

REIMAGINING EDUCATION DURING COVID-19 and BEYOND

Addressing Student Attendance Through the PBIS Framework

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Session Logistics

- **Handouts:** Session handouts are available for download in the handouts section on your screen and at www.gadoe.org/sdeevents
- **Questions:** Use the question box to type questions or comments throughout the presentation
- **Feedback:** We ask all participants complete the pop-up feedback survey after the close of the session
- **Recording:** A link to the session recording and certificate of attendance will be emailed in 24-hours
- **On Demand:** All sessions will be available on-demand following the conference on the [SDE Events and Conference webpage](#)

Objectives

- Examine current practices on measuring student attendance.
- Investigate the leading reasons for chronic student absenteeism.
- Identify how a multi-tiered system of support, like PBIS, can address attendance.
- Develop a six-step process for improving student attendance.

“When students improve their attendance rates, they improve their academic prospects and chances for graduating.”

Measuring Attendance



Attendance Matters

“For students to learn, they must be present and engaged in school. As a result, absenteeism is a concern for all schools. Poor attendance is associated with a host of negative short and long-term outcomes, such as academic failure, disengagement, leaving school, and problem behaviors in school and community” (Balfanz, 2016).

Attendance Matters

“Despite the challenges, evidence suggests that even small changes in attendance are related to meaningful outcomes for students” (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012).



What data can you use to predict student attendance?

Go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and use code

Measuring Attendance

“Attendance is most often measured using the metric of *average daily attendance*. However, this metric may mask underlying chronic absenteeism, especially at the individual student level. We recommend monitoring both number and percentage of students in each of the following categories” (Attendance Works, 2017)...

Measuring Attendance

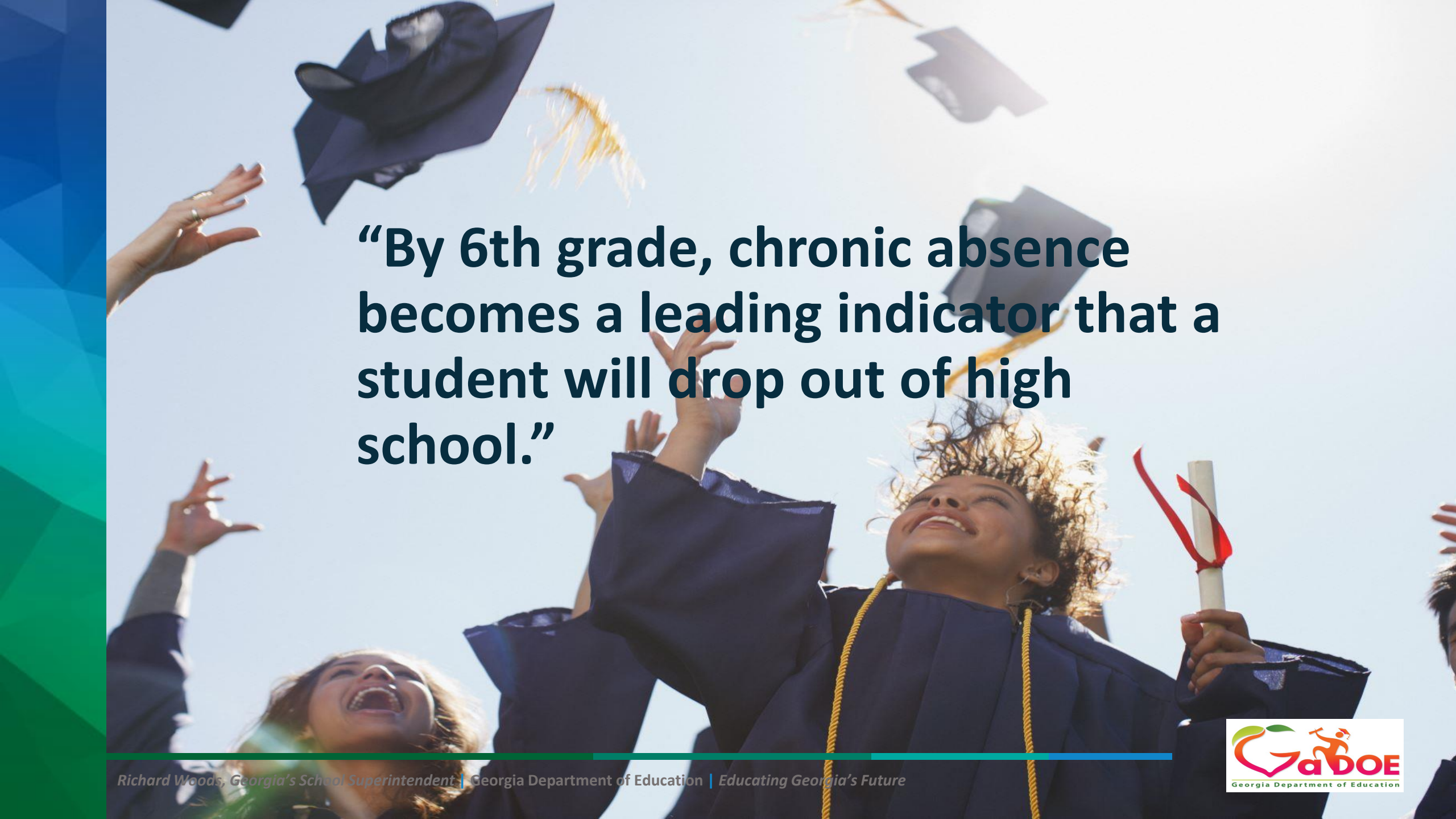
- **Regular attendees**: miss 5 or fewer days a year (less than 1 day per month)
- **At risk**: miss 5%-9% of school (about 9 days a year, 1-2 days per month)
- **Chronically absent**: miss 10% or more of school (about 18 days a year; more than 2 days per month)
- **Severely chronically absent**: miss 20% or more days of school (about 36 days a year; more than 4 days per month).

