

Tackling Absenteeism Through Student Engagement Webinar

Activities Worksheet

Use this worksheet to take notes during your breakout group activities. You will see that other groups are populating this document at the same time. Following the webinar, we will edit and share the finished document with all webinar participants.

Breakout Group Activity #1:

What systems do you have in place to prevent/address chronic absenteeism?

- Policies (but not enforced)
- Policy
- Family Engagement Specialists to support home-school relationships
- [School counselor attendance intervention checklist](#)
- Letter templates sent out on certain days missed - every 5, 10, 15, and 20 days missed.
- Phone calls home each day if we don't hear from families. Incentive plans for students who are struggling to come to school.
- Alternative plans (drop off times, transportation barriers, schedule changes).
- Attendance council who met around attendance procedures for county wide expectations on missed time. More restorative in nature than punitive.
- School meetings with student team, parent/guardian(s), student, and other supportive adults to make a plan for continued attending.
- If or when it gets to the point truancy affidavits are submitted. Has not been very helpful.
- CSPs
- Youth Services- BARJ (balanced and restorative justice)
- Cares Meeting (part of MTSS structure) - meet once or twice a month to discuss kids

What practices?

- Link families to family engagement specialists/school social worker to improving relationships/connections
- Creation of attendance plan documenting strategies between 5-10 days absent
 - Can include referral to outside agencies and access to more intensive interventions and plans
- Think out of box when tracking and evaluating attendance
- Student jobs - take attendance, water plants, etc.

What data do you use?

- IEP services
- CSP
- Attendance Data
- Panorama data
- Educlimber Data pulled from PowerSchool
- Climate surveys (student/teacher)
- School MTSS Dashboard

Breakout Group Activity #2:

As a group, discuss:

Where is your school on the continuum (1-5) from “Problem-Focused” to “Partnership-Focused” with families/caregivers? (1= fully problem-focused; 5 = fully partnership-focused)

- We feel like we are right in the middle especially with the addition to family engagement specialists and home-school liaisons.
- Our group feels that we try really hard to be partnership-focused but then it gets to a point where the need for meetings and communication becomes problem-focused. Overall we want to be partners but at times our families or guardians don't always perceive it that way.

Discuss strategies you use or will consider to be more partnership-focused around preventing and addressing absenteeism

- Formed team to tackle absenteeism
- Exploring how to use language and relationship while still staying true to process - reaching out with the letter, being intentional with reason for meeting, leveraging relationship.
- Maintaining reaching out. Keep communication open to all stakeholders. Continue reach out to caregivers and those students who are truant.
- School-based team who focuses on engagement and attendance. Try to reflect on school-based practices and change/add where we find gaps.
- Meeting students and families where they are - fit in holistic model - not "your kid has been absent 15 days" but "how can we support you and your family" - parent's experience sometimes becomes the child's experience, approach is how do we break that and support the families holistically

Breakout Group Activity #3:

Brainstorm additional solutions to the root cause(s) of absenteeism (listed below):

Sense of safety:

Meeting with safety teams to address safety concerns

Use of FIS/Climate survey to gain sense of size of problem

Proper training in use of Restorative Practices to ensure they are done as intended and with fidelity

Belonging:

[Relationship mapping by Making Caring Common](#)

Purpose/motivation:

More connection between school and students goals - making school relevant

Mental Health:

Specific interventions like the Resiliency Education Program (REP). Materials here: [REP Home – SMHC](#)

Home/school coordination

Peer influence:

Family:

Home visits by administrators; home/school coordination by MH clinicians

Health/medical: