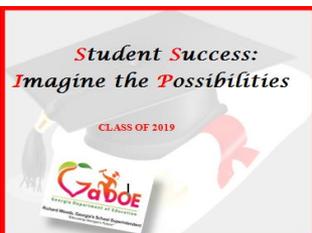


# A Closer Look at Strategies for Promoting School Attendance

Renee Mixon, Claire Smith,  
Dr. Deshonda Stringer

October 25, 2016





Richard Woods,  
Georgia's School Superintendent  
*"Educating Georgia's Future"*  
[gaDOE.org](http://gaDOE.org)

# Overview

- Define chronic absenteeism
- Develop a multi-pronged approach to addressing chronic absenteeism
- Access tools, resources, and strategies to address chronic absenteeism

Georgia Department of Education

# Table Talk

- Was attendance identified as a barrier during your district's comprehensive data analysis?
- If yes, did you include action steps to address this barrier in your SSIP action plan?
- If no, is it possible that attendance was an underlying cause of another barrier that you addressed in your SSIP action plan?





Richard Woods,  
Georgia's School Superintendent  
*"Educating Georgia's Future"*  
[ga.gov](http://ga.gov)  
[gaedoe.org](http://gaedoe.org)

# What is Chronic Absenteeism?

- At your tables, come to a consensus on a definition.

Georgia Department of Education

# Chronic Absenteeism

- “Missing at least 10% of school days in a year for any reason, excused or unexcused...”

US Department of Education

- How does this definition compare to the criteria used to calculate your district's CCRPI score?



Richard Woods,  
Georgia's School Superintendent  
"Educating Georgia's Future"  
[ga DOE.org](http://ga DOE.org)

# Consequences of Chronic Absenteeism

- An abundance of studies link chronic absence to academic achievement.
- Chronic absenteeism may prevent children from reaching early learning milestones.
- Irregular attendance can be a better predictor of whether students will drop out before graduation than test scores.
- Frequent absences from school can shape adulthood.

Chronic Absenteeism in the Nation's Schools, (2016)

# *Understanding the Factors Contributing to Chronic Absence in Your School*



Richard Woods,  
Georgia's School Superintendent  
"Educating Georgia's Future"  
[gadoe.org](http://gadoe.org)



## Understanding the Factors Contributing to Chronic Absence in Your School (Revised – December 2010)

Once you have been able to collect data on the prevalence of chronic absence for your school (and ideally district-wide), it is important to unpack—and understand—the factors that lead children to miss school for extended periods of time. These factors can vary across schools, communities and groups of families. Developing a more informed picture of the story behind the statistics on prevalence is a critical step in developing effective interventions.

The strategies described below will help you to identify what is occurring in your school and community. The attached matrix also offers a framework for using these activities to answer key questions about factors that contribute to chronic absence, as well as what assets might be engaged to improve school attendance.

### 1. **Examine data on chronic absence.**

Review and reflect upon your school and district data on chronic absence. Some issues to discuss include:

<http://www.attendanceworks.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/ID-Cont-Factors-DEC-2010-.pdf>

# District Data Toolkit Companion Document



Richard Woods,  
Georgia's School Superintendent  
*"Educating Georgia's Future"*  
[gaDOE.org](http://gaDOE.org)

## In your comprehensive data analysis, have you addressed:

- What is the district's attendance data: 5 or fewer days; 6 to 15 days; more than 15 days?
- How discrepant are the attendance data across subgroups? If so, what are possible reasons for this discrepancy?
- Is there higher absenteeism for a particular content area? If so, is there a correlation between the content area and performance/retention?
- How do tardies impact performance in content classes?
- What is the correlation between teacher attendance and student attendance?
- What policies and processes impact attendance? Are those policies and processes consistent across all schools?
- What kinds of perception data could provide root causes for these trends?

# Types of Data



Richard Woods,  
Georgia's School Superintendent  
"Educating Georgia's Future"  
[ga DOE.org](http://ga DOE.org)

- **Demographic Data**: How well do we know our customers?  
Some examples are enrollment data, SES Data, Graduation Data, Dropout Data.
- **Student Learning Data**: How well are students demonstrating what they know?  
Some examples are Milestones Data, Benchmark Data, EOG/EOC Data.
- **Perception Data**: Perceptions are real to those that have them.  
Some examples are Parent Surveys, School Climate Data.
- **Process Data**: The way we go about doing business.  
Some examples are instructional strategies, tiered supports for teachers and students.

# Universal vs. Targeted

- **Universal** – applied to all schools and/or students
- **Targeted** – applied to selected schools and/or students

# Develop a Multi-Pronged Approach for District and School



Richard Woods,  
Georgia's School Superintendent  
"Educating Georgia's Future"  
[gaode.org](http://gaode.org)

- District Actions/Strategies
- School Actions/Strategies
- Family & Community Actions/Strategies
- Student Actions/Strategies

# Effective Strategies for Districts and Schools



Richard Woods,  
Georgia's School Superintendent  
"Educating Georgia's Future"  
[gaode.org](http://gaode.org)

- **Districts**

- Assess effectiveness of local policies and practices.
- Identify exemplary schools as well as those needing extra support.