“Absences add up! Missing just 2 days a month means a child misses 10% of the school year.” –
Attendance Counts

Chronically absent

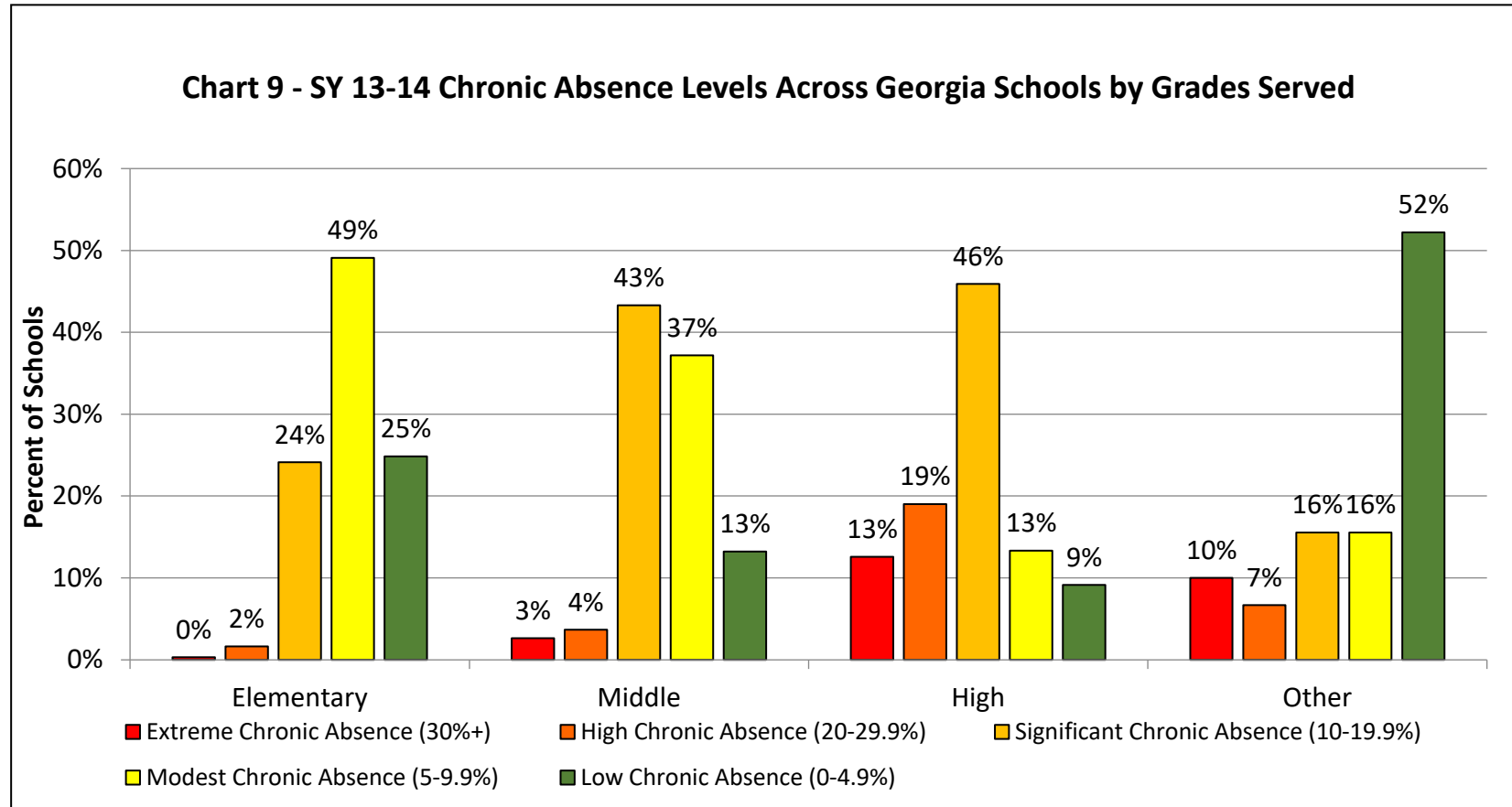
- 15.5% of students in the United States are chronically absent
- 12.7% of students in Georgia are chronically absent
- North Dakota is the only state in the nation with a chronically absent rate below 10% (9.6%)
- Washington has the highest chronically absent rate in the nation at 27.1%

