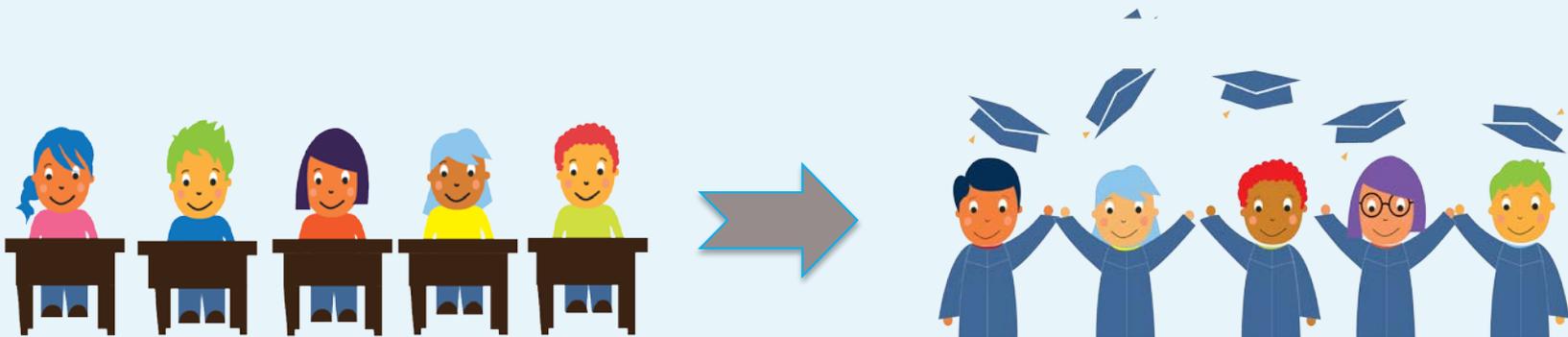


Reducing Chronic Absence

Why Does It Matter? What Can We Do?



Attendance Is an Essential Ingredient of Academic Success

“3 A” School Success Framework

Attainment
Over Time

Achievement
Every Year

Attendance
Every Day

Developed by Annie E. Casey Foundation & America’s Promise Alliance
For more info go to www.americaspromise.org/parentengagement



Improving Attendance Matters Because It Reflects:

Exposure to Language: Starting in Pre-K, attendance equals exposure to language-rich environments, especially for low-income children.

Time on Task in Class: Students only benefit from classroom instruction if they are in class.

On Track for Success: Chronic absence is a proven early warning sign that a student is more likely to be behind in reading by 3rd grade, fail courses middle and high school, and ultimately drop out.

College Readiness: Attendance patterns predicts college enrollment and persistence.

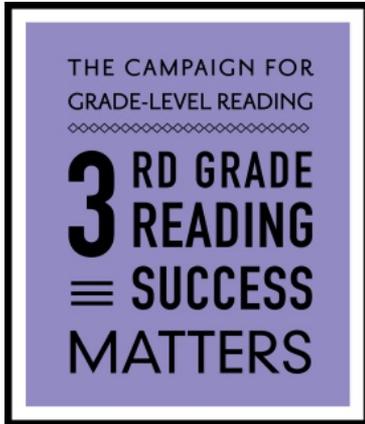
Engagement: Attendance reflects engagement in learning.

Effective Practice: Schools, communities and families can improve attendance when they work together.

(For research, see: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/research/>)



Attendance Matters Early In A Child's School Career



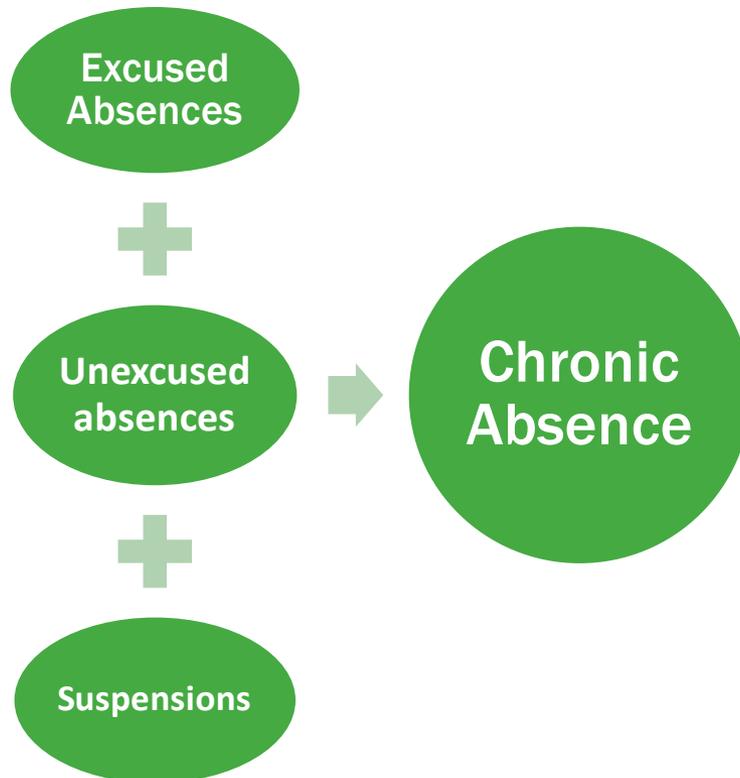
The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is focusing on three challenges to reading success that are amenable to community solutions:

- **The Readiness Gap:** Too many children from low-income families begin school already far behind.
- **The Attendance Gap (Chronic Absence):** Too many children from low-income families miss too many days of school.
- **The Summer Slide (Summer Learning Loss):** Too many children lose ground over the summer months.



What Is Chronic Absence?

Chronic absence is missing so much school for any reason that a child is at risk academically. Attendance Works recommends defining it as **missing 10% or more of school.**

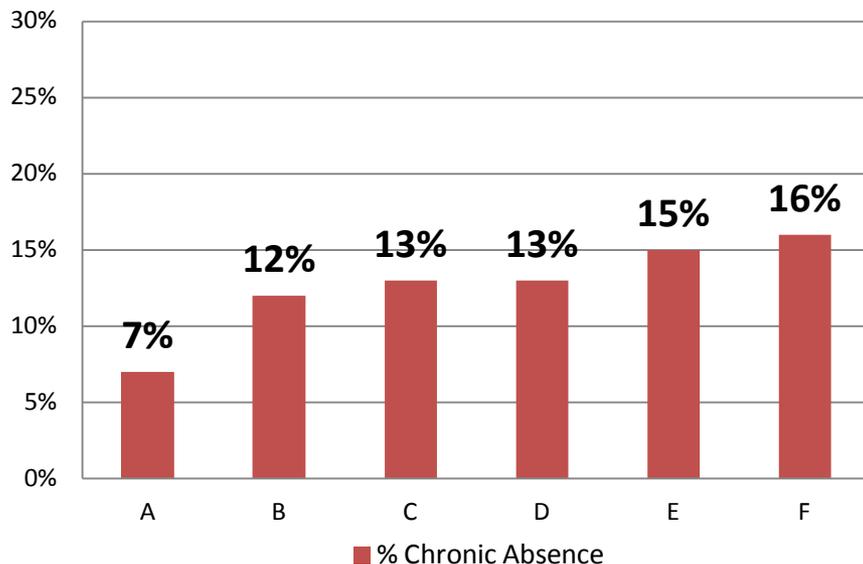


Chronic absence is different from truancy (unexcused absences only) or average daily attendance (how many students show up to school each day).

