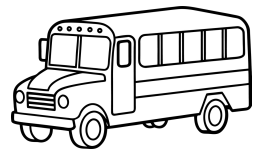




Developing a Coordinated Response to Chronic Absenteeism School Checklist



Purpose: Assess and reflect upon school-wide response. This framework emphasizes a supportive, tiered response to chronic absenteeism and the promotion of regular school attendance.

"The goal is to turn data into information, and information into insight."
- Carly Fiorina

Use Data to Drive Action

- ☐ Review attendance data regularly. Consider disaggregating data by grade-level or student group to draw out additional insights.
- ☐ Identify which students are at risk of being chronically absent (missing $\geq 10\%$ of school days).
- ☐ Analyze trends and patterns, including links to academic outcomes.
- ☐ Use data to inform timely, responsive supports.

Build Attendance Awareness

- ☐ Communicate clearly and consistently that regular school attendance matters.
- ☐ Include relevant data in school communications with families/caregivers that is meaningful as well as accessible.
- ☐ Include data in school communications with students in developmentally appropriate ways.
- ☐ Develop, implement and memorialize ongoing and informed communication strategies.

Strengthen Tier 1

- ☐ Promote a positive school climate and sense of belonging.
- ☐ Establish consistent, school-wide attendance messaging.
- ☐ Recognize and celebrate improved attendance, not just perfect attendance.
- ☐ Train staff on the impact of attendance on learning.
- ☐ Use tools like [NJ-SCI](#) to assess and strengthen school climate.

Identify and Address Barriers

- ☐ Engage students and families/caregivers to understand root causes.
- ☐ Examine systemic barriers (transportation, health, scheduling, climate).
- ☐ Identify gaps in supports across tiers.
- ☐ Ensure school responses are supportive, not punitive.

Refine Tiered System of Supports

For students missing 5–10% of school:

- ☐ Monitor attendance closely.
- ☐ Conduct early outreach (e.g., after 2 consecutive absences).
- ☐ Assign staff for check-ins and relationship-building.
- ☐ Provide targeted supports (mentoring, tutoring, check-in/check-out).

For students who are chronically absent:

- ☐ Develop individualized attendance plans.
- ☐ Engage family/caregivers in problem-solving.
- ☐ Coordinate with community-based supports (mental health, housing, transportation).
- ☐ Use multidisciplinary teams where appropriate.

Reflect, Adjust, and Sustain. Where are gaps persisting?
Which strategies are working and can be explained?

Document what is working.



- Recognize and celebrate progress with students and families/caregivers.
- Review and refine policies to ensure a proactive and student-first approach.
- Maintain focus on continuous improvement.

Connect the Dots



- At regular intervals, review effectiveness of strategies.
- Ask: Are we still seeing gaps despite universal and targeted efforts?
- Coordination: Can we duplicate and streamline efforts that are working?
- Consider including external partners as they may have resources that will help build capacity on the district and school level.

Reflect, Adjust and Celebrate



- How can we improve?
- Do we need to expand?
- How will the district celebrate families/caregivers as they meet their goals for improving attendance?

Resources



- [Student Attendance](#)
- [Conditions for Learning](#)
- [Attendance Works](#)