Source: The Hamilton Project

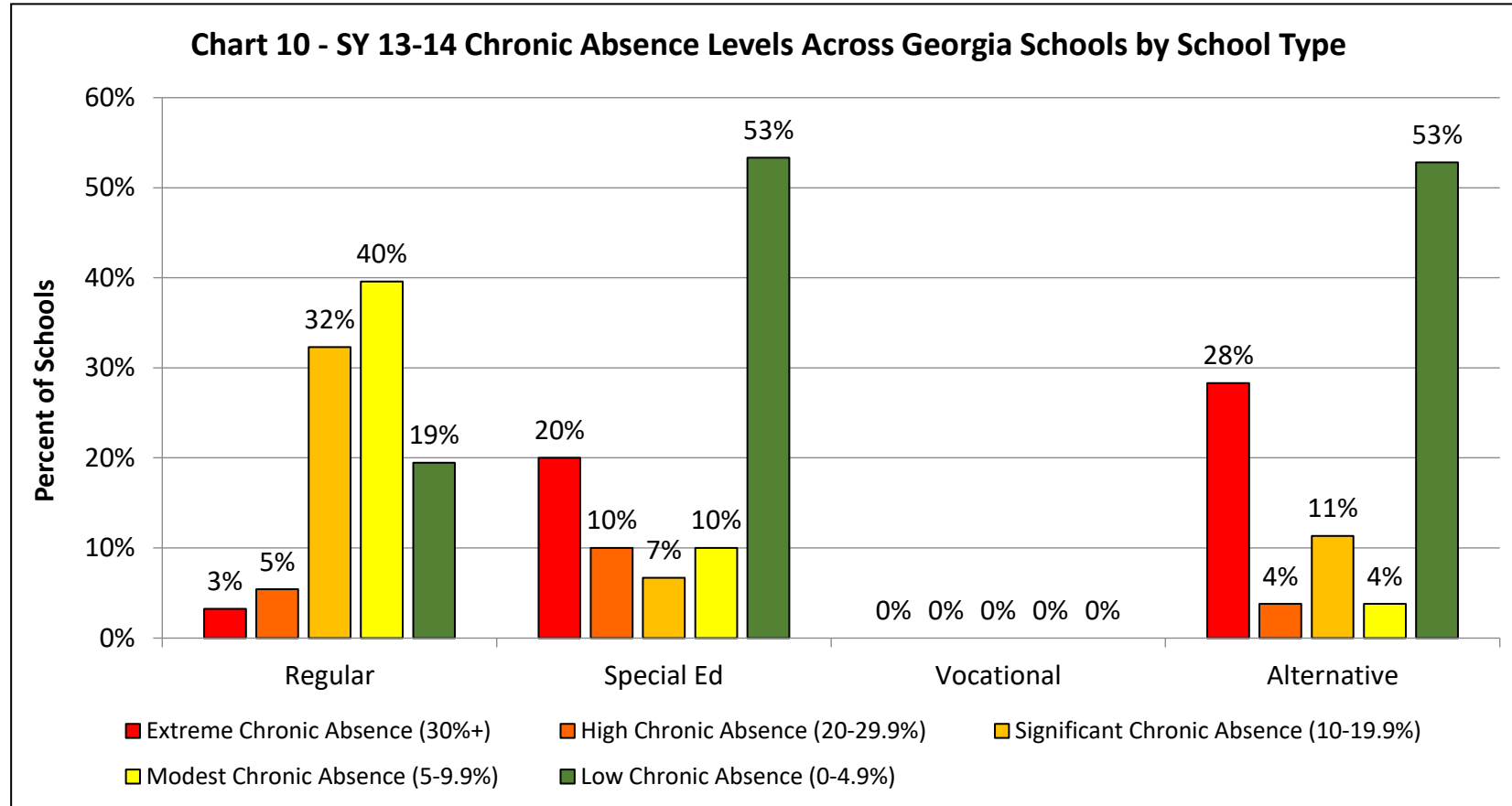


“By 6th grade, chronic absence becomes a leading indicator that a student will drop out of high school.”

