

Boosting your Systems for Better Attendance & Engagement



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Session Outline



Attendance and MTSS



Teaming for Better Attendance



Data-based Decision-making



Continuum of Supports for Attendance



At the end of this session, participants will:

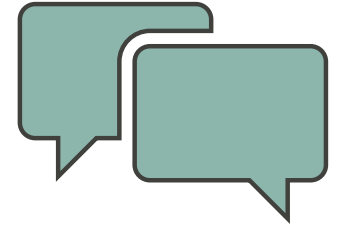


- Assess their own level of implementation teaming, data and tier 1 supports in support of attendance and engagement
- Understand the potential causes of absences and how they determine appropriate supports and interventions
- Understand options for teaming structures
- Reflect on and explore what data is needed and their current access to needed data
- Have knowledge of key Tier 1, 2 & 3 supports & interventions



Self-Assess

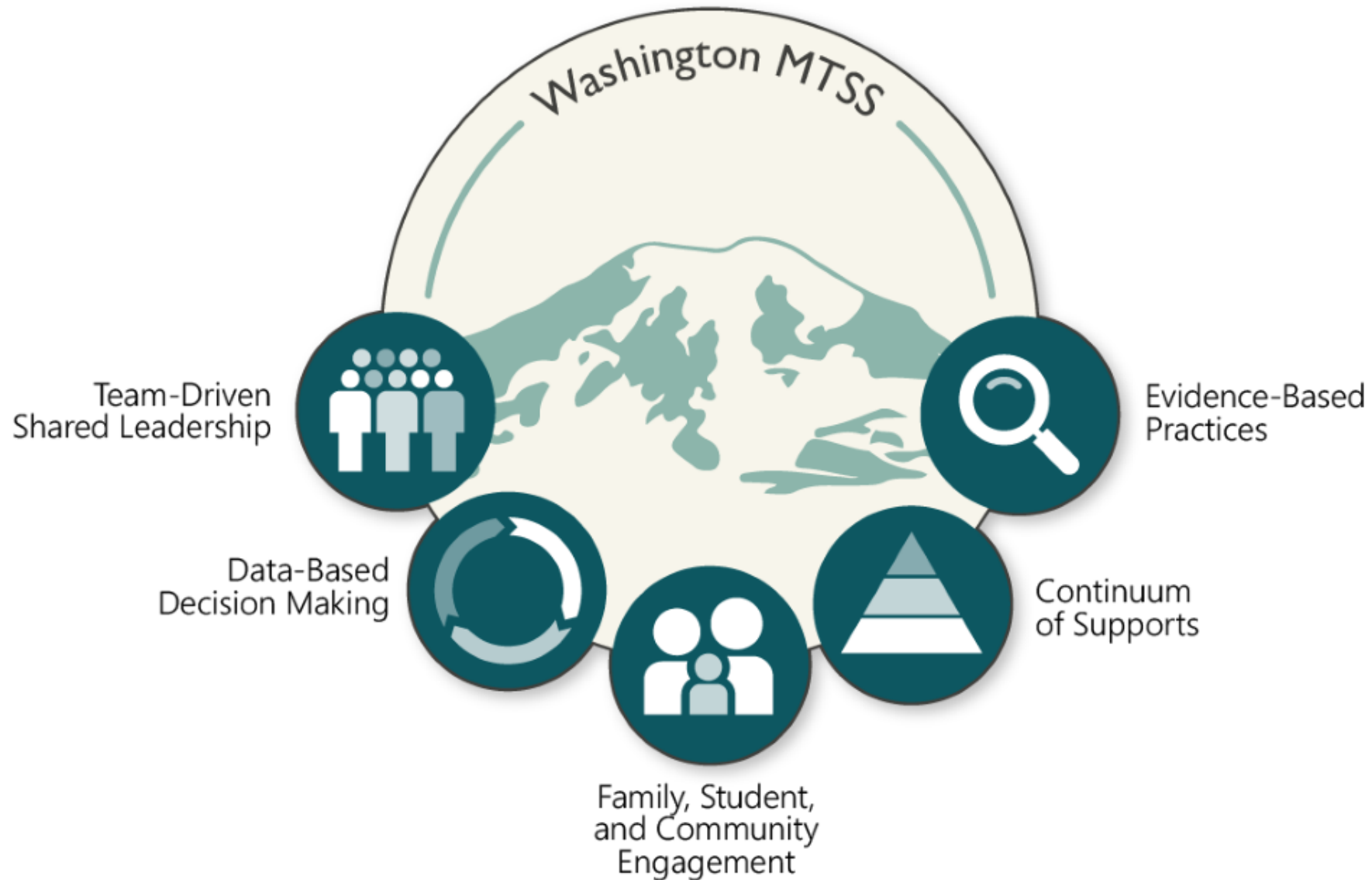
Talk to a Partner



- ☐ *Do you have a team that looks at Tier 1 schoolwide attendance trends?*
- ☐ *Do you have a team that addresses group interventions based on barriers (Tier 2)?*
- ☐ *Do you have a team that supports individual students with more intense interventions (Tier 3)?*
- ☐ *Do you have a continuum of supports (interventions) with clear roles and action steps assigned when students meet certain thresholds of absences?*
- ☐ *Do you have access to chronic absence data (missing 10% excused and unexcused)?*
- ☐ *Does your continuum of support (interventions) & messaging about attendance focus on building relationships & helping to address barriers (or do they lean on blame, shame or threat)?*