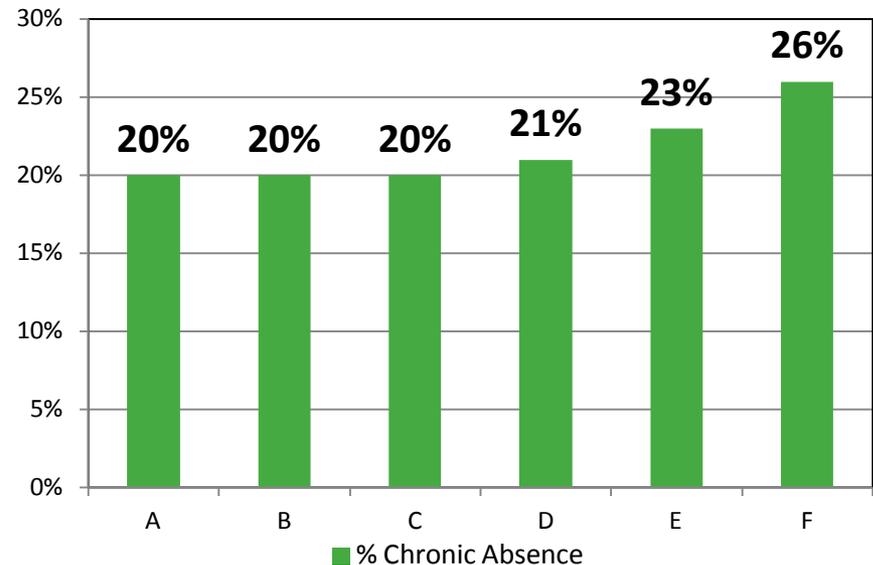
High Levels of Average Daily Attendance (ADA) Can Mask Chronic Absence

90% and even 95% \neq A

Chronic Absence For 6 Elementary Schools in Oakland, CA with 95% ADA in 2012



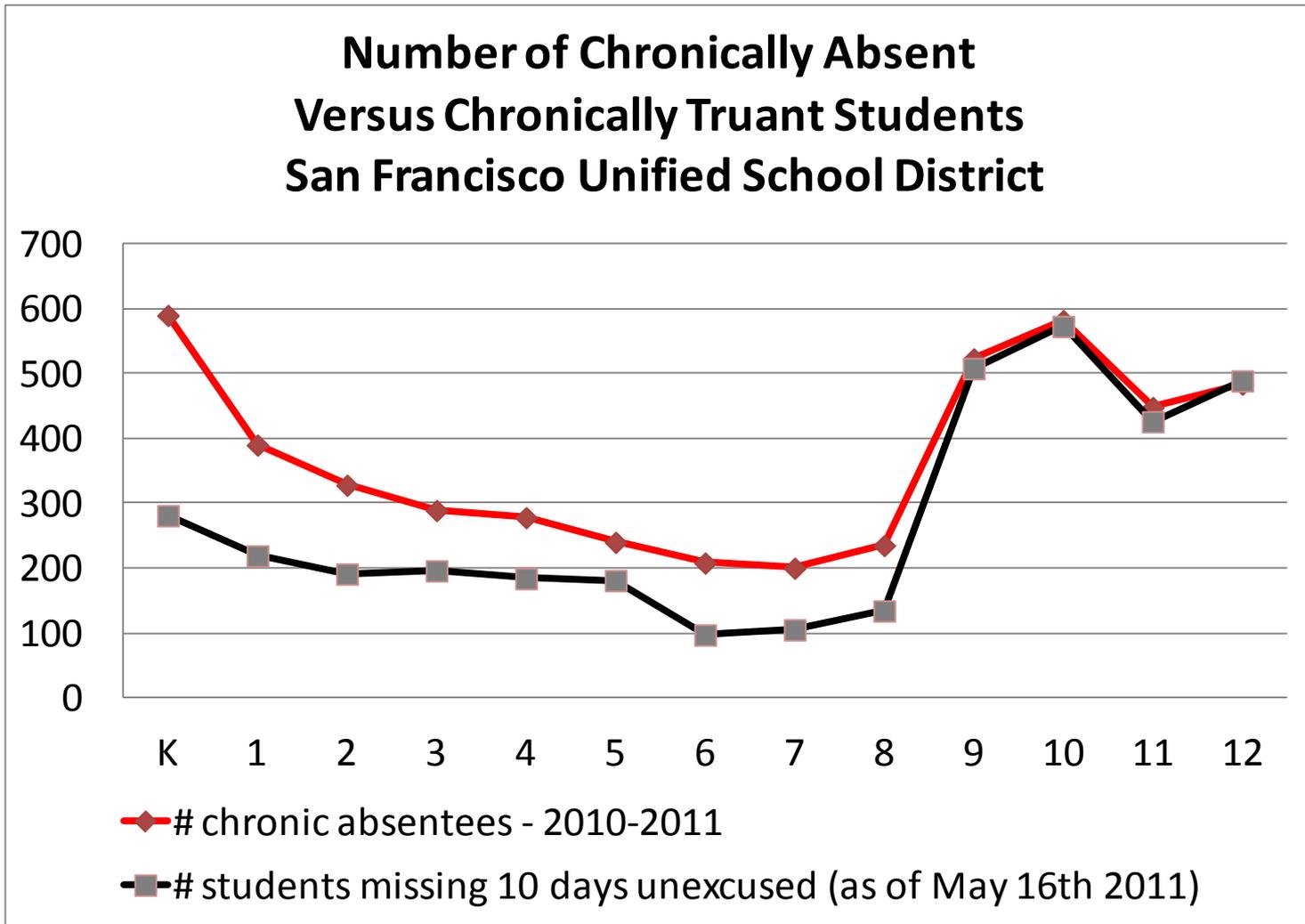
Chronic Absence for 6 Schools in New York City with 90% ADA in 2011-12



98% ADA = little chronic absence
95% ADA = don't know
93% ADA = significant chronic absence



Truancy (unexcused absences) Can Also Mask Chronic Absence



Chronic Absence

A Hidden National Crisis

- ❑ Nationwide, as many as **7.5 million students** miss nearly a month of school every year. That's 135 million days of lost time in the classroom.
- ❑ In some cities, as many as **one in four students** are missing that much school.
- ❑ Chronic absenteeism is a **red alert** that students are headed for academic trouble and eventually for dropping out of high school.
- ❑ Research shows that chronically absent students **are less likely to succeed academically**, and are **more likely to be suspended and eventually dropout**.
- ❑ Poor attendance isn't just a problem in high school. It can start **as early as pre-kindergarten**.