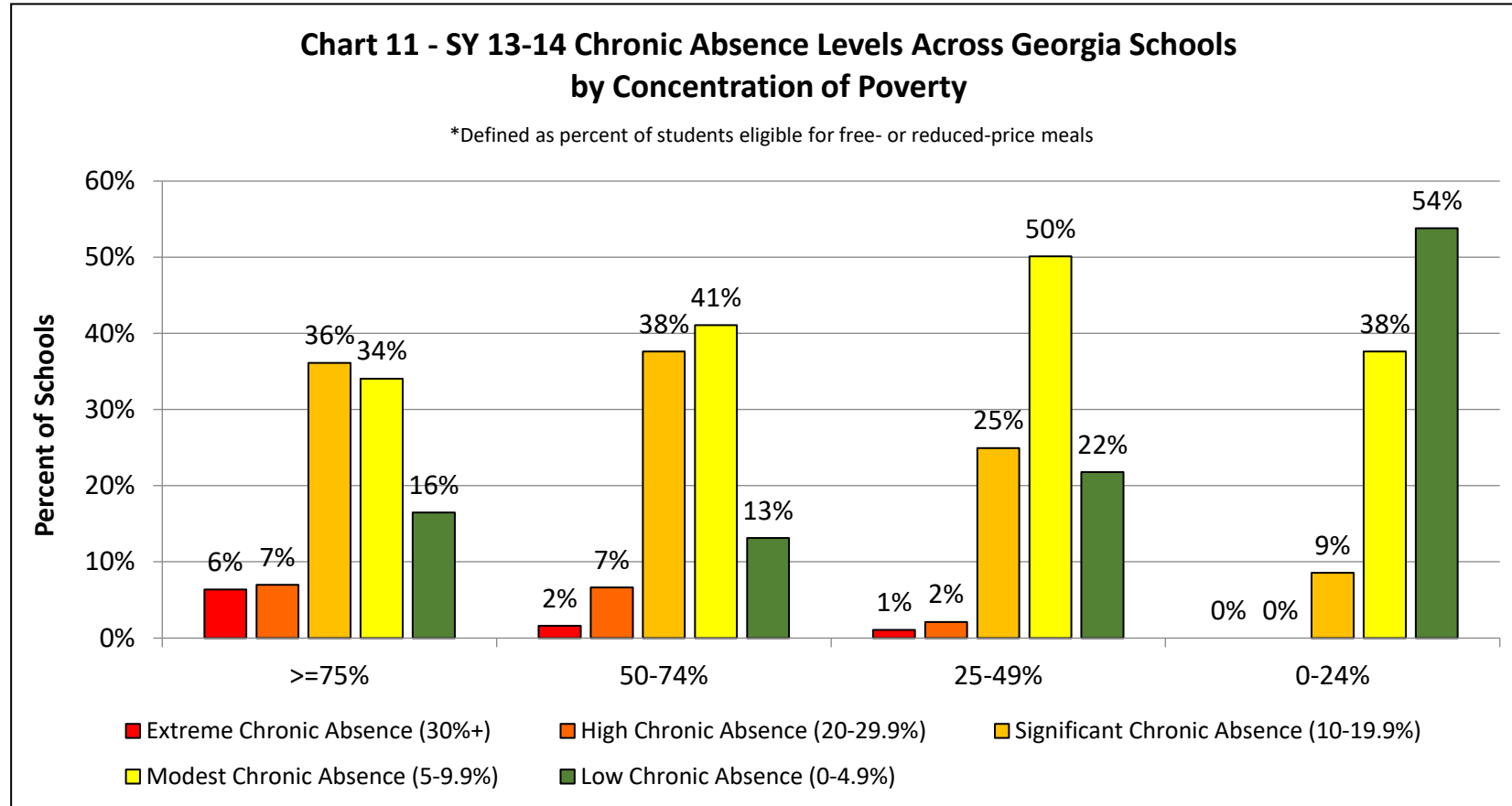
Chronic Absence by School Level



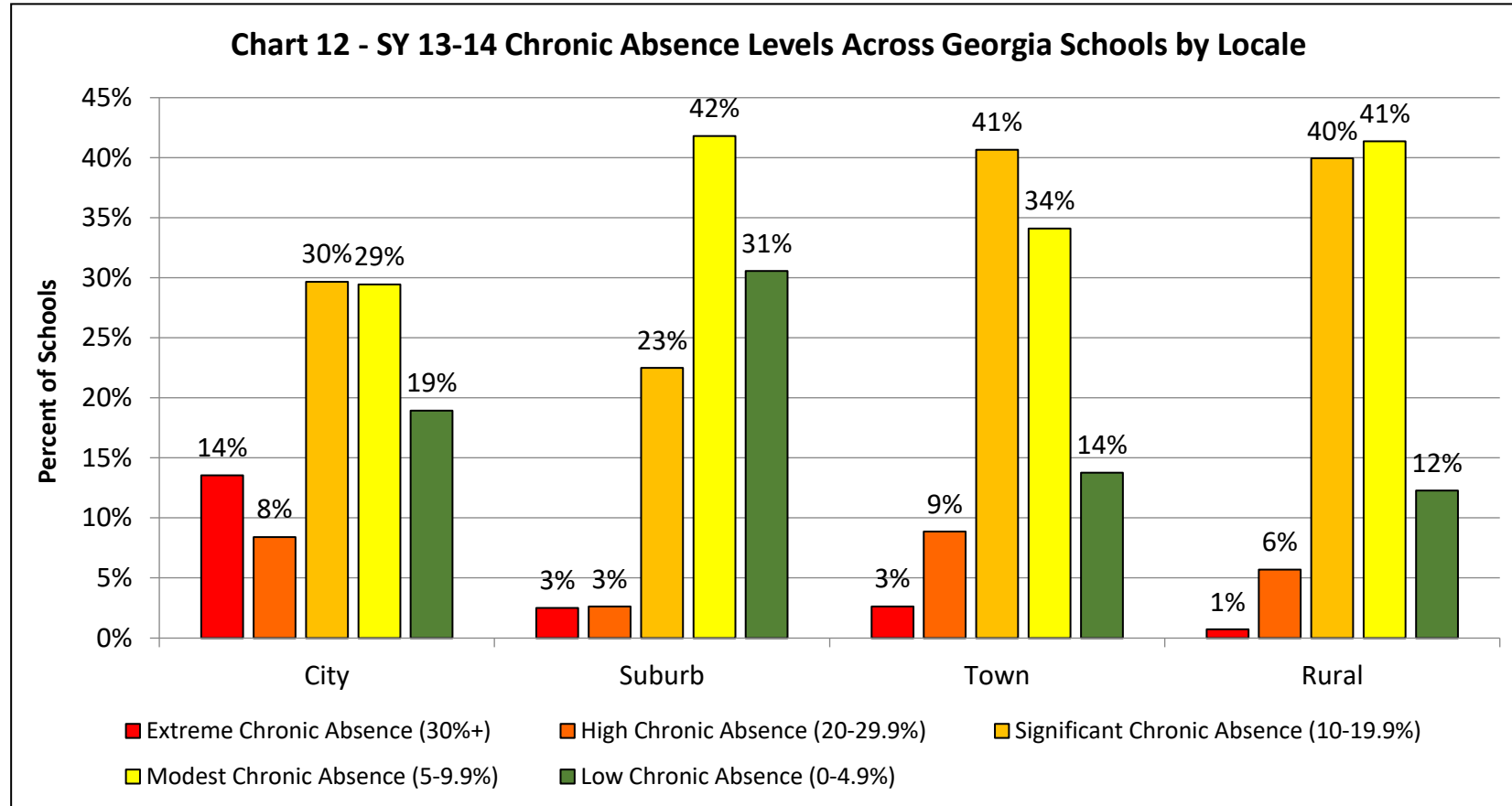
Chronic Absence by School Type



Chronic Absence by Poverty



Chronic Absence by Locale



Monitoring Attendance

- Monitoring attendance must be
 - Intentional – Develop a plan that aligns with the school improvement plan.
 - Assigned – Assign who (e.g. PBIS Team) will be responsible for monitoring attendance.
 - Consistent – Schedule a team, at least on a monthly basis, to review attendance reports.
 - Preventative – Do not wait for students to be chronically absent before a plan is developed.

**80% of
SUCCESS is
SHOWING
UP**



Reasons for Absenteeism



Absenteeism

“Absenteeism is a complex problem involving a variety of individual, family, school, community, and societal factors. The reasons for absences vary, and each reason for absence arises from a different type of problem” (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012).

Students cannot come to school due to uncontrollable circumstances, such as illness or other obligations.

Students will not come to school in order to avoid aversive situations, such as bullying, unsafe conditions, or harassment.

Students do not come to school, because they don't see the value of school or they have something else that they would rather do.



Rank order the reasons students are not coming to school.