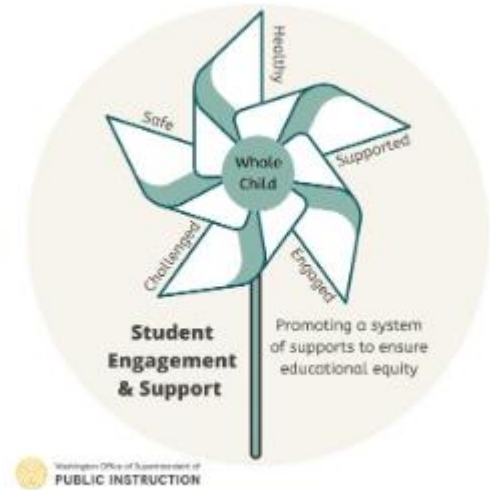


Attendance critical part of MTSS



OSPI Attendance Guiding Principles

- Attendance and engagement are foundational to student learning
- Absences tells us when a student has **not accessed or had the opportunity engage in instruction**
- Absences can reflect **inequities** that are caused by or perpetuated by our **systems**
- Absences can signal when a student or family might need more **support**, which makes absences such a critical **early warning indicator** & screening tool
- We have an opportunity to get **curious** about why students aren't attending
- **Students** and **families** are our best partners to understand the barriers to attendance and how to increase attendance and engagement
- **Support, connection and relationship** come before accountability
- Courts should be a **last resort** to addressing truancy



Chronic Absence: Research Highlights

[Attendance in the Early Grades:
Why it Matters for Reading](#)

[Utah Data Alliance – Chronic
Absenteeism Research Brief](#)



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Students that are chronically absent in preschool, kindergarten and 1st grade are **much less likely** to read at grade level by 3rd grade.

Students who can't read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade are **four times more likely** than proficient readers to not graduate.



A student that is chronically absent in any two years between 8th and 12th grade has **a 50% chance** of not finishing high school.

Attendance, Engagement & Enrollment Highly Impacted During & After the Pandemic

Estimate of **3 million students** nation-wide were unaccounted for during the pandemic*

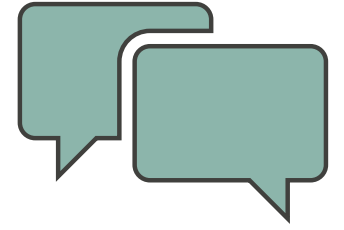
In Washington, an estimated **29,000 were disconnected** (not enrolled) from their education**

State Enrollment Down  3.9% from pre-pandemic

Regular Attendance 67% (21-22)  17.7% from pre-pandemic



Talk to a partner



Do you know:

- Your **chronic absence** rate from last school year?
- Your **enrollment** last year?
- Your **withdrawn students** (who don't re-enroll elsewhere)?
- *Were these higher or lower than the year before?*
- *Can you predict next year's data?*



Why do students miss school?

Why Students Miss School

- Students miss school for a multitude of reasons
- Often, we assume the student and/or parent is the sole decider or influencer over the absences
- Understanding the underlying reasons are critical to a healthy school culture and for providing interventions
- Could be family, neighborhood, classroom, hallway, student...
- Sometimes, the reason they are absent is because of what's happening in the classroom or school
- Therefore, sometimes the remedy is changing school culture, instruction, communication, etc.

"Different types of problems require different types of interventions."

Balfanz, R. & Byrnes, V. (2012)



Which of these reasons for absences can we influence as education leaders?

Barriers

- Chronic and acute illness
- Family responsibilities or home situation
- Trauma
- Poor transportation
- Housing and food insecurity
- Inequitable access to needed services
- System involvement
- Lack of predictable schedules for learning
- Lack of access to tech
- Etc. and many more!

Aversion

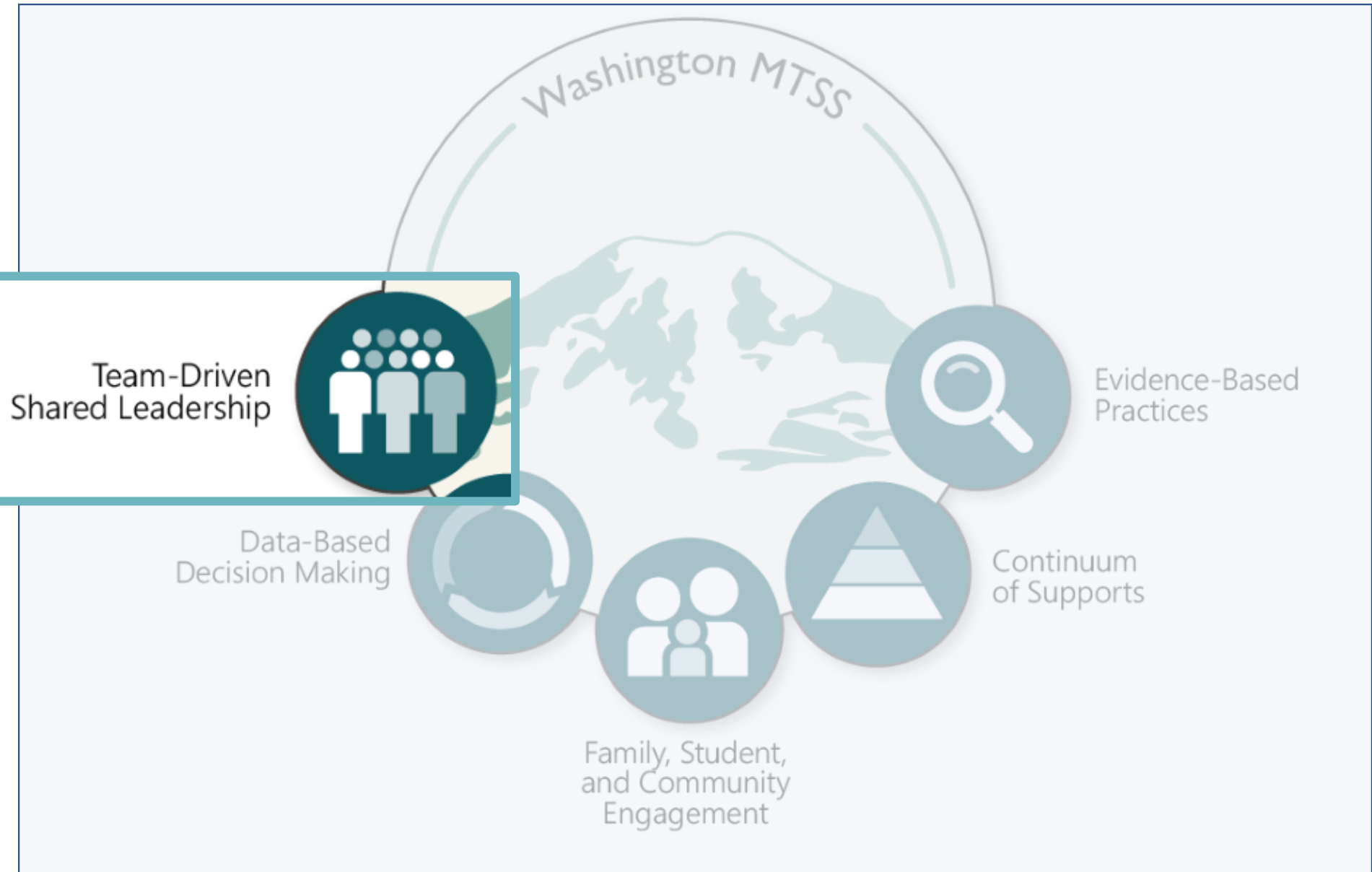
- Struggling academically and/or behaviorally
- Unwelcoming school climate
- Social and peer challenges
- Anxiety
- Biased disciplinary and suspension practices
- Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations
- Parents had negative educational experiences