13.5% of students in Utah were chronically absent in 2010/11

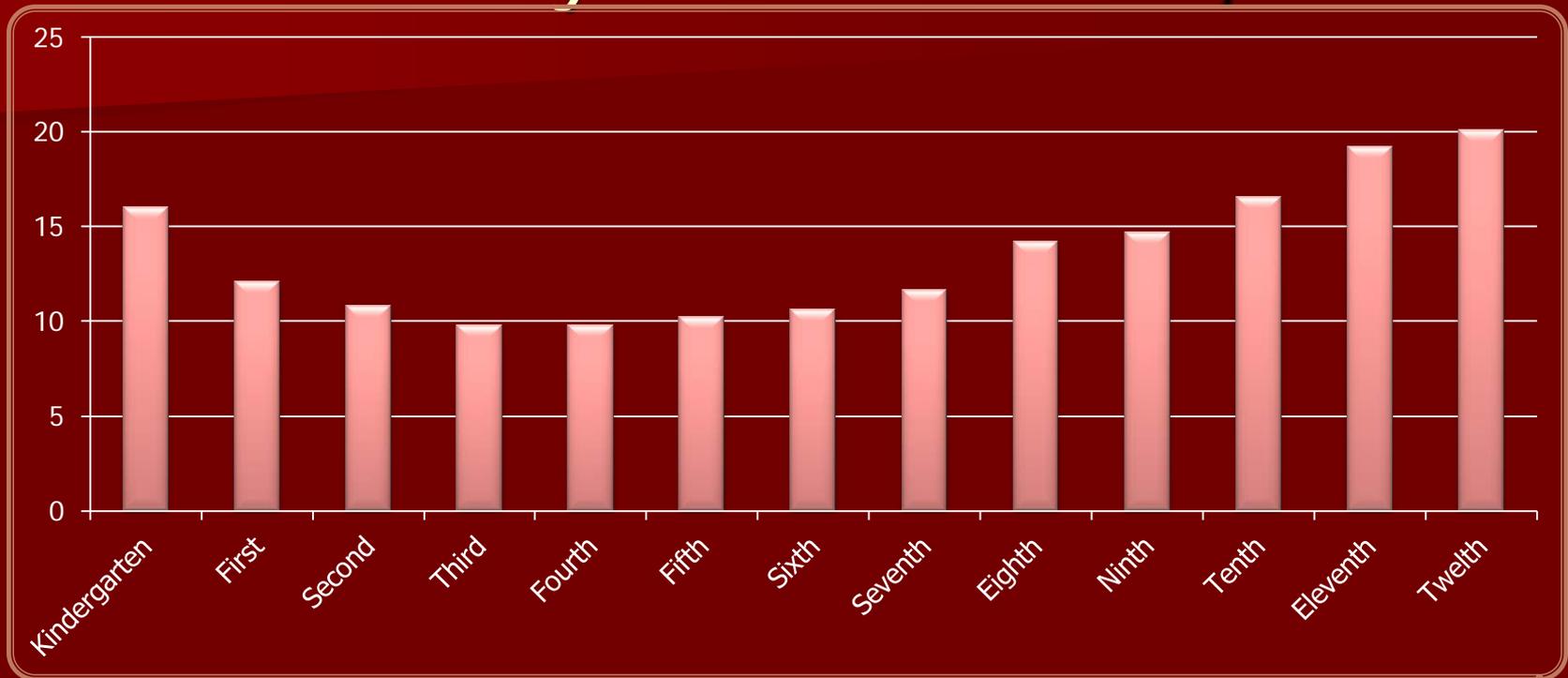


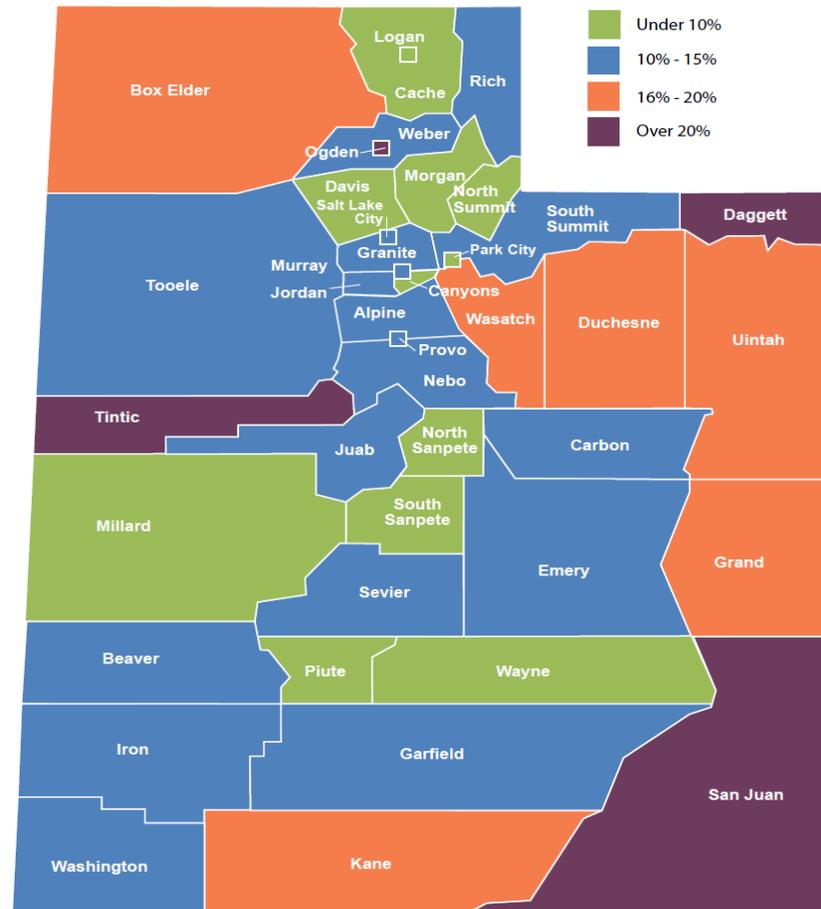
Figure 2. Proportion of Chronically Absent Students by Year in School

The grade of the student was related to chronic absenteeism. The general U-shaped trend is typical of what is seen in other states.

Elementary Chronic Absence Is A Statewide Challenge in Utah

Utah Elementary Schools by School District, Percent of Students Chronically Absent, 2013

In Utah, 12% (36,638) of elementary students are chronically absent

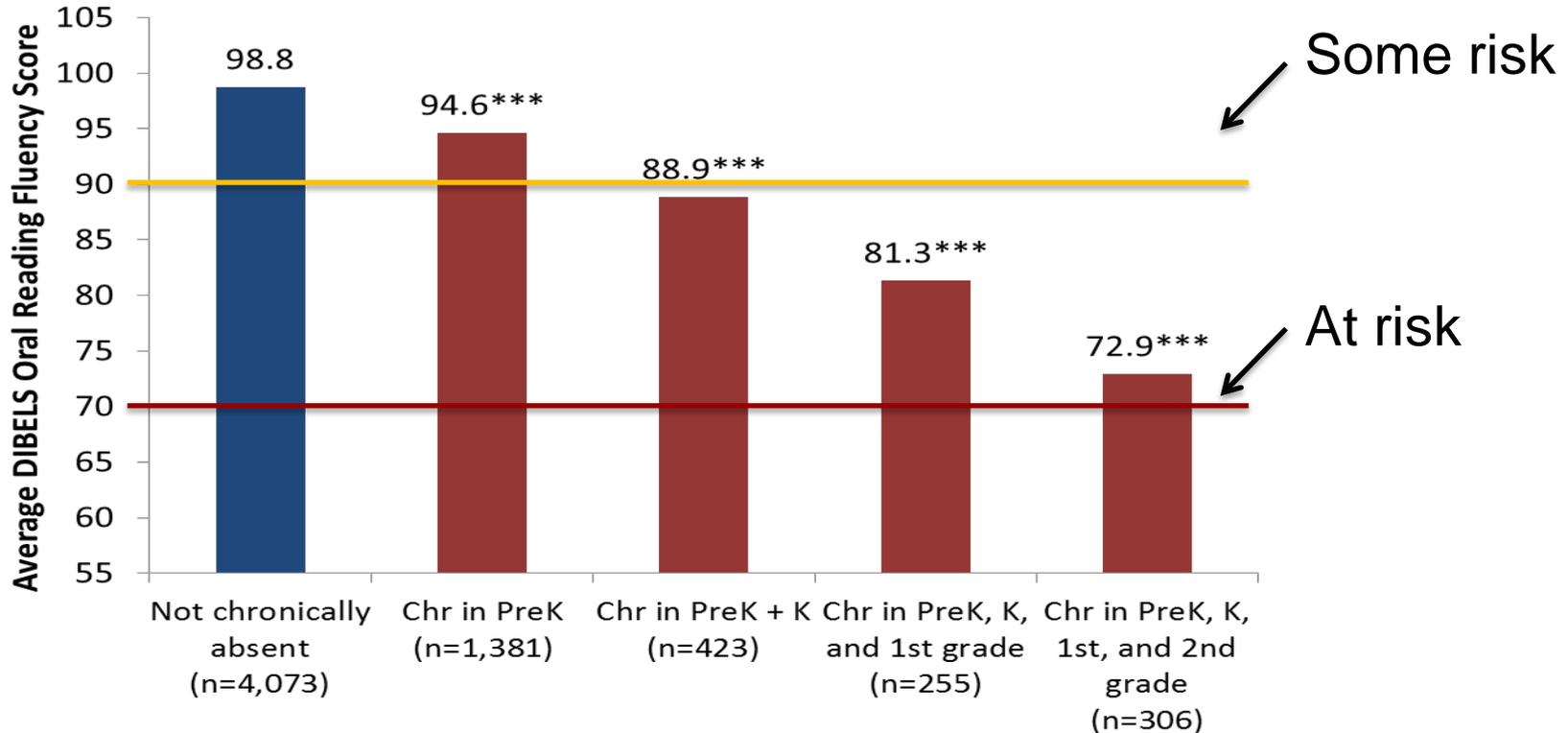


Why Does Attendance Matter for Achievement?

