

The logo for engageok, featuring the word "engageok" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font. The "o" is yellow, and the "k" is purple. Below the "o" and "k" is a stylized graphic of a yellow and purple shape, resembling a speech bubble or a stylized letter "o".

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ADMINISTRATORS
CONFERENCE

Decreasing Chronic Absenteeism: Using a Multi-Tiered Systems Approach

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Cleveland, OH Example Video



Share Your Thoughts

1. What resonated with you in the video?
2. Did the video spark any thoughts for potential community partnerships for your school?

What is Chronic Absenteeism?

What is Chronic Absenteeism?

Chronic absence is missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at risk. Attendance Works recommends defining it as **missing 10% or more of school for any reason.**

Excused
Absences



Unexcused
Absences



Suspension



Chronic
Absence

Barriers

When you think about your chronically absent students, what barriers do you see?

What can we do about Chronic Absenteeism?

Chronic Absenteeism Self-Assessment Tool for Districts

1. Actionable Data
2. Positive Engagement
3. Capacity Building
4. Shared Accountability
5. Strategic Partnerships

ACTIONABLE DATA	Strength	OK for Now	Could Be Better	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	How Do You Know?
<p>1. At least every two weeks (ideally in real time), attendance data reports (with satisfactory, at risk, moderate and severe chronic absence) are produced and reviewed by a cross-functional district team that also ensures schools accurately enter daily attendance into the district student information system.</p>						
<p>2. At least every two weeks (ideally in real time), the district office distributes attendance data to individual schools and their attendance teams categorized by satisfactory (absent < 5%), at-risk (absent 5-9.99%), moderate (absent 10-19.99%), and severe chronic absence (absent 20% or more).</p>						
<p>3. The district office ensures that students and parents/caregivers have access to attendance data that is easy to understand and alerts them when a student is academically at risk due to poor attendance.</p>						
<p>4. The district office reports aggregate and disaggregated attendance and chronic absence data by school, grade level, and ESSA sub-groups to the School Board at least once a year.</p>						
<p>5. The District creates chronic absence reports that are broken down by grades, schools, teacher; and by student sub-groups IEP, 504 plans, Free and Reduced Price Lunch, Ethnicity, ELL, Homelessness, foster care, and neighborhood.</p>						

POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT	Strength	OK for Now	Could Be Better	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	How Do You Know?
1. District leaders consistently and clearly promote awareness among district staff, parents, key stakeholders and the general public about chronic absence, why it matters, and how it can be addressed through a comprehensive approach via flyers, handbooks, back-to-school letters, and other communications.						
2. The district office ensures that schools offer trainings and workshops throughout the year in families' home languages to help them understand the importance of attendance and to assist them with identifying attendance barriers they face.						
3. The district office has explicit attendance protocols for outreach to families when students begin to miss too much school. Implementation of protocols is routinely tracked and monitored.						
4. The district office publicly recognizes schools and community partners that demonstrate best practice strategies and achieve measurable reductions in chronic absences, including those that demonstrate how to improve attendance of different vulnerable student populations.						
5. The district office ensures that school staff receive professional development and resources to ensure sensitivity to cultural differences and challenges that vulnerable students and their families may experience when seeking to reduce absenteeism.						

CAPACITY BUILDING	Strength	OK for Now	Could Be Better	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	How Do You Know?
1. The district office has a widely disseminated, comprehensive attendance policy and practice manual that clearly lays out why attendance matters, describes what schools can do to build a positive culture of attendance and outlines strategies for reducing chronic absence that align with the needs of their different student populations.						
2. A cross-functional district level team is in place to implement a systemic, tiered approach to improving attendance that aligns with existing initiatives.						
3. The district office builds site level capacity to take a multi-tiered and systemic approach to reducing chronic absenteeism including equipping schools to have functioning attendance teams by providing guidance, resources, and materials to support implementation tailored to the realities of each school and their students and families.						
4. The district office ensures that district-level attendance staff understand the national, state and local laws, policies and regulations related to attendance.						
5. The district office provides professional development to ensure school staff are equipped to tailor attendance improvement strategies with special attention to students with disabilities, and other vulnerable populations.						

SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY	Strength	OK for Now	Could Be Better	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	How Do You Know?
1. The Superintendent and School Board set and publicize district-wide goals for attendance including chronic absence and report on progress.						
2. The district office ensures that school leaders are held accountable for having a data-driven plan to address chronic absence, for setting measurable targets for improvement, for identifying and removing structural attendance barriers, and for outlining a process for monitoring and recognizing progress.						
3. The district office has contracts or MOUs with community organizations that outline how they will share data and provide support to schools and the district in improving school attendance and how they will assess the effectiveness of their efforts.						
4. The district office prioritizes distribution of resources to help schools and student sub-groups with high rates of chronic absence (e.g. physical and behavioral health services, transportation, early childhood education, and after-school programs and activities, and economic supports to families.)						
5. The district office ensures school leaders use their data to identify which students are most likely to miss school and place attendance improvement strategies tailored to address the needs of vulnerable populations.						