Disengagement

- Lack of challenging, culturally responsive instruction
- Bored
- No meaningful relationships to adults in the school (especially given staff shortages)
- Lack of enrichment opportunities
- Lack of academic and behavioral support
- Failure to earn credits
- Drawn to low-wage job vs. being in high school

Misconceptions

- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Missing 2 days per month doesn't affect learning
- Lose track and underestimate **TOTAL** absences
- Sporadic absences aren't a problem
- Attendance only matters in the older grades
- Suspensions don't count as absence



Teaming for Better Attendance

Team-Driven
Shared Leadership



Team Functions

- Analyze schoolwide and student group attendance trends
- Organize an attendance continuum of support
 - Universal Attendance Strategies and Absence Prevention (Tier 1)
 - Group interventions based on barriers (Tier 2)
 - Individual student interventions (Tier 3)
- Mobilize the school community to address attendance

Tips:

- Functions may not be fulfilled by the same team
- Functions may fit or be added to existing teams
- Teams might be 2 people!



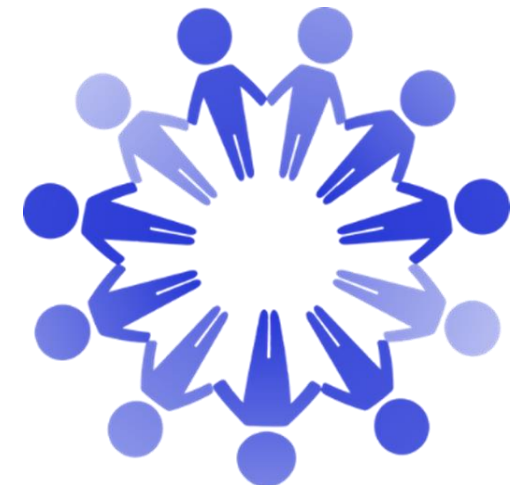
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Best Practices in Teaming

Team-Driven
Shared Leadership



1. Have the Right People at the Table
2. Clearly Defined Roles
3. Team Agreements
4. Decision Making Protocol
5. Agendas and Minutes
6. Data Protocols
7. Calendar
8. Action Plan
9. PDSA or Progress Monitor and Evaluate Success



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Real-World Examples: Teaming

Team-Driven
Shared Leadership



- Attendance Team for Tier 2-3, and PBIS for Tier 1 (NC HS)
- Embed work within an existing team (Wellpinit, 9 Mile Falls)
- Separate Attendance Team covering all 3 tiers (EVHS, Stevens Elementary)

Percent of Students Attending 85% or more days in 5 SPS Elementary Schools

	2021-2022	2022-2023	Change since previous year
Stevens Elementary	55%	75%	20%
School A	63.40%	63.7%	0%
School B	62%	62.12%	0%
School C	60%	72.5%	13%
School D	53.20%	69%	16%

Source: SPS Chronic Absence Data from Data Tools as of 5/19/2023; includes students in the "Satisfactory", "At-Risk", and "Chronic" categories



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Back-to-School First Steps for Teaming on Attendance

Team-Driven
Shared Leadership



If Setting Up a New Attendance Team

1. Determine if separate attendance team is needed, or if you'll embed the work in an existing team
2. Identify team lead & members; invite to 1st mtg

If Continuing With an Existing Attendance Team

1. Invite & orient any new members (share existing documents/resources, etc.)
2. Consider completing a [team self-assessment](#) during an initial meeting to inform team priorities



Example Objectives for Meeting 1

- Establish/revisit your team **purpose**
- Agree on norms
- Set **roles** (facilitator, note taker, data specialist, etc)
- Calendar standing **meeting** time for rest of year
- Take **self-assessment**; if time, start discussing results (or push to meeting 2)



Example Objectives for Meeting 2:

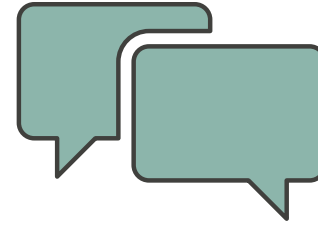
- Review attendance **data** from previous year(s) and self-assessment results; consider using data review protocol to help focus conversation
- Set long-term goal as well as short term (45-day) goals; outline and assign **action steps**
- Agree on meeting Data Protocols template



For All Future Meetings

Follow the meeting agenda template you settled on in previous meeting!