What we know from research around the country



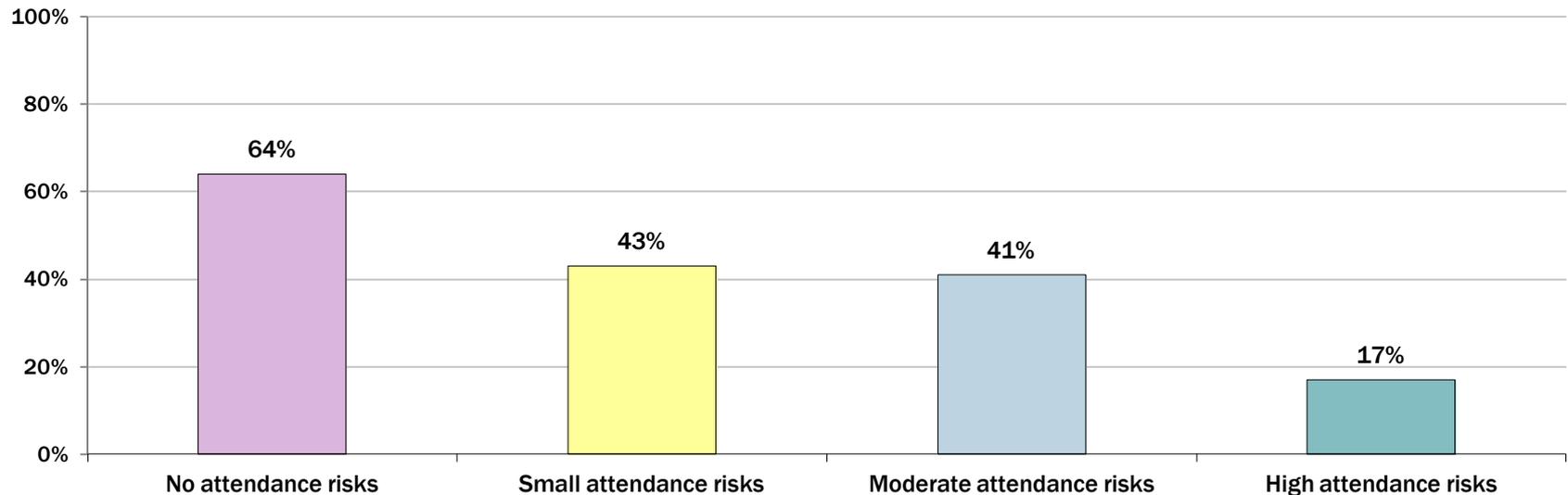
Starting in PreK, More Years of Chronic Absence = Need for Intensive Reading Support By 2nd Grade



* Indicates that scores are significantly different from scores of students who are never chronically absent, at $p < .05$ level; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Chronic Absence in Kindergarten and 1st Grade = Lower 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency

Percent Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced on 3rd Grade ELA Based on Attendance in Kindergarten and in 1st Grade



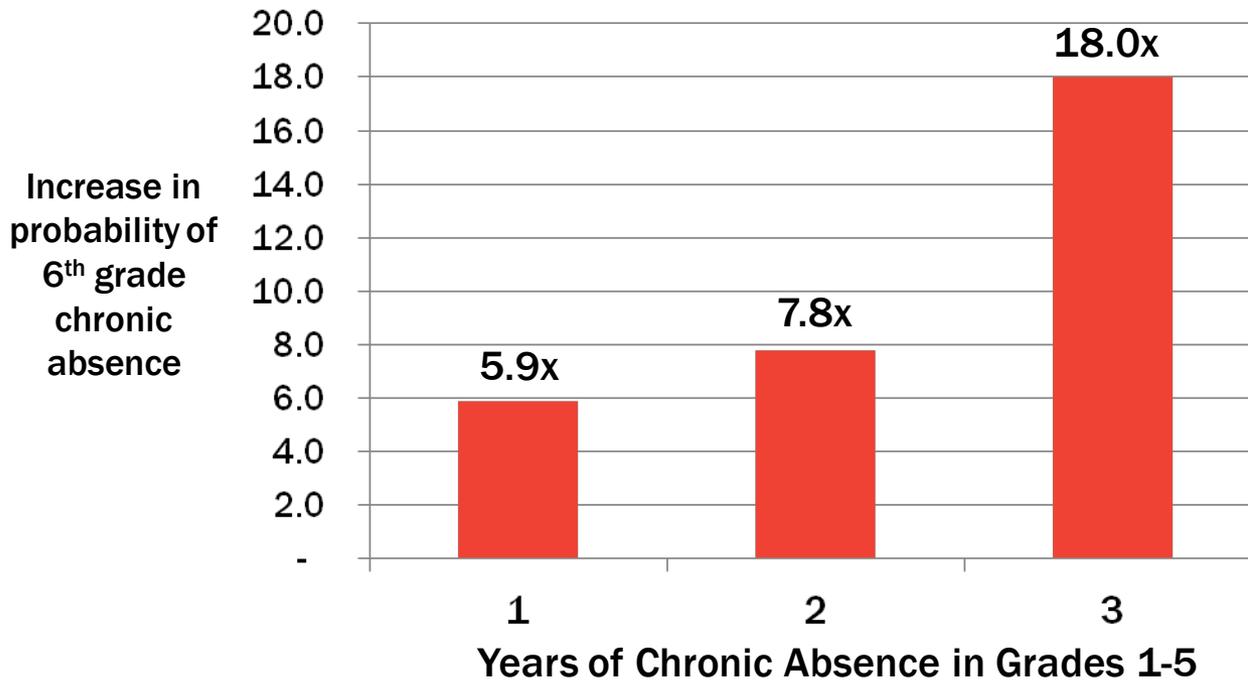
No risk	Missed less than 5% of school in K & 1st
Small risk	Missed 5-9% of days in both K & 1st
Moderate risk	Missed 5-9% of days in 1 year & 10% in 1 year
High risk	Missed 10% or more in K & 1st

Source: Applied Survey Research & Attendance Works (April 2011)



Multiple Years of Elementary Chronic Absence = Worse Middle School Outcomes

Each year of chronic absence in elementary school is associated with a substantially higher probability of chronic absence in 6th grade



Chronic absence in 1st grade is also associated with:

- Lower 6th grade test scores
- Higher levels of suspension

Student Achievement as Predicted by Chronic Absenteeism

Outcome	Effect of Chronic Absence
Reading on grade level	Odds of being below grade level were 1.7 times higher
CRT Language	Decreased 3.798 points, on average
CRT Math	Decreased 5.861 points, on average
CRT Science	Decreased 4.850 points, on average
Cumulative GPA	Decreased .854 points, on average
Dropout	Odds of dropping out were 7.4 times higher

Table 1. Relationship between Chronic Absenteeism and Academic Outcome Variables

Cumulative Influence of Chronic Absence on Dropping Out

Number of Years Chronically Absent	Percent Who Dropped Out
0	10.3%
1	36.4%
2	51.8%
3	58.7%
4	61.3%
5	Not Reported (<1%)

Table 3. Proportion of Students Dropping Out by Number of Years the Student Was Chronically Absent

The effects of chronic absenteeism were cumulative. With every year of chronic absenteeism, a higher percentage of students dropped out of school.