Go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and use code

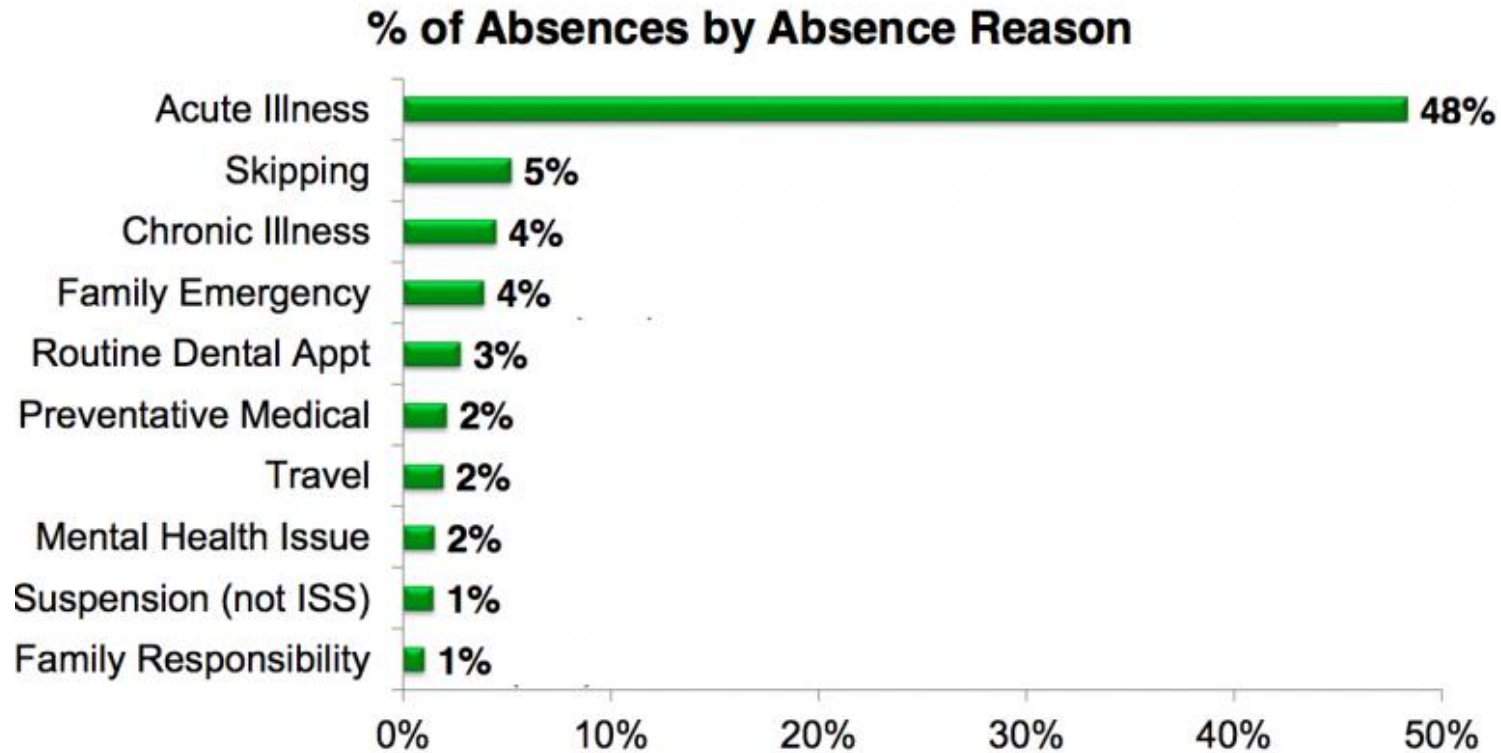
Using Multiple Data Sources

- “Understanding the reason/s behind chronic absenteeism may require examination of other data sources, including office discipline referrals, student surveys, academic performance, and medical history which may be obtained through record reviews or student and family surveys and interviews. Addressing multiple contributing factors will require collaboration between schools, families, and communities.”

Virtual Learning

- Recently the Georgia Department of Education released guidance on student attendance.
- “A student is considered to be ‘in attendance when he or she is participating in active instruction and/or educational services from a school district.’”

Absence Reasons



Source: E3 Alliance analysis of absence data from 9 schools in PISD & HCISD, 1/14/13-3/8/13

© 2015 E3 Alliance

“My child was sick” really means...

- Avoid uninteresting or engaging instruction
- Deficit academic skills leads to avoiding instruction
- Avoid fear regarding lack of security (e.g., not feeling safe)
- Avoid bullying behavior
- Lack of communication regarding absenteeism
- Lack of transportation
- Poor mental health care (e.g., untreated anxiety)
- Providing care for siblings (e.g., bring funds to family)
- Poor routine to wake, get ready, and go to school
- Unsafe pathways to school



What are some of the most common reasons students are absent from 'virtual' schools?

Go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and use code

Consideration for Online Attendance

- “There may be many reasons why a student is not participating in, or is consistently tardy to, virtual/distance/remote learning.”

Consideration for Online Attendance

- “Does the student have stable internet connectivity?”
- “Does the student have access to a device?”
- “Is the student sharing a device with another relative (and at the same time)?”
- “Is the student sick?”
- “Is the student caring for family members who are sick?”

Consideration for Online Attendance

- “Is the student caring for younger siblings during the day while parents/guardians are working?”
- “Is the student employed and required to work during scheduled virtual/distance/remote learning sessions?”
- “Are there any language barriers inherent to the instructional model or format?”

Communication Strategy

“Plan a communication strategy to identify the root of the student’s attendance issue. It is possible that students who are struggling to participate in virtual learning may not be immediately responsive to email. Consider multiple communication mediums and strategies to connect with students and families to determine the cause of the student’s attendance issue.”

Alternate or Flexible Solutions

“Depending on the situation, students may need to adjust the timing of their instructional model. Advise the parent on options for student participation (improved internet access, access to additional devices if available, modified schedule, or instructional options to ensure the student is able to fully access and participate in the class).”

**“Attend today
and achieve
tomorrow.”**



Addressing the Problem



Why PBIS?

- “A Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS), such as PBIS, can be useful for organizing a continuum of intervention supports for attendance.”

Why PBIS?

“Many of the factors contributing to chronic absenteeism are directly and indirectly addressed by PBIS, such as developing a safe and respectful school climate, teaching critical social skills (e.g., self-regulation, problem solving, conflict management), establishing an engaging relationship with a peer or adult, and implementing individual and small group positive behavior support plans.”



What percentage of the schools you serve are currently implementing PBIS?

Go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and use code

“What makes you want to come to school?”



<https://youtu.be/hbt3wHvdaMY>

**How would your students answer the question,
'What makes you want to come to school'?**

“Positive student behavior support helps educators and parents appreciate good behavior and motivates all students to achieve.”



Why PBIS?

“Rather than developing standalone and parallel interventions or initiatives for addressing attendance, [PBIS] provides a team-based decision-making system to take advantage of existing resources, merge and integrate practices aimed toward a common outcome, and enhance a continuum of practices that support all students as well as those with chronic attendance challenges.”

