

**Starting Strong:
Attendance Action Planning Worksheet to Address Chronic Absence**

This tool is designed to help your school identify and prioritize strategic actions that will decrease chronic absenteeism.

A. Mentoring Target Students

1. Identify your target students

Which students will you target from your list of students with a history of chronic absence? Will you focus on certain key grades or groups based on what your data tells you and where you feel you can make the most impact?

2. Identify your Success Mentors

Who will serve as your Success Mentors? Will you use internal school staff or might there be a partner organization that could provide the mentors? Do you have an existing mentoring program that can include a focus on attendance?

What are your expectations for your success mentors?

3. Select and assign target students to your Success Mentors so they are ready to go when the school year starts

How will you match target students to success mentors (If you are using school staff, you should match staff with students they would normally see throughout the course of their day)? How many students will you match with each mentor?

4. Select your Attendance Coordinator

Who is the best fit for this role at your school? This person will be responsible for supporting the Success Mentors, working with the Principal to identify members of the attendance team, creating agendas, and ensuring the data is compiled each week for attendance team meetings.

5. Plan to introduce your school wide attendance policy and your team of Success Mentors to your school staff, students, and families

When will this introduction take place? How will you create buy-in among school staff for this program?

B. Weekly Attendance Team Meetings

1. Select the day/time for your weekly attendance team meeting.

The attendance team meeting should take place at a consistent day and time each week.

2. Identify the members of your attendance team who will attend weekly meetings.

Who are the key partners from your school who should be included on your attendance team? Remember to include key community partners and consider the skills you will need on your team to be effective at analyzing data and identifying interventions.

C. Family Engagement

1. Identify how you will build relationships with parents as partners in this work.

How will you share information with families about the benefits of regular attendance?

What is one way you can include parents in celebrating gains in student engagement and attendance?

D. School-Wide/Universal Strategies

1. Identify school-wide strategies that will create a culture that promotes student engagement and removes barriers to attendance to help every student attend and learn in school every day.

How will you create a culture in which all students are engaged and supported to prevent absences? What types of incentives/awards could you offer to students and their families to celebrate both perfect and improved attendance?

E. Strategic Partnerships

1. Identify resources in your community (CBOs, ACS Community Partnership Programs, etc.) with whom you can collaborate to help you decrease chronic absenteeism?

Where are the opportunities for strategic partnerships?

If you have an after-school program or other programs/services at your school run by partner organizations, how can you engage them in helping remove barriers to attendance? (e.g., Could they target chronically absent students to join their programs? Could they help you speak with families about the benefits of regular attendance?)

**Adapted from the Children's Aid Society National Center for Community Schools*