Turn & Talk



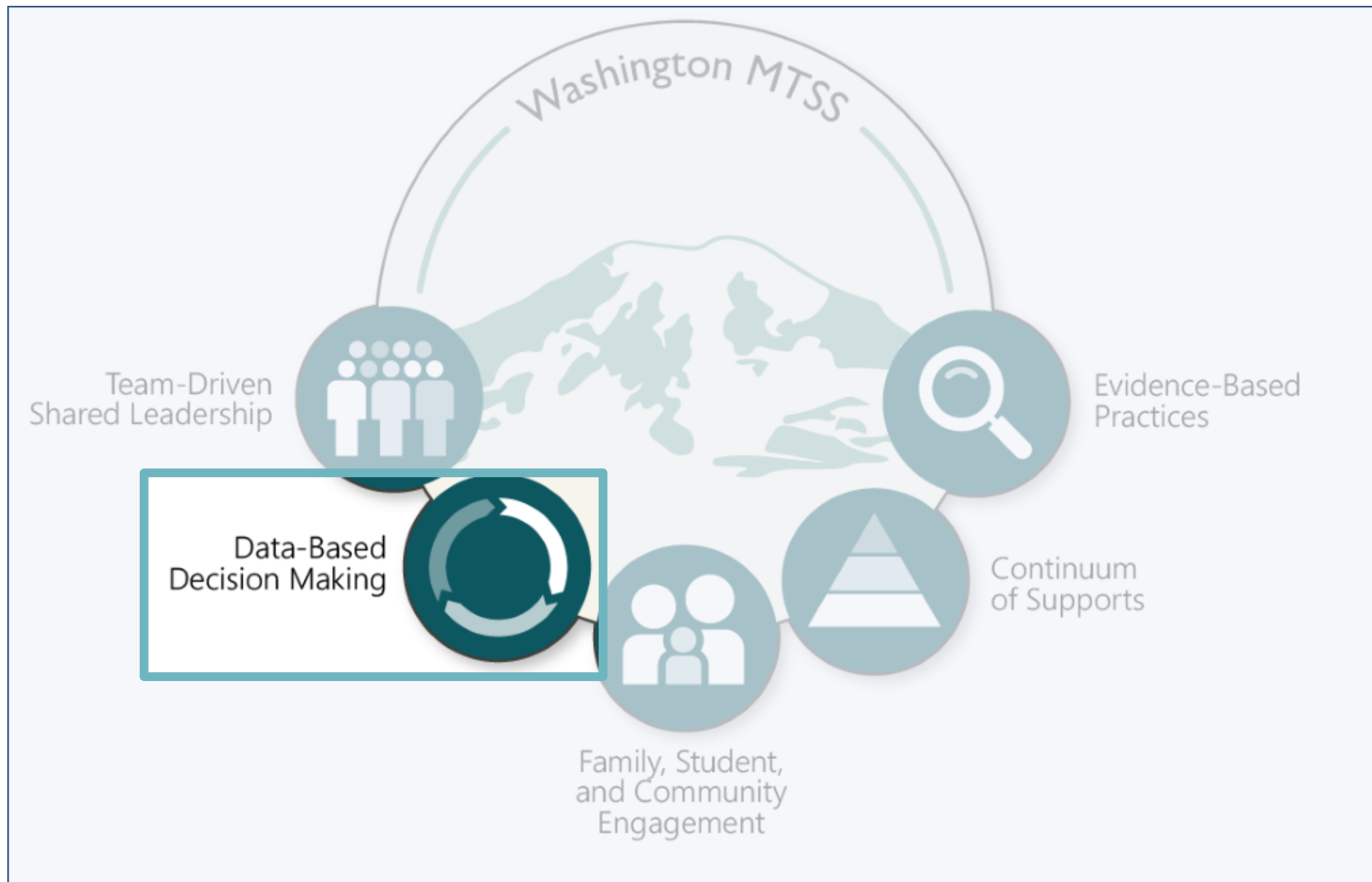
Team-Driven
Shared Leadership



What are one or two immediate next steps for you, your school or your district to set up or strengthen teaming around attendance & engagement?



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The Three A's of Data Literacy

Access

Analysis &
Sense-making

Action
Planning



Data-based Decision Making



Guiding questions to keep asking:

- *Who is missing?*
- *Why are they missing?*
- *What other information do we need to answer these two questions?*
- *Are we ready to hear it's us, not them?*



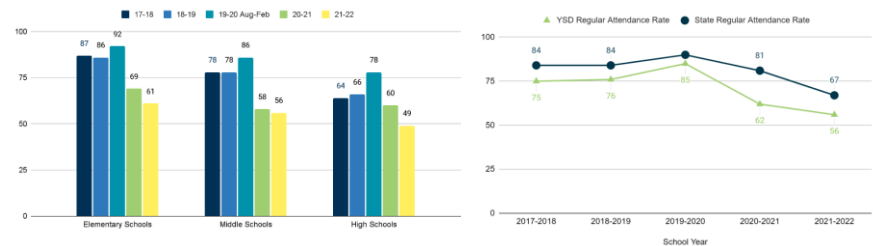
Access to Data - *Talk to a partner*



Can you **access** different types of data?

