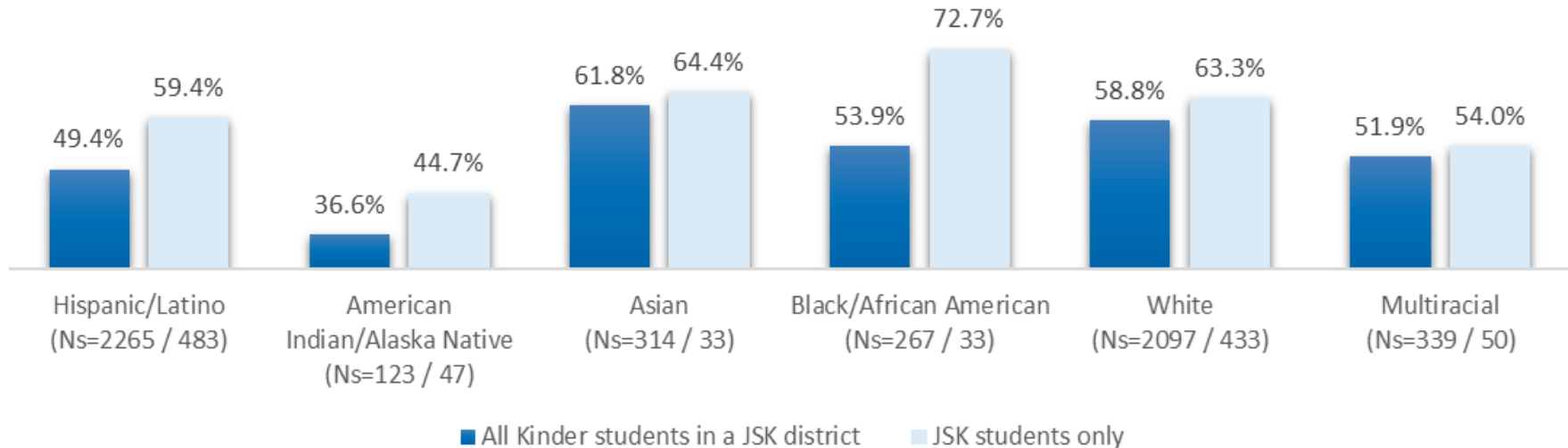
- Regional Meetings with K–12 and early learning partners

Regular Attendance Rates – Summer 2022

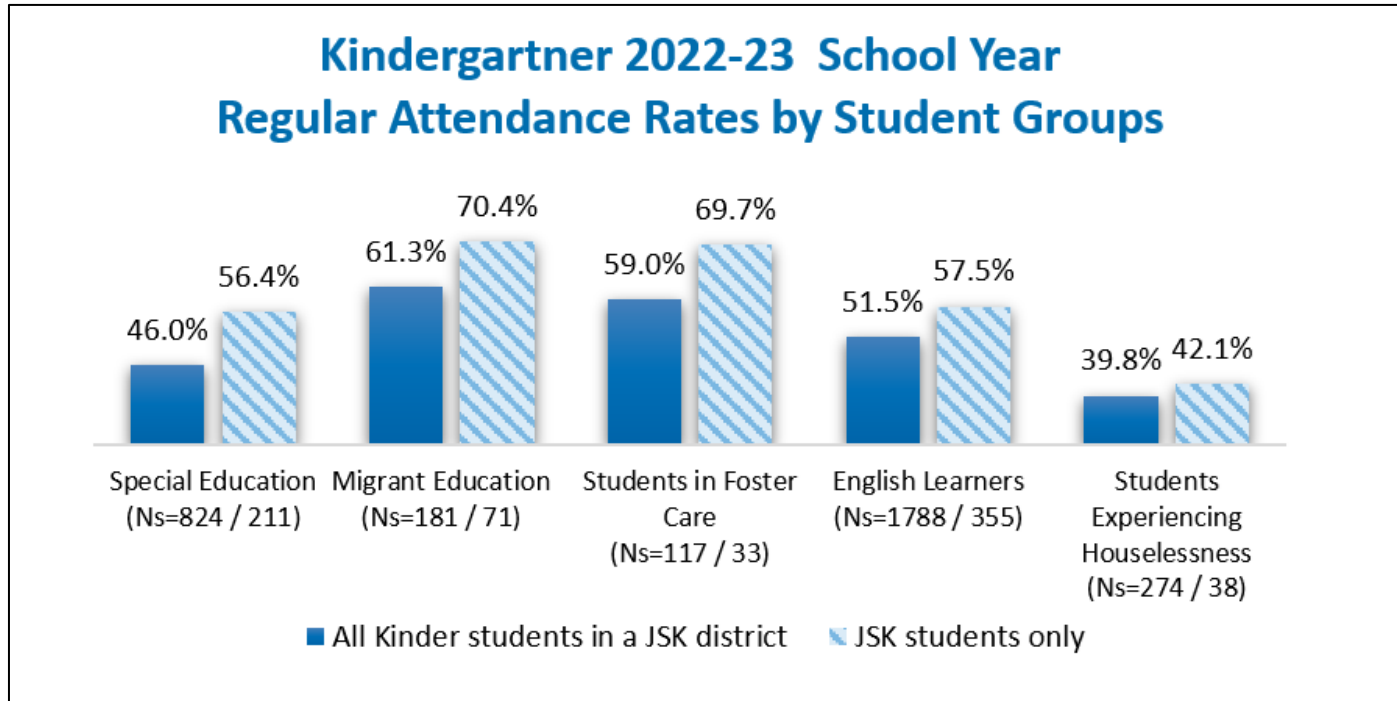


Regular Attendance Rates – Race/Ethnicity

Kindergartner 2022-23 School Year Attendance Rates by Race / Ethnicity



Regular Attendance Rates – Student Groups



Statewide Kindergarten Registration Promotion

When families register for school in the spring, they have more opportunities to:

- share information about their child's strengths, interests, and needs;
- participate in summer kindergarten programs;
- sign up for school meals, transportation, and before- and after-school programs; and
- meet other families during school events and start the year off right!

Oregon Department of Education, Department of Early Learning and Care, and Oregon Department of Human Services

¿Su hijo(a) cumplirá 5 años el 1 de septiembre o antes?



¡INSCRIBA A SU HIJO(A) EN EL KÍNDER HOY!





Questions?

Reflections?

Please type your questions
and reflections in the chat.



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Thank you!

Please complete our [evaluation form](#).



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