High School Chronic Absence Affects Post-Secondary Outcomes

Preliminary results of new study found high school graduates with record of chronic absence:

- Were less likely to go to college than their peers;
- Were less likely to persist in college;
- Were less likely to earn credits in their classes;
- Had lower GPAs (if they earned a 4-year degree); and
- Were less likely to have earned 4-year degrees.

How Can We Address Chronic Absence?



Find Out Why Students Are Chronically Absent

Myths

Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused

Sporadic versus consecutive absences aren't a problem

Attendance only matters in the older grades

Barriers

Chronic disease

Lack of access to health or dental care

Poor transportation

No safe path to school

Aversion

Child struggling academically

Lack of engaging instruction

Poor school climate and ineffective school discipline

Parents had negative school experience

Covariates of Chronic Absenteeism

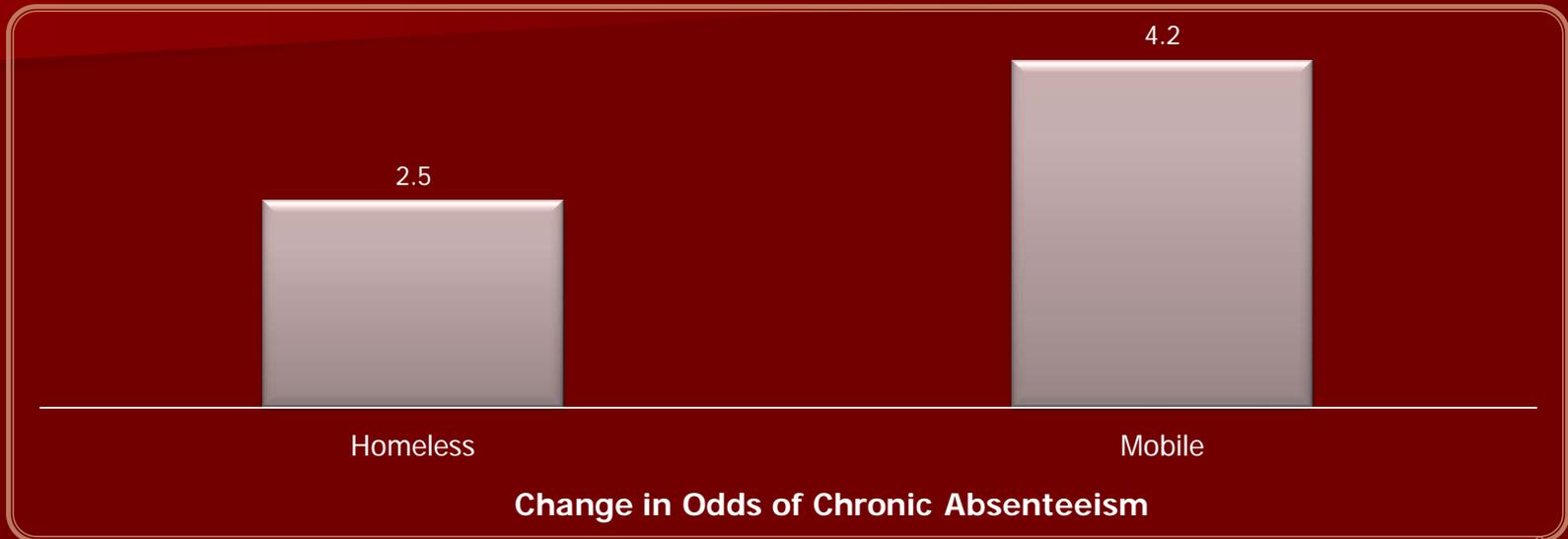
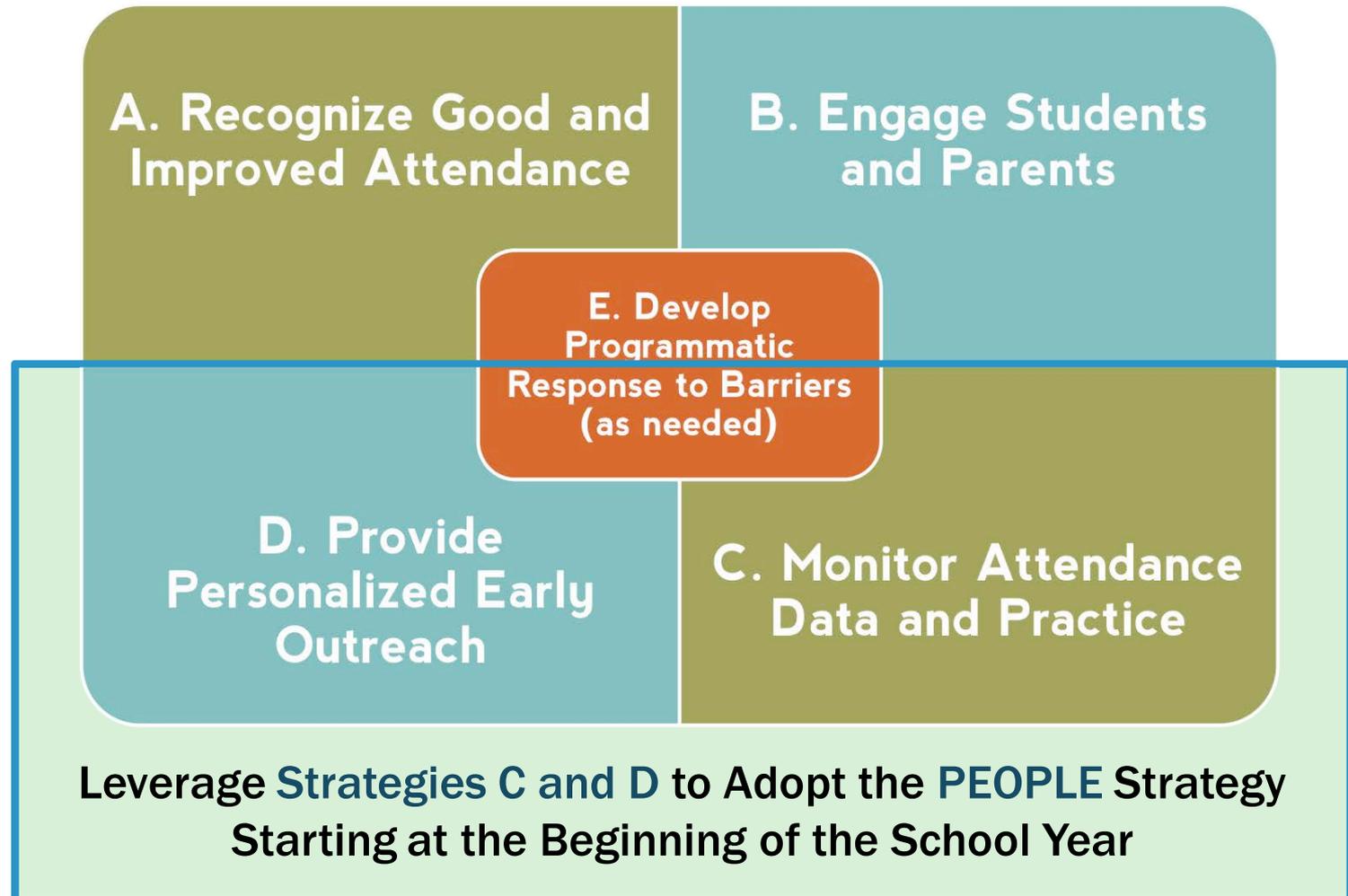


Figure 3. Change in Odds Associated with the Covariates of Mobility and Homelessness

Students who were homeless in 2010-2011 were 2.5 times more likely to be chronically absent than students who weren't homeless, and students who checked out of one school and into another during the 2010-2011 year were 4.2 times more likely to be chronically absent.

