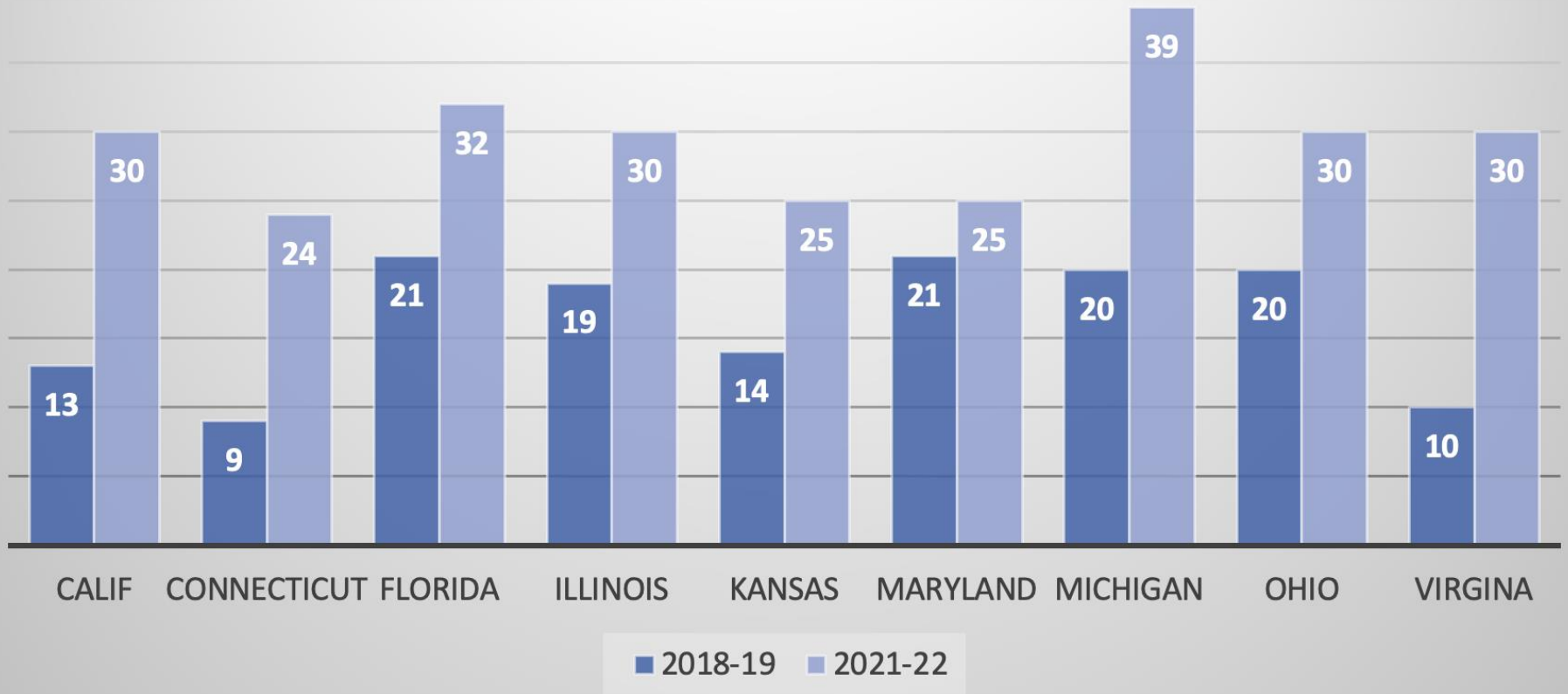


Future*Ed*

Independent Analysis, Innovative Ideas

Increasing Rates of Chronic Absenteeism



Lessons from the Pandemic

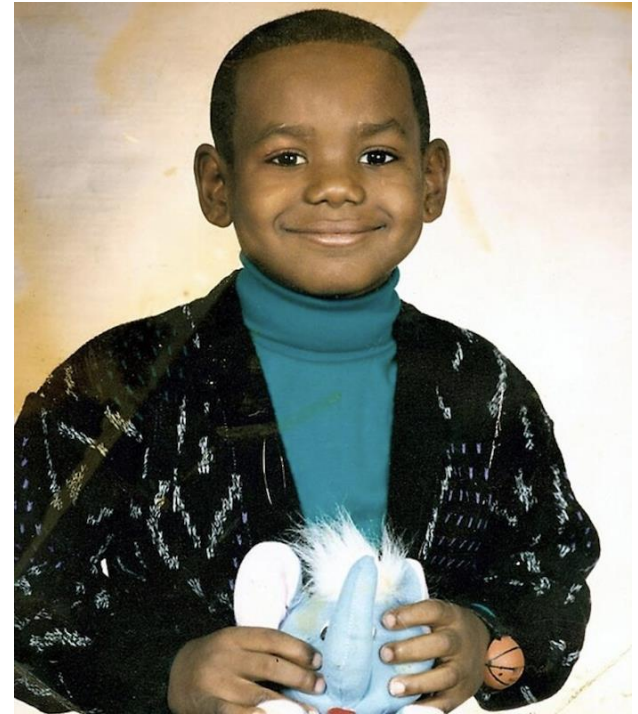
- Chronic absenteeism rates **doubled** and remain high
- Turning these trends around is **central** to addressing learning loss and student mental health
- **Barriers**, like transportation, health and housing, persist and in some places are worse
- School needs to be a **safe, welcoming place** for students and families.
- **Connection**—to teachers, peers, classrooms, and activities—is key to improving attendance
- Student and families want a **voice** in the classrooms and decision-making process

Attendance Barriers: Housing Instability

- Homeless students have high rates of chronic absenteeism, likely double that of other students
- Nationally rates are higher among students in shelters vs. those doubled up with families

Solutions:

- Coordinators at schools/shelters
- Wrap-around services/ Connected Schools
- Transportation options



Attendance Barriers: Transportation

- Missing the school bus can mean missing school for students with unreliable transportation
- Heavy traffic and community violence can keep students from getting to school