PBIS Practices

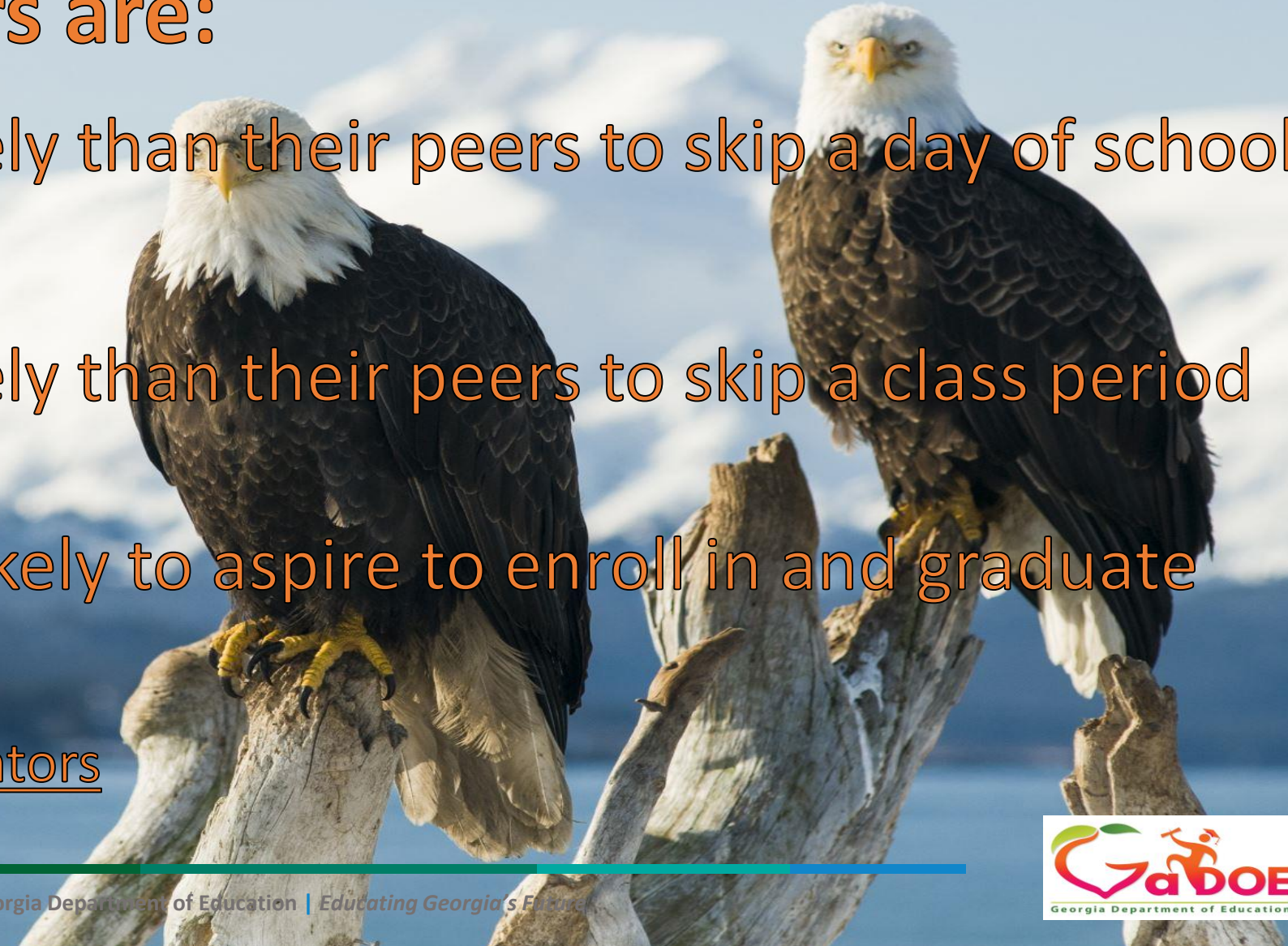
“Schools and districts may consider including the following practices within their PBIS continuum of practices and systems (Freeman et al., under review):

- Mentoring programs
(e.g., Check and Connect, Success Mentors)
- Chronic physical health supports
(e.g., asthma, diabetes, obesity),”

Students who regularly meet with mentors are:

- **52%** less likely than their peers to skip a day of school
- **37%** less likely than their peers to skip a class period
- **36%** more likely to aspire to enroll in and graduate from college.

Source: Mobius Mentors



PBIS Practices

- “Direct instruction on skills related to greater success getting to school (e.g., transportation, sleep and eating routines, homework completion) or at school (e.g., academic study, requesting assistance, conflict management, problem solving, managing bullying and other harassment),”

“Positive school climates not only minimize unnecessary suspensions and expulsions, but also reduce disorder in the classroom and bolster learning.”

– [Arne Duncan, Former U.S. Secretary of Education](#)



PBIS Practices

- “Incentives for attendance (e.g., token economies, monetary incentives, social recognition, community access),
- Academic remediation supports (e.g., peer tutoring, small group and/or individual instruction, instructional accommodations),
- Family supports (e.g., positive home-school communication, access to community resources, training on home-based strategies, school-home-community behavior support planning),”

PBIS Practices

- “School-based mental health supports (e.g., integrated community mental health supports, interdisciplinary mental and behavioral health planning) for chronic challenges (e.g., substance use, school avoidance/phobia, juvenile delinquency, homelessness, and gang involvement).”

“School keeps you safe, it educates you, it prepares you for your future. Don’t miss out!”