AW Recommended Site-Level Strategies

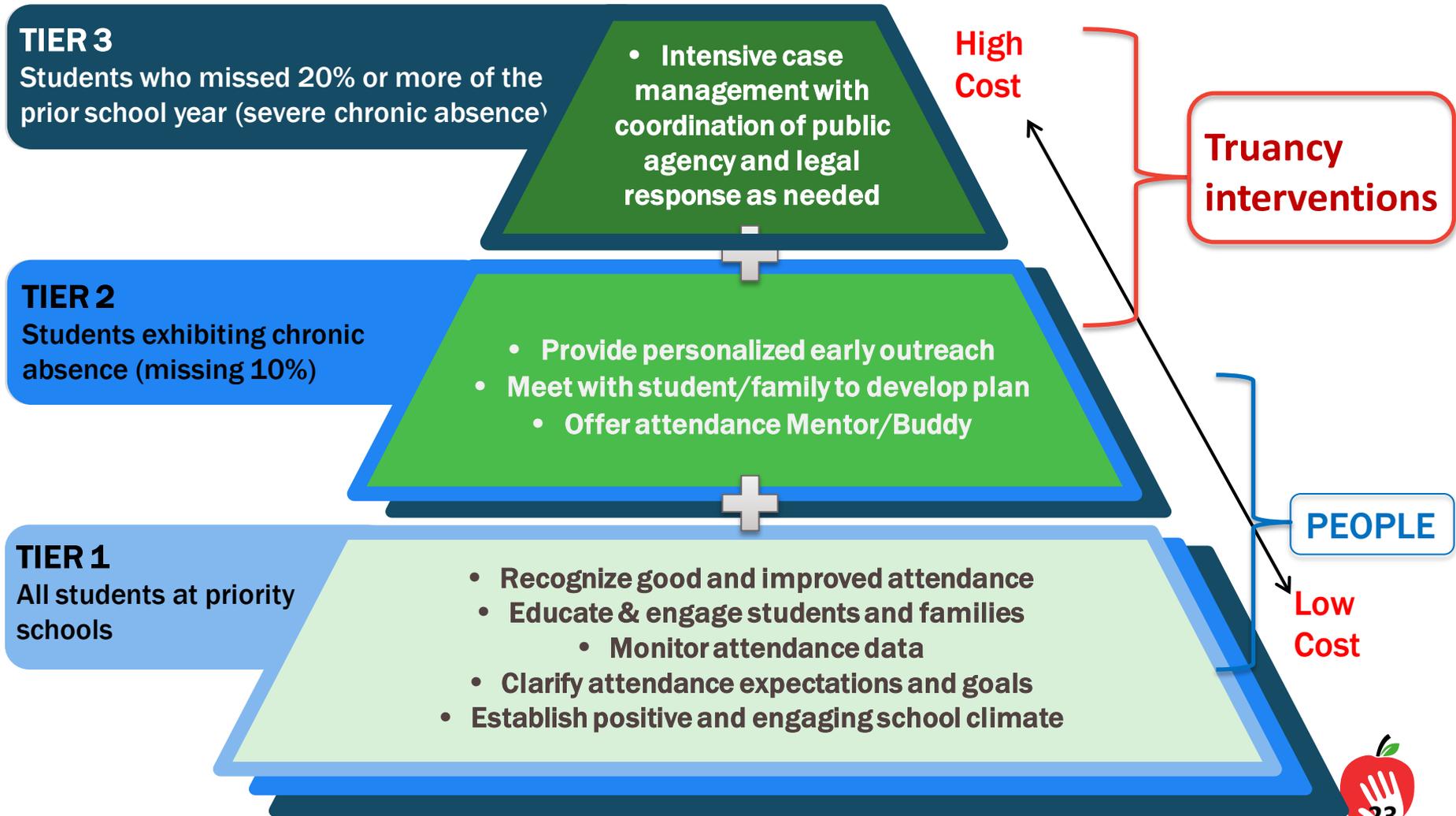


Priority Early Outreach for Positive Linkages and Engagement (PEOPLE)

- **P**riority: Focuses on at-risk students in grades, schools and neighborhoods with high levels of chronic absence.
- **E**arly: Begins with the start of school.
- **O**utreach: Connects to students and families.
- **P**ositive: Promotes preventive, supportive approaches rather than punitive responses.
- **L**inkages: Taps the full community for support.
- **E**ngagement: Motivates showing up to class & offers students & families a role in improving attendance.

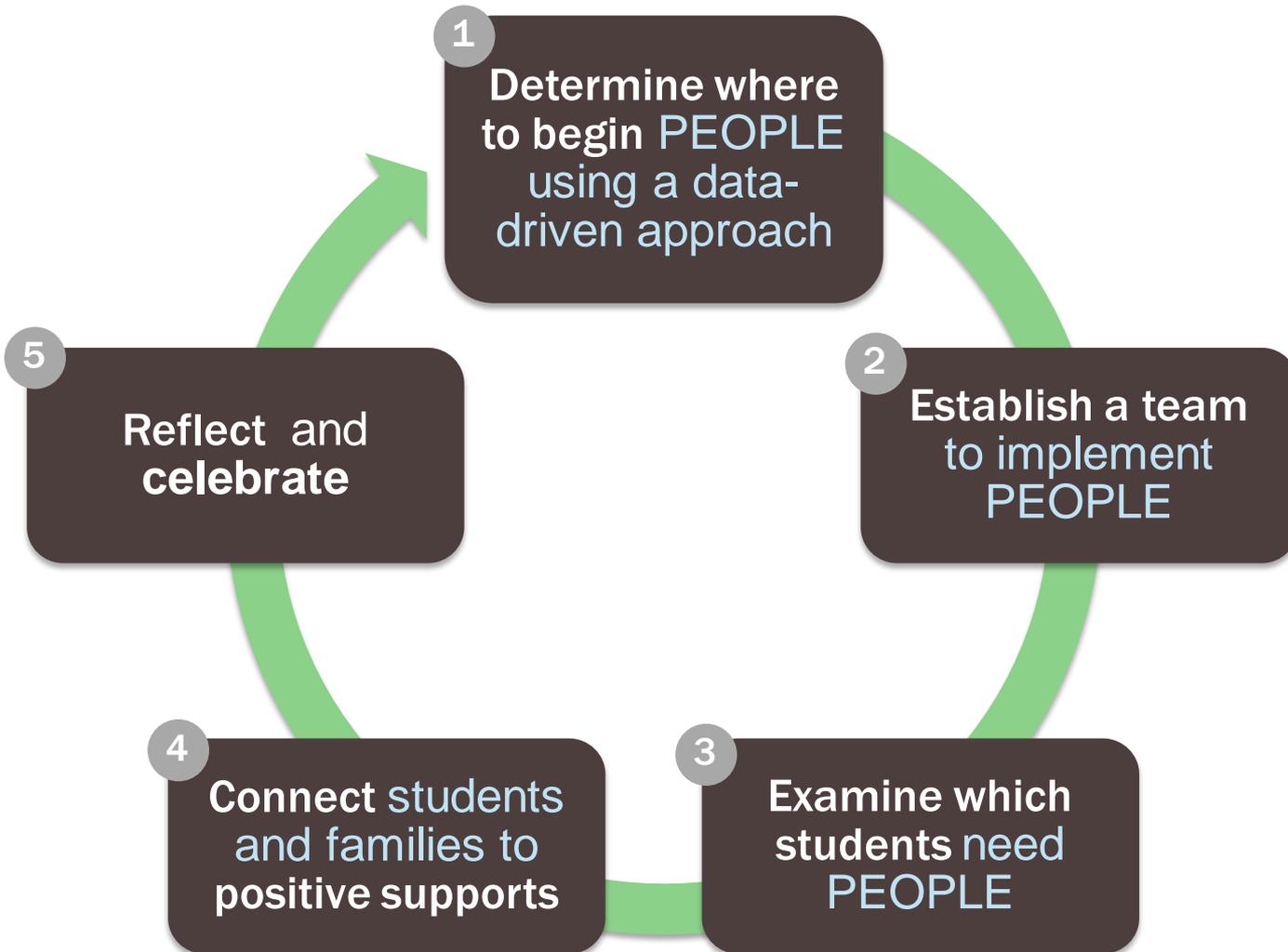


PEOPLE helps ensure adoption of a tiered approach that begins with prevention



Implementing PEOPLE

(Priority Early Outreach for Positive Linkages and Engagement)