- Transit passes work if bus and trains run on reliable schedules



Solutions

- Targeted transportation
- Safe Passage
- Walking School Bus
- Public transit passes

Attendance Barriers: Health

- Nationwide, illness is the No.1 cause of absenteeism, especially asthma, which accounts for 14 million missed days annually
- Unhealthy buildings—with mold, mildew or poor ventilation—can contribute to illness
- Mental health concerns can contribute to misconduct and school refusal—leading to more absenteeism



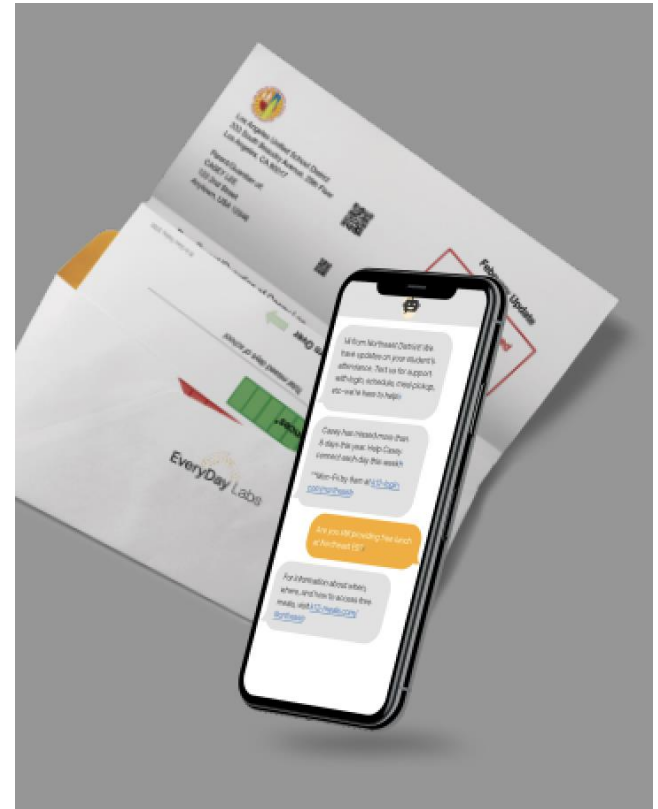
Solutions

- Attention to asthma
- Immunization clinics
- Handwashing protocols
- Telehealth

Communicating With Families

Direct, personalized outreach to families—through letters or texts—can reduce absenteeism. These should:

- Research shows families don't know how much school their children have missed
- A combination of letters and texts seem to work best
- Focus on empathy, how the school can help families, rather than punitive messages
- Send repeated communications notices throughout the year



Targeted Home Visits

During the pandemic, some districts began targeting home visits to families of students with high rates of absenteeism.