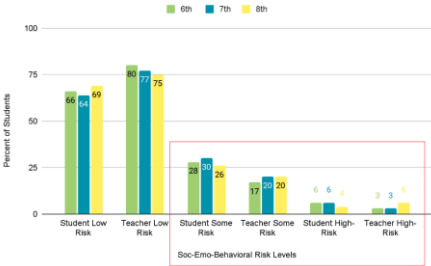


Attendance Data



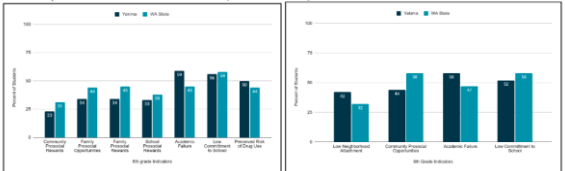
Screening Data

Level of Risk, Student vs Teacher SAEBS Universal Screener Fall to Winter 2022-2023



Health, Safety, Transportation, Data

2021 Disparities in 6th and 8th Healthy Youth Survey, Yakima vs. WA State



2022-2023	Yakima	WA State
Asthma rate per 10,000 (Ages 0-17)	25%	14%

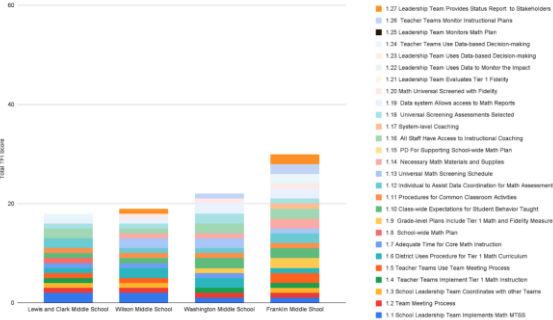
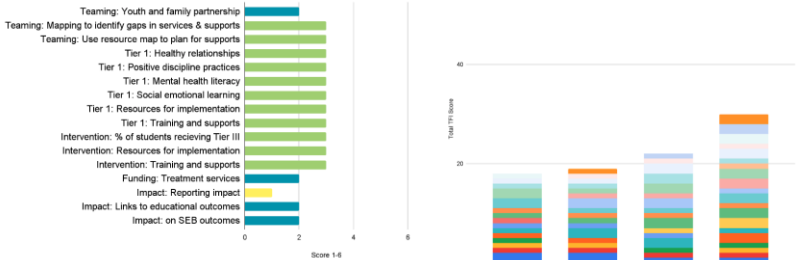
Qualitative Data



Why are students missing?

Systems/Practices Fidelity Data

SHAPE Assessment for School Health and Safety Policies and Practices



Considering an MTSS Whole Child Data System?

Some Examples:

- Educlimber
- Panorama
- EdData
- OnCourse
- Tableau
- Branching Minds
- PowerSchools
- Domo
- Kickboard
- Edsby
- Infinite Campus
- Schoolzilla

Checklist:

- ☐ District, school, grade, intervention, class level system evaluation
- ☐ Timely data entry
- ☐ Reports for accurate, timely decision-making
- ☐ Quick user access to data and reports
- ☐ Graphical, easy-to-understand data representation
- ☐ Clear goal-setting and evaluation process
- ☐ Cost-effective, accessible system
- ☐ Allows input data downloading and storage
- ☐ Easily trainable staff for system usage and report-based decision-making
- ☐ Prevention-focused assessment system
- ☐ Leadership data usage for decision-making
- ☐ Ongoing professional development availability
- ☐ Resource-appropriate assessment system
- ☐ Family communication and collaboration support
- ☐ Staff communication and collaboration support
- ☐ Short and long-term goals evaluation support
- ☐ MTSS framework effectiveness evaluation support

National Center on Intensive Intervention



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Data-Based
Decision Making



Our district doesn't have an MTSS system... what then?

Skyward (with Attendance Works) has rudimentary reports to access chronic absence

ESD Attendance Coordinators can help you get access



Can you answer WHY students are missing?



- Qualitative data (empathy interviews, student voice, focus groups, surveys, etc.)
- Attendance data
- Screening Data (SEB, Academic, Attendance, Incident)
- Health, Safety Data, Transportation Data
- Systems/Practices Fidelity Data (PBIS, Attendance, Shape)