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS	Strength	OK for Now	Could Be Better	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	How Do You Know?
1. The Superintendent and School Board ensure that cross-sector partnerships are established by creating opportunities for community partners to review data on chronic absence, learn about the district attendance efforts, and identify opportunities to address attendance barriers.						
2. The district office creates materials, resources and opportunities to help public agencies, non-profit organizations and civic groups work together with schools and districts to promote Tier 1 positive messaging and engagement about the importance of daily attendance for academic supports and the availability of supports to help families.						
3. The district office facilitates community and agency partners working with districts to implement Tier 2 early intervention that use personalized outreach to motivate attendance, identify barriers to attendance, and connects students and families to needed supports and resources.						
4. The district office facilitates community and agency partners working with districts to implement Tier 3 intensive intervention that prioritizes and coordinates provision of case management and service delivery to students who are severely chronically absent. Resources are tailored to address the strengths and needs of vulnerable student populations.						
5. The district office identifies and recruits partners to help improve attendance. These partners have the skills and capacity to address the needs of students with disabilities and other vulnerable populations.						

Chronic Absenteeism Self-Assessment Tool for Districts

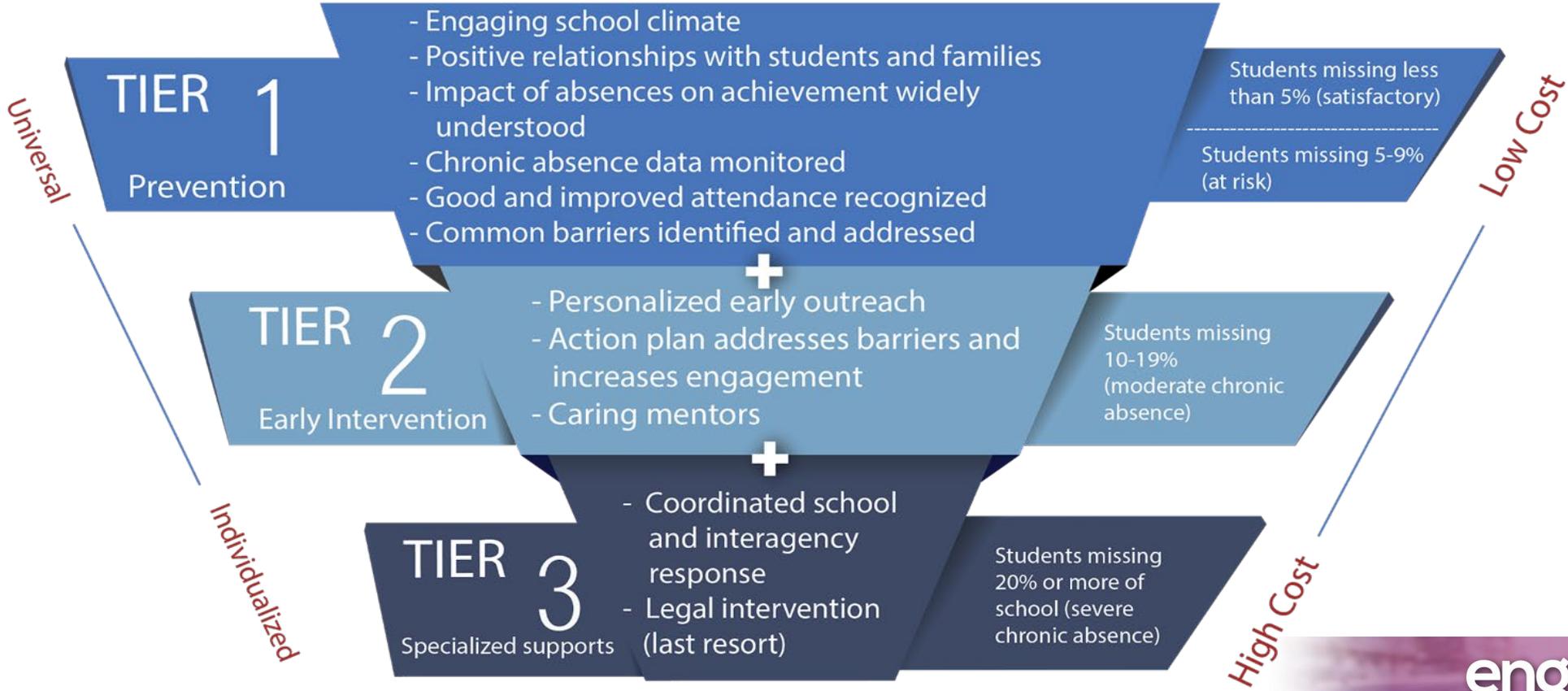
Develop a cross-functional district office team to annually participate in the following steps:

1. Complete the assessment - complete individually prior to meeting
2. Debrief and set goals - tally individual results onto a single assessment. Determine strengths, gaps and difference of opinion. ID practices to continue and priority areas for improvement
3. Make a plan - assign responsibilities and establish a timeline for completion
4. Communicate the results - to district office staff, schools and community partners to engage them in implementing plan

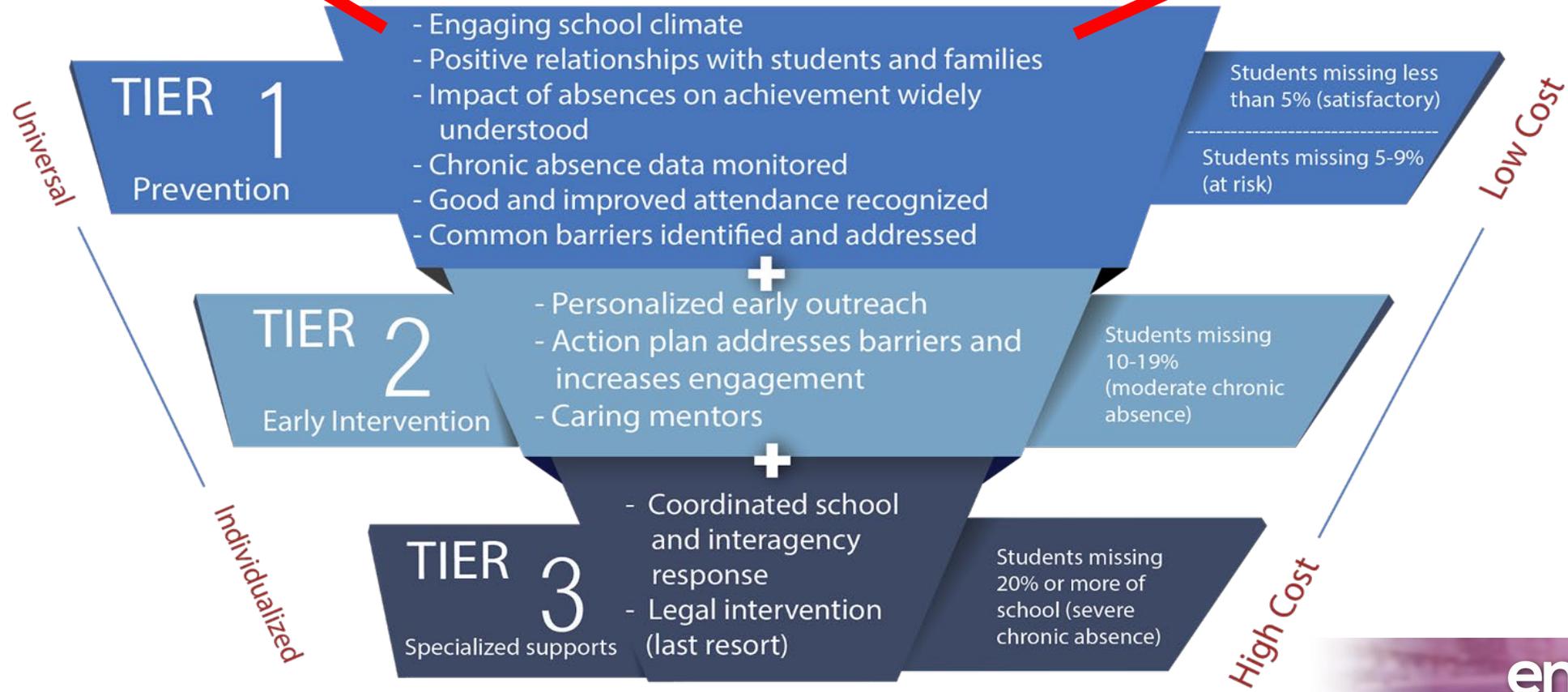
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support



Use a Multi-Tiered Systems Approach



Use a Multi-Tiered Systems Approach



Culture = shared set of beliefs, values and assumptions

- Basic assumptions (the unspoken, assumed group values) really drive an organization (Schein (1992), p . 16-27)
- Non-material organizational forces, “culture, values, vision, ethics” all interact in intangible and unseen spaces within a work environment (Wheatley (1999), p. 54)
- Messages (“mental maps”*) in these spaces exert control and create power and influence
- Any attempt to work within an organization without an analysis and understanding of these unseen motivators and controllers will fail or succeed only as a matter of chance

*Budge, K., and Parrett, W. (2018). Disrupting poverty: Five powerful classroom practices. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

School Culture

“The bottom line for leaders is that if they do not become conscious of the cultures in which they are embedded, those cultures will manage them.”

Schein, E. (2004). p. 23.

Research is clear that **schools and districts can impact** students' absenteeism rates.

<http://www.attendanceworks.org/research/evidence-based-solutions/>

RESOURCES

[Attendance Works](#)

[Oklahoma State Department of Education](#)