Connecticut's \$10.7 million LEAP program:

- Reached 8,700 students in 15 districts
- Led to a 15 percentage-point increase in attendance after 6 months



Connecting with Teachers, Mentors

Numerous studies show that connections to teachers, tutors and mentors can influence attendance—and, with it, academic success

What Matters:

- Knowing the teacher from past years
- Working in small groups or advisories
- Fair discipline practices
- A diverse workforce



Instruction That Matters

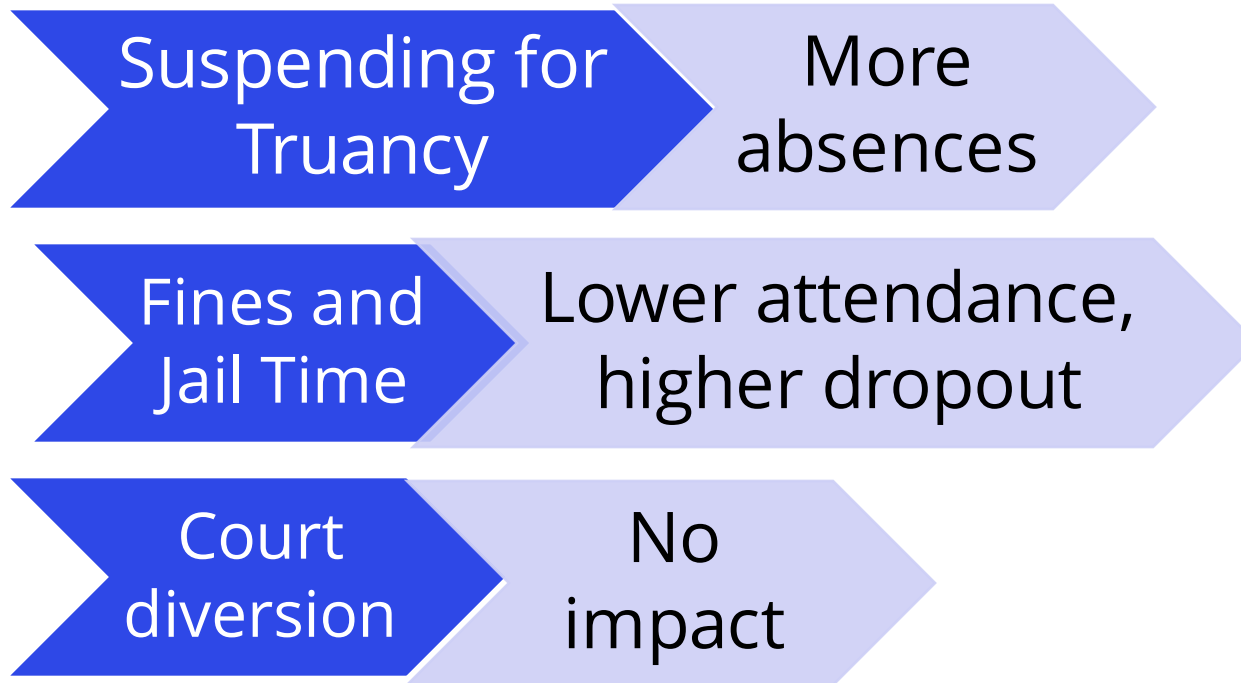
Students become more engaged when they believe what they're learning matters.

This works best when interventions:

- Help students see the relevance of lessons
- Connect to a students' culture
- Offer a viable career track
- Offer students a voice