Students and families are critical contributors to this knowledge





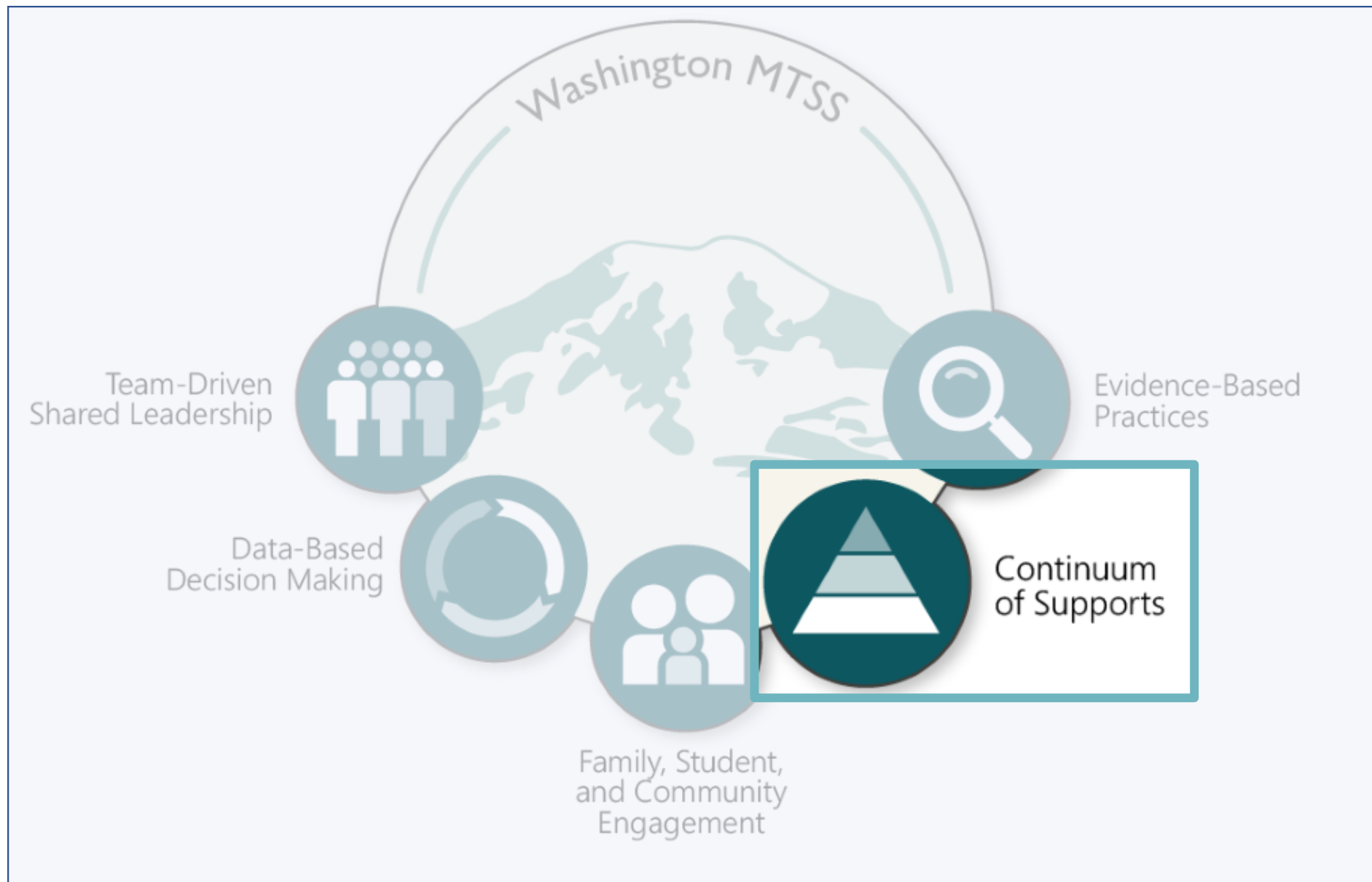
The type of barriers drives the type of interventions.

School, Community, Family

Why are they Missing?

Contributing Factors for Chronic Absenteeism

Factors Contributing to Absenteeism	Possible Influencing Contexts		
	School	Family	Community
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	•		•
Obtain peer rewards for truancy	•		•
Lack of communication regarding absenteeism	•	•	
Lack of transportation	•	•	•
Poor health care (e.g., untreated asthma)		•	•
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			•



Tier 1



- Awareness & communication
 - Personalized communication to families when students are absent that sustains dignity and is not shame-based like Welcome back and we missed you messages
 - Nudge letters
 - Clear, concise and consistent communication about schedules and expectations
- Impact of attendance on the whole child is widely understood – families, students, and educators
- Clear expectations of teachers
- Incentives, celebrations & fun competitions
 - No perfect attendance, recognize improved attendance, lots of opportunities for individuals and whole classrooms or grades
- Connection to caring adult in the school