Next Steps



Step 1

1. Use an existing school-wide team (e.g., PBIS, MTSS, mental health) to meet regularly and to facilitate an examination of the status of attendance.

Questions Every Principal Should Ask...

1. Is our school a place where students want to be?
2. Are our lessons engaging?
3. Are we supporting the whole child?
4. Are we supporting the whole family?
5. Do students see school as their way to a better future?

Step 2

2. Collect existing and new data that enable answering attendance related questions, for example, (a) What is current attendance rates? (b) Which and how many students are attending and not attending? (c) When and how often are students not attending? (d) What percent of students are chronically not attending school?

Step 3

3. Set desired attendance rates (outcomes) based on answers to the previous question.

Step 4

4. Identify what existing practices, strategies, etc. could be adapted and (re)implemented to achieve the desired attendance rates (outcomes). If existing supports are not available or appropriate, identify what other evidence-based supports might be adopted and integrated into current implementation plans.



What current practices and policies are counter intuitive to improving student attendance?

Go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and use code

Step 5

5. Develop an implementation plan that includes monitoring of student progress and responsiveness and of implementation fidelity.

Step 6

6. Develop adaptations and enhancements based on student responsiveness and implementation fidelity.



Questions and Comments

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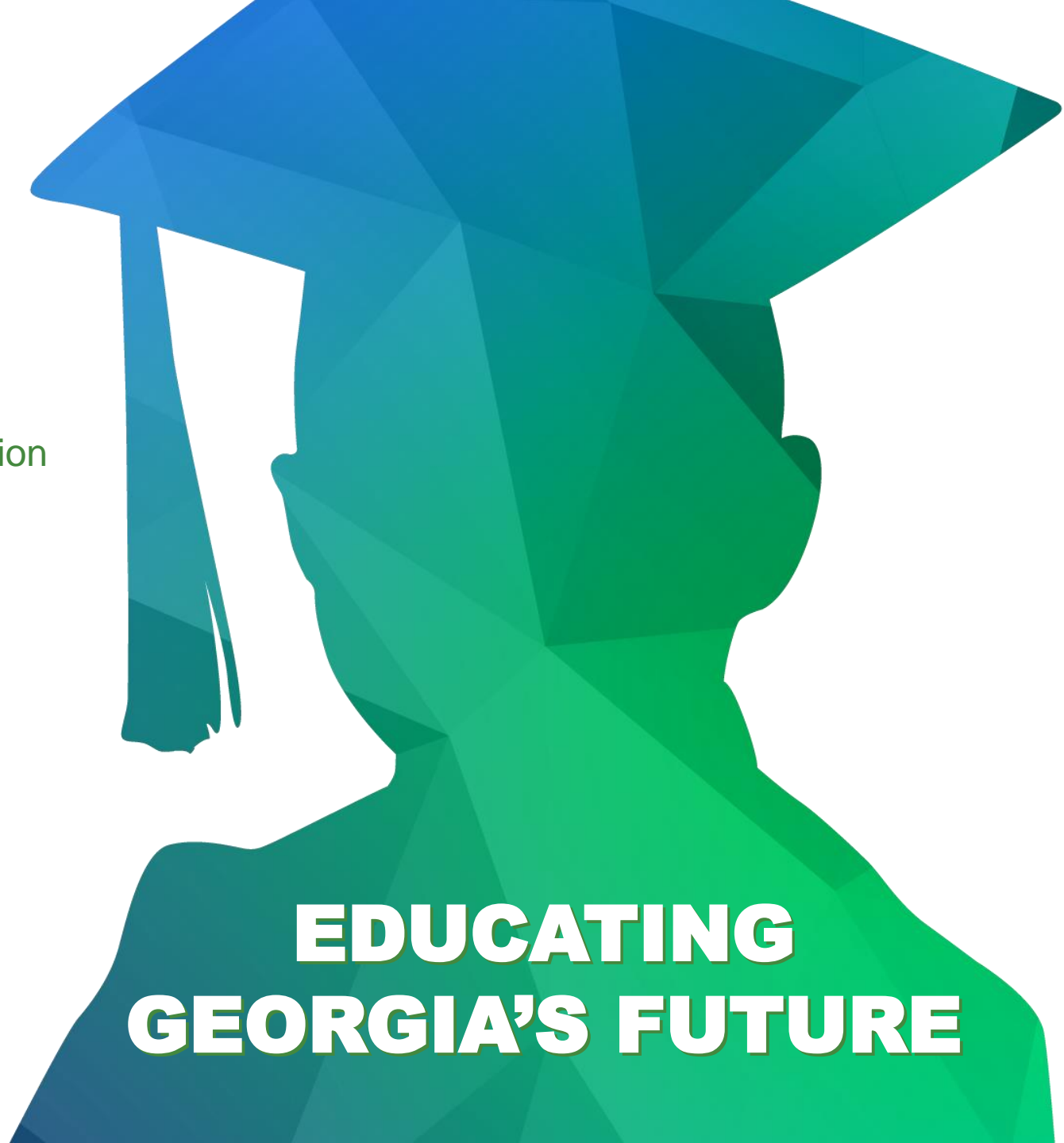
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GEORGIA'S FUTURE**



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