Use Data to Identify Where to Begin Implementation Within a District or School

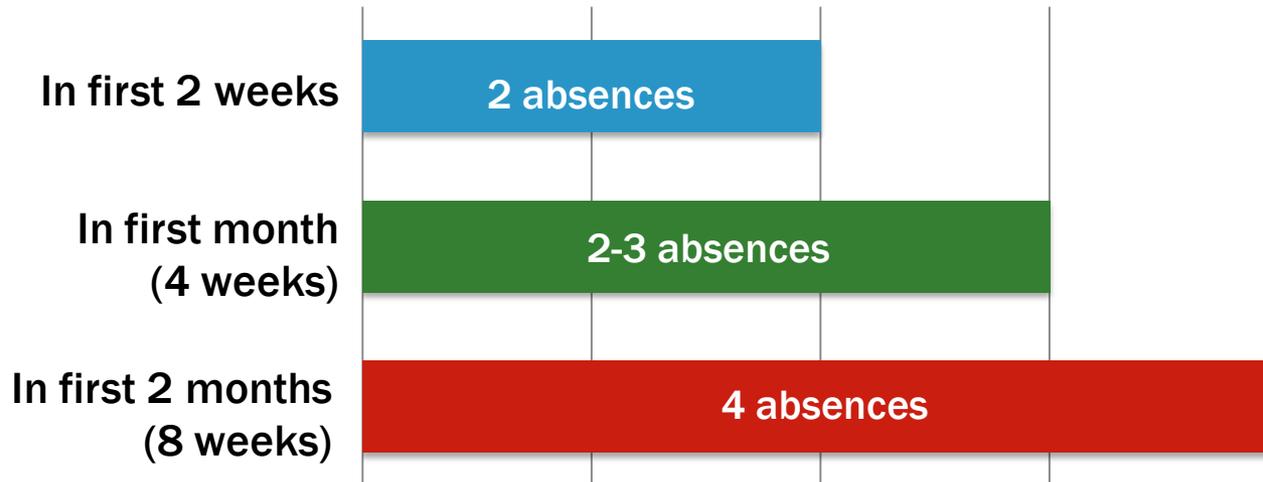
Proposed Criteria:

- Significant number of low-income students
- Elevated chronic absence rates especially in transitional grades (e.g., K/1, 6th, 9th grades)
- School leadership committed to making attendance a priority and adopting recommended practices and working with priority outreach list
- Community partners that can help support the work



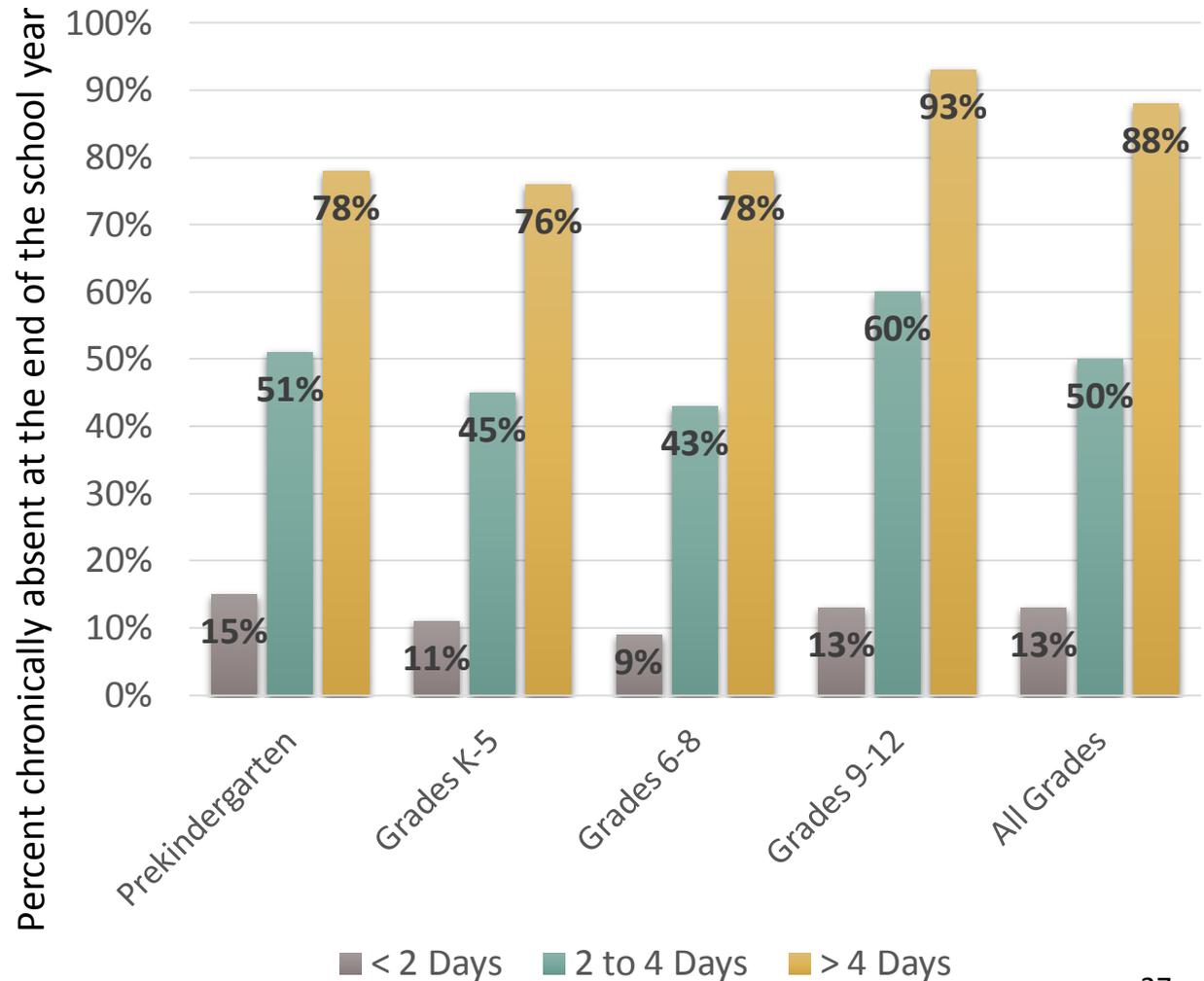
Criteria for Identifying Priority Students for Tier 2 Supports

- ❑ Chronic absence (missed 10% or more of school) in the prior year, assuming data is available.
- ❑ And/or during the beginning of the school year, student has:

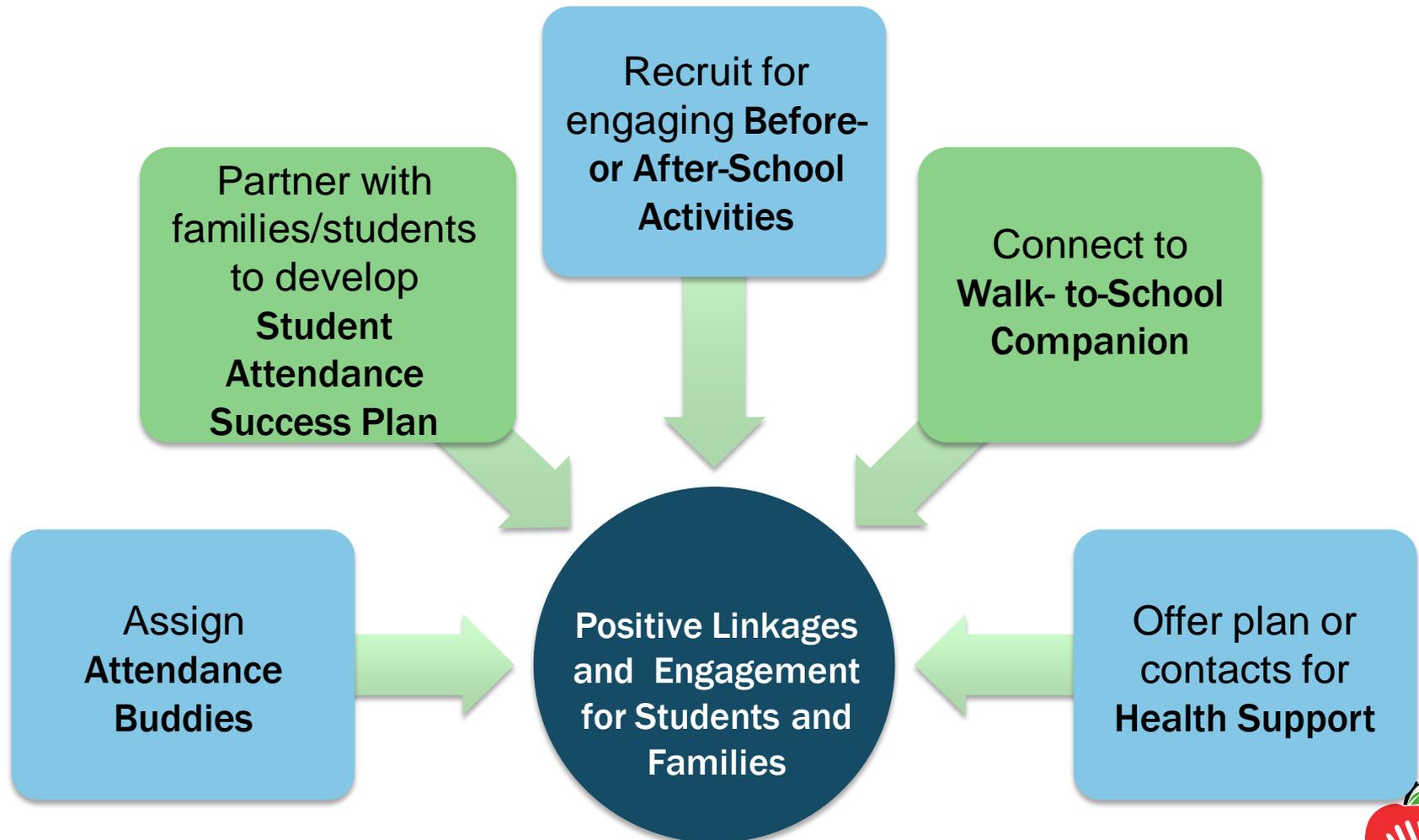


Students Who Miss 2 or More Days of School in the First Month of School Are Significantly More Likely to Be Chronically Absent by the End of the School Year

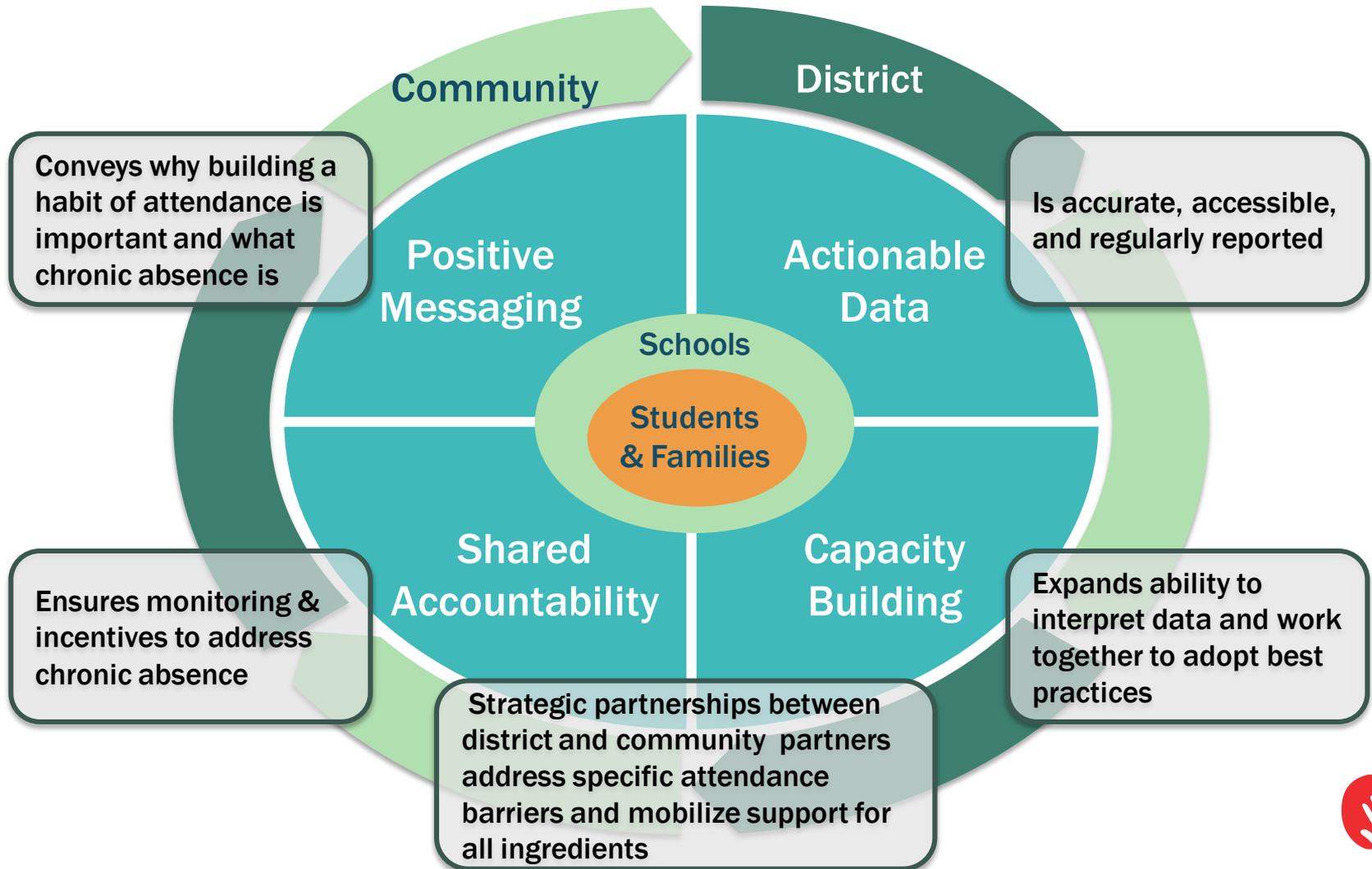
- Baltimore students who missed 2-4 days of school in September were 5 times as likely to be chronically absent.
- Students who missed 5 or more days of school in September were 16 times as likely to be chronically absent.



Possible Tier 2 Interventions



Ingredients for System-wide Success & Sustainability



Potential Implications for Policy and Action

- 1. Build Public Awareness About Chronic Absence and Why It Matters.**
- 2. Ensure Standard Approach to Reporting Absences and Calculating Chronic Absence Across Districts.**
- 3. Publically Report Chronic Absence by District, School, Grade and Subgroup.**
- 4. Encourage Real-Time Data Reports to Families and Engagement When Absences Add Up.**



Potential Implications for Policy and Action

- 5. Ensure Chronic Absence Is Addressed and Engaged as