Tier 1 Elements + Evidence of Systems and Practices

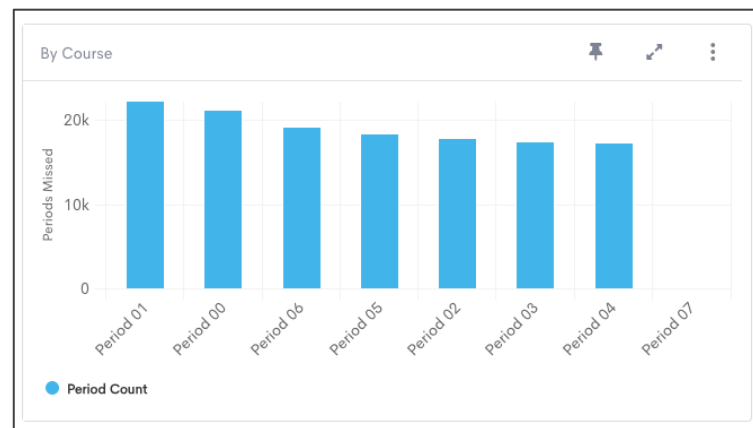
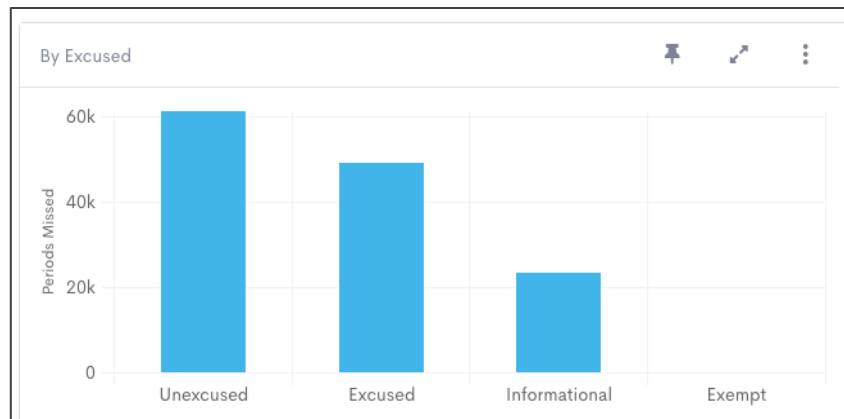
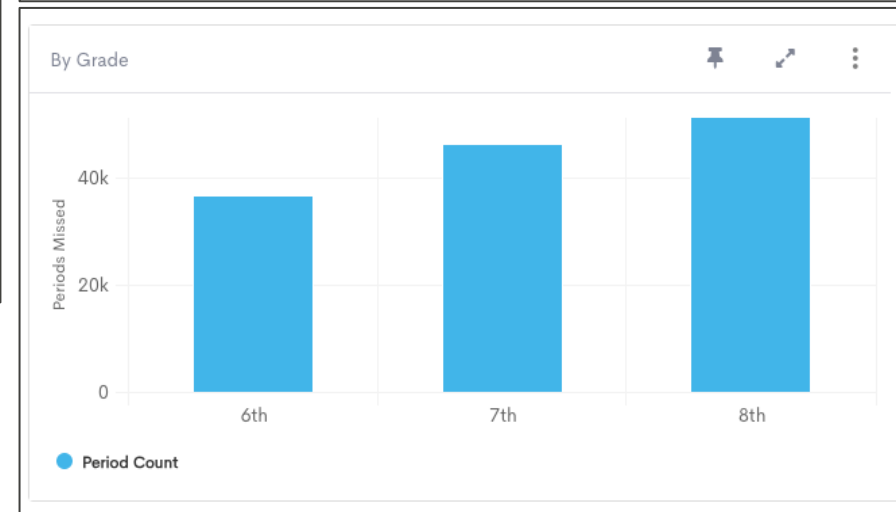
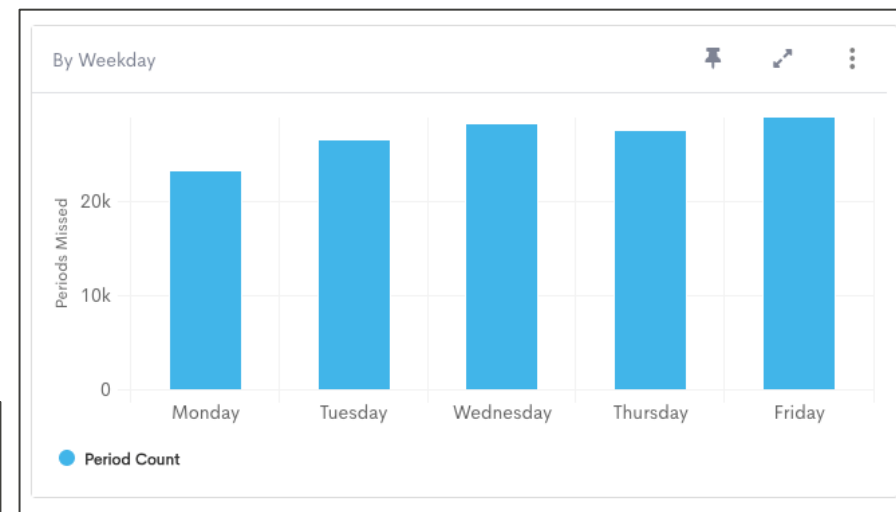


Tier 1 Attendance	
Tier 1 Attendance Elements	Tier 1 Attendance System Evidence
Teaming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Team Composition 1.2 Team Operating Procedures 	Teaming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> District and School MTSS Org Charts Tier 1 team meeting agendas and minutes Tier 1 Attendance Team Roles Tier 1 Attendance action plan
Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.3 Attendance Expectations 1.4 Teaching Expectations 1.5 Attendance Barriers Definitions 1.6 Attendance Policies 1.7 Professional Development 1.8 Classroom Procedures 1.9 Feedback, Nudging, Acknowledgement 1.10 Faculty Involvement 1.11 Student/Family/Community Involvement 	Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Walkthrough Tool Staff handbook Student handbook Attendance/PBIS Professional development calendar Lesson plans Informal attendance walkthroughs District Policy and School Policy Attendance flowchart Code of attendance Informal administrator interview Progress monitoring Individual classroom data Attendance Self-Assessment Survey Informal surveys Staff meeting minutes Team meeting minutes Voting results from parent/ family meeting
Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.12 Attendance Data 1.13 Data-based Decision-Making 1.14 Fidelity Data 1.15 Annual Evaluation 	Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School policy Team meeting minutes Student outcome data Data decision rules Staff professional development calendar Staff handbook Team meeting minutes School policy School newsletters School website Staff, student, and family surveys Tier 1 handbook Fidelity tools District reports

Tier 1 – Real World Examples



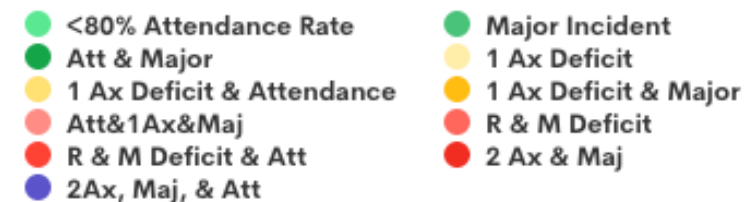
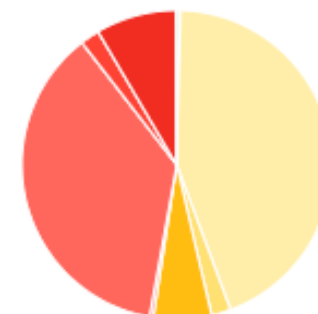
- Franklin Middle School, Yakima PBIS/Attendance Meetings
 - *Big 5 - Who, What, When, Where, Why* + Precision Problem Solving