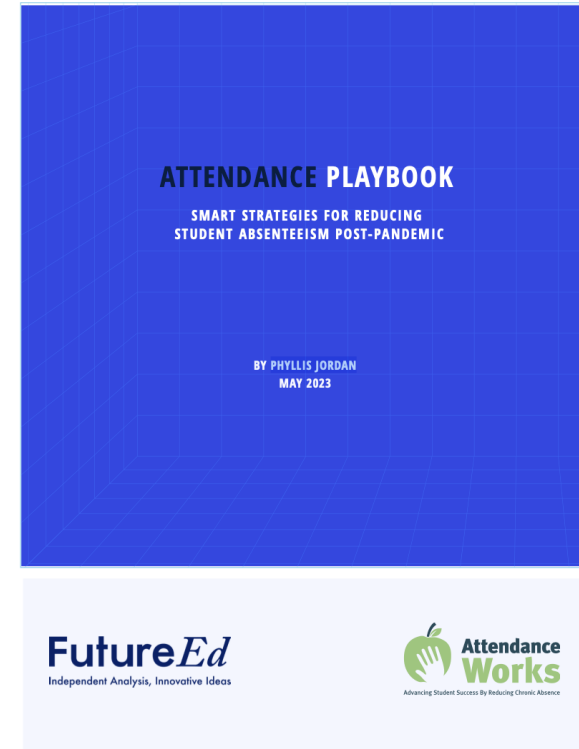


What Doesn't Work: Punitive Approaches



Attendance Playbook 3.0

- A joint project by FutureEd and Attendance Works
- Offers interventions for reducing chronic absence
- Provides:
 - ✓ ESSA research level
 - ✓ MTTS tier of support
 - ✓ Research and resources



LINK: <https://www.future-ed.org/attendance-playbook/>

Research and Resources

RESEARCH

- School-located influenza vaccination and absenteeism among elementary school students in a Hispanic community: **PROMISING**
- Impact of school flu vaccine program on student absences: **EMERGING**
- Burden of asthma in inner-city elementary schoolchildren: **PROMISING**
- The Relationship Between School-Based Health Centers, Rates of Early Dismissal from School, and Loss of Seat Time: **PROMISING**

RESOURCES

- The Cost Benefit of Comprehensive Primary and Preventive School-Based Health Care
- School-Based Health Care Support Toolkit