- **Schools**

- Reinforce attendance strategies in small group and individual programs such as mentoring and tutoring
- Use case management and coaching.
- Provide attendance data monitoring.
- School/family/ community partnerships.
- Develop and maintain a comprehensive tiered approach to improving attendance.

Preventing Missed Opportunity, 2016

# Effective Strategies for Families, Communities, and Students

- **Families & Communities**

- Involve parents for students with poor attendance.
- Cultivate school/family/ community partnerships.

- **Students**

- Provide academic support.
- Implement incentive programs.
- Offer student engagement programs.
- Help students overcome attendance barriers.
- Encourage positive peer support.



**COOPERATION**

# Self-Assessment



Richard Woods,  
Georgia's School Superintendent  
"Educating Georgia's Future"  
[ga DOE.org](http://ga DOE.org)



## School Attendance Practices: *Self-Assessment Tool*

Strength	OK for now	Could be better	Urgent gap	Don't know	How do you know?
Attendance is accurately taken and entered daily into the district data system in all classrooms.					
Our school has a clear and widely understood attendance policy.					
A team with the administrator reviews attendance data on a regular basis to identify chronically absent students and monitor attendance patterns by grade, student and sub-groups and classroom.					
Our school offers rich and engaging learning activities, keeping students from not wanting to miss school.					
Our school recognizes and appreciates good and improved attendance.					



Richard Woods,  
Georgia's School Superintendent  
"Educating Georgia's Future"  
[ga DOE.org](http://ga DOE.org)

# Universal Attendance Supports

- **Tier I** supports are often sufficient to maintain the attendance of students missing less than 5 percent of school and improve attendance for students missing 5 to 10 percent.
- Examples
  - School-wide culture of good attendance.
  - Warm, engaging school climate where students feel welcomed and noticed.
  - Helping families recognize that missing just two days a month can cause a student to fall off track academically.

Preventing Missed Opportunity, 2016



Richard Woods,  
Georgia's School Superintendent  
*"Educating Georgia's Future"*  
[gaDOE.org](http://gaDOE.org)

# Universal Strategies

- <http://www.attendanceworks.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/incentives.pdf>
- <http://www.attendanceworks.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/BreakingBarrierstoattendance.pdf>

Georgia Department of Education

# Targeted Attendance Supports



Richard Woods,  
Georgia's School Superintendent  
"Educating Georgia's Future"  
[gaode.org](http://gaode.org)

- **Tier II** supports are early interventions designed to help moderately chronically absent students.
- Examples
  - Provide personalized early outreach.
  - Develop tailored action plans.
  - Connect to a caring adult or mentor.
  - Increase student engagement including afterschool programming.

Preventing Missed Opportunity, 2016

# Targeted Attendance Supports



Richard Woods,  
Georgia's School Superintendent  
"Educating Georgia's Future"  
[ga DOE.org](http://ga DOE.org)

- **Tier III** supports involve strategies with intensive supports offered to chronically absent students who face the greatest challenges to getting to school.
- Examples:
  - Provide intensive case management.
  - Develop a coordinated, cross-agency approach.
  - Interventions depend upon students' personal circumstances and grade level.

Preventing Missed Opportunity, 2016



# Reflective Questions



# Resources

- Attendance Works, <http://www.attendanceworks.org/>
- Attendance Works Tools & Resources, <http://www.attendanceworks.org/tools/>
- Chronic absenteeism in the nation's schools: An unprecedented look at a hidden educational crisis. (2016). <http://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html>
- Georgia Department of Education, Student Attendance Improvement, <http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Pages/Student-Attendance-Improvement.aspx>

# Resources

- Count us in! Working together to show that every school day matters (2013). [attendanceworks.org/attendancemonth](http://attendanceworks.org/attendancemonth)
- Chang, H. N. (2010). Curbing chronic absence in the early grades.  
<https://www.naesp.org/resources/2/Principal/2010/M-Jp46.pdf>
- Preventing missed opportunity: Taking collective action to confront chronic absence (Sept. 2016).  
<http://www.attendanceworks.org/research/preventing-missed-opportunity>

# Resources

- Reducing chronic absenteeism: Every day counts (2016).
- Reducing chronic absence starting in the early grades: An essential ingredient for promoting success in school (2016).  
<https://relwest.wested.org/resources/220>
- <http://www.attendanceworks.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Attendanceworks-toolkit-final-6.20.11.pdf>
- Teaching Attendance: Everyday strategies to help teachers improve attendance and raise achievement (2014).  
<http://www.attendanceworks.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/AWTeacherToolkit-August-2014-new2.pdf>