Tier 1 – Real World Examples



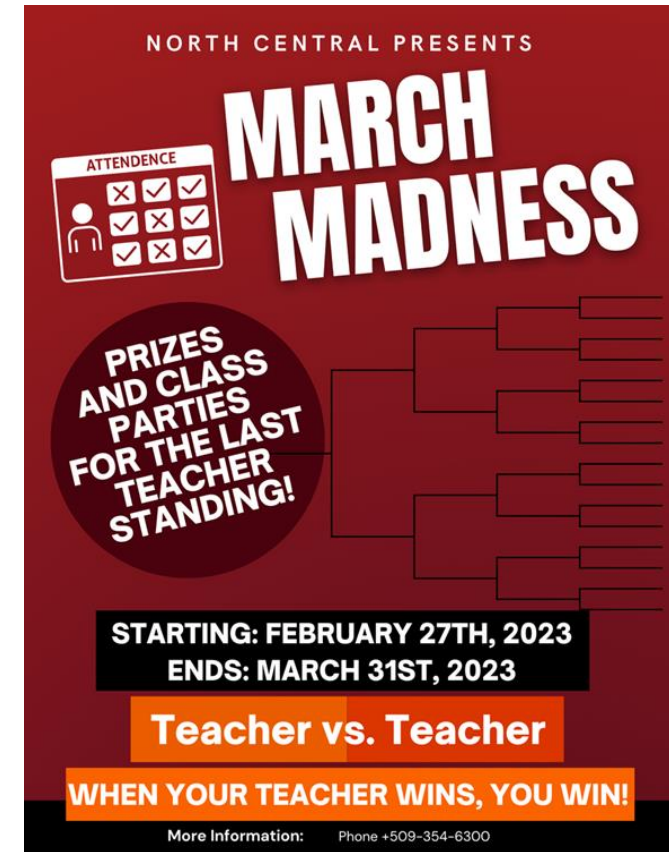
- Franklin Middle School PBIS + Attendance Meetings
- Whole Child Early 5th Grade Warning D Analysis and Prevention Plans
 - <80% attendance, >1 failing course, >1 major incident or office referral



Tier 1 – Real World Examples



Improved Attendance Awards & Incentives



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Attendance Challenges

Tier 1 – Real World Examples



Nudge Letters

Skyward Nudge Letter 1-Pager

How ATTENDANCE LETTERS CAN IMPROVE ABSENTEEISM

Here's why using psychology and automation helps districts improve attendance!

WHAT ARE THEY?

Automated letters to parents notifying them of:



the importance of attendance



their child's attendance



how their child's attendance compares to their peers'

Parents who only saw reminders (no data) underestimated their child's absence record by

50%
(ABOUT 6 DAYS)

After parents received letters, students were chronically absent

8-15% LESS OFTEN

Letters may include all or only some of this, but parents' motivation improves most with the comparison nudge.

HOW IMPORTANT IS ATTENDANCE ANYWAY?

2 = 10%
DAYS OF SCHOOL

Missing just two days per month is considered chronic absenteeism!

....Chronically absent middle school students were up to

7.4x MORE LIKELY
to drop out of school

HERE'S HOW TO MAKE IT WORK FOR YOUR DISTRICT.

AUTOMATE ATTENDANCE LETTERS

Eliminate the legwork to make letters work.

EASE ADMINISTRATIVE ATTENDANCE TIME FOR TEACHERS

Human-Centered Attendance Communications

<<SCHOOL NAME>>

Date: 8/26/2022

<<PARENT/GUARDIAN>>

1234 NE 49th STREET
VANCOUVER, WA 98683

Dear <<PARENT/GUARDIAN>>,

We are reaching out to inform you about your student's absences, and offer support to you and your student with school attendance. Our records indicate that <<STUDENT>> has missed 3 (THREE) unexcused days of school so far this year. We truly want your student here at school with us each day so we can provide opportunities for <<STUDENT>> to:



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Large Group Share



Which Tier 1 practices have been effective in your setting to promote attendance & engagement?



Tier II & III



Tier II

- Community barriers identified and addressed
- Student success plan that includes attendance
- Family visits
- Mentors
- CICO
- Tutoring

Tier III

- Intensive mentoring
- Interagency case management
- Housing stability supports
- Individualized success plans

The type of barriers drives the type of interventions.



Teaming Resources

Team-Driven
Shared Leadership



- [How to Organize an Effective **School** Team to Improve Attendance](#) (updated Jan 2023)
- [How to Organize an Effective **District** Team to Improve Attendance](#) (updated Jan 2023)
- Attendance Team in Action [video](#)
- [Map of existing school teams worksheet](#)
- [Year-Long Planning - Attendance Works](#)



Data Resources & Protocols



- Problem-solving process for attendance data meetings
 - [TIPS resource](#)
- Root Cause Analysis (5 Why's or Fishbone)
- [Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle Example](#) from Attendance Works
- [MTSS Platform Buyer's Guide](#) (Branching Minds)
- [OSPI Guidance on Attendance & Truancy Assessment/Screeners](#)



Tiered Interventions & Supports Resources



Tier 1 Supports

- [Student attendance success plans](#)
- [Attendance Works resources and exercises for families](#)
- [Starting Each Class With a Warm Welcome](#)
- [Making Connections With Greetings at the Door](#)
- Attendance Awareness – [Editable templates/materials from OSPI/AESD](#) and [Attendance Works Awareness Campaign 2023](#)
- Example Letters & Other Materials in [Padlet from Districts in Washington](#)

Continuum of Supports

- [Attendance Playbook](#) from FutureEd (updated May 2023)



ESD Attendance & Reengagement Coordinators

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Session Evaluation

- What tool, tip, or piece of information did you find most helpful?
- What were you hoping to get out of today's presentation that you did NOT get?
- What is one next step you thought of for your team?



Thank you!

Contact Information

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Questions?

Stick around if you want to chat!



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