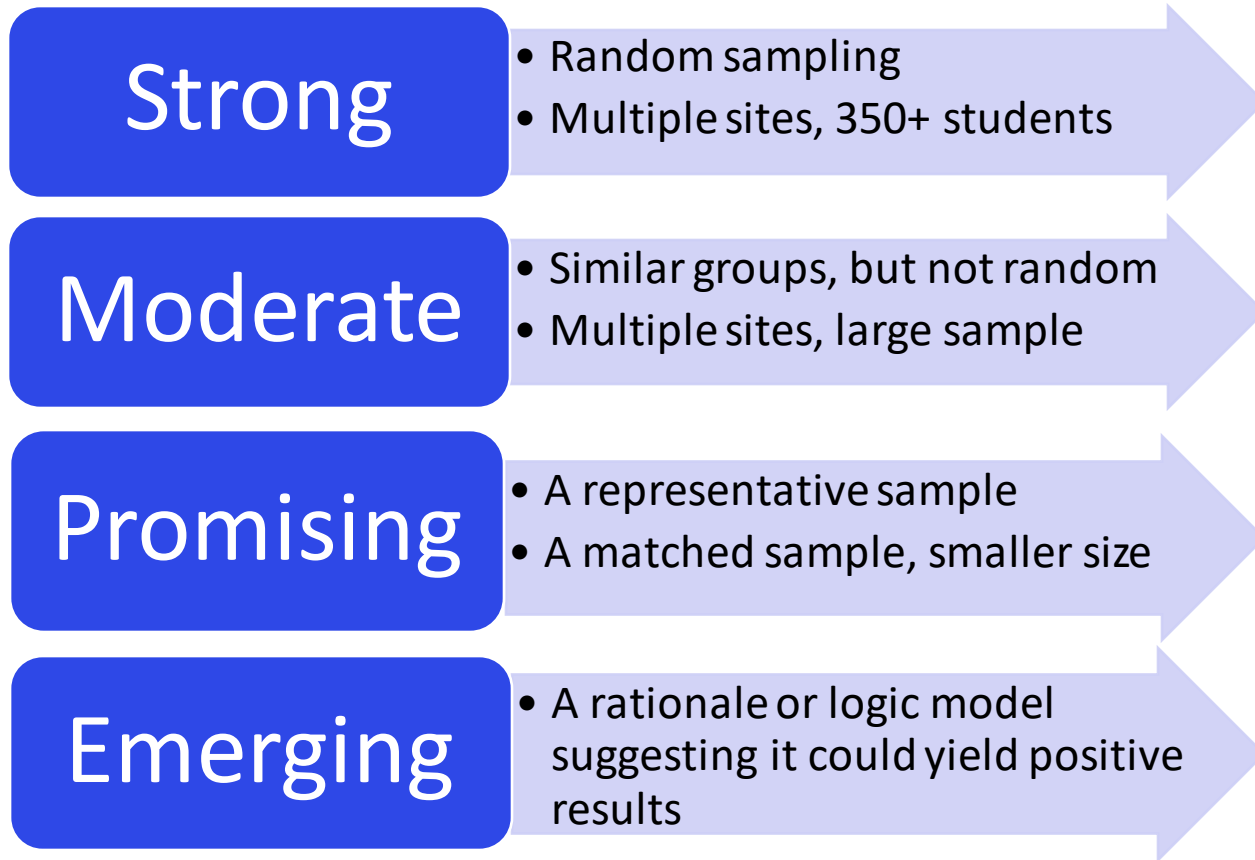
RESEARCH

- Can Restorative Practices Improve School Climate and Curb Suspensions? **MODERATE**
- The Promise of Restorative Practices to Transform Teacher-Student Relationships and Achieve Equity in School Discipline: **EMERGING**
- A Cluster-Randomized Trial of Restorative Practices: **EMERGING**

RESOURCES

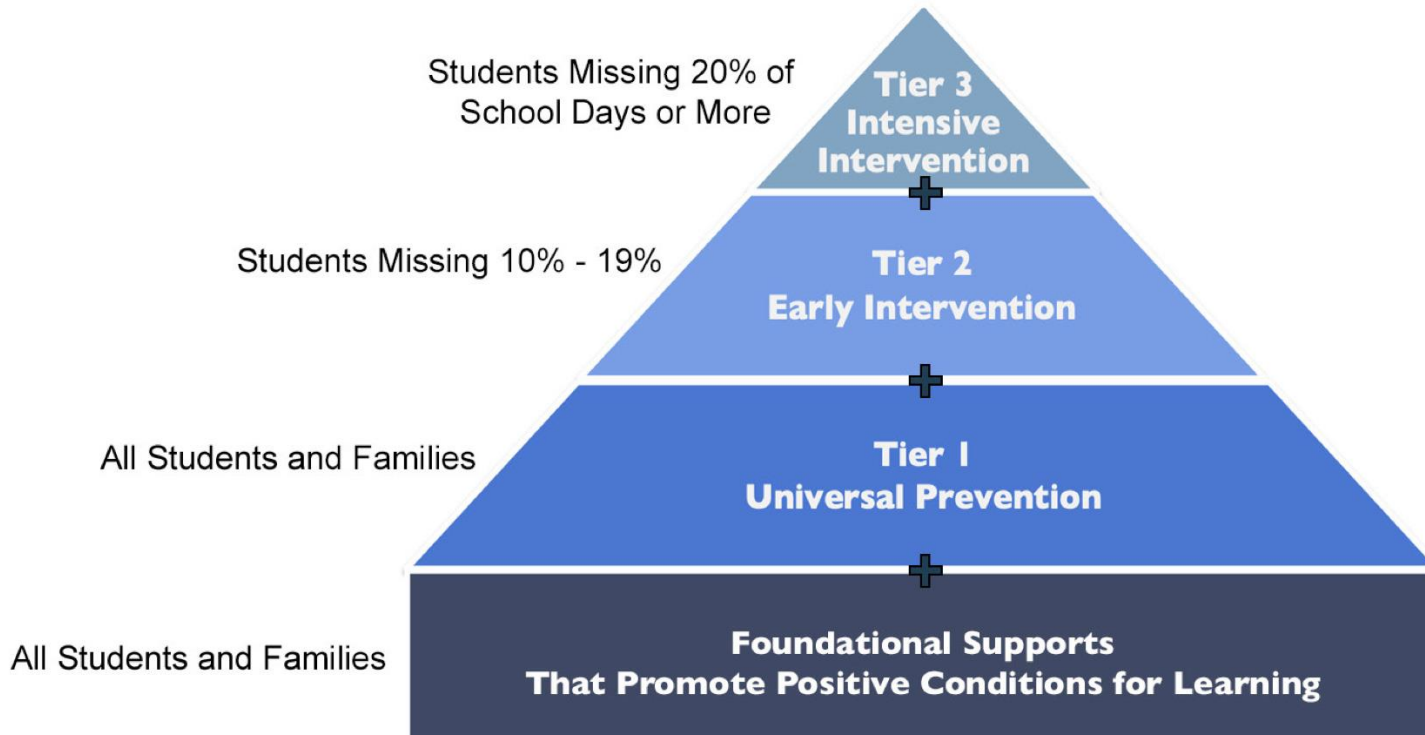
- Restorative Justice in U.S. Schools: A Research Review

Levels of Evidence



Tiers of Support

Three Tiers of Attendance Support



www.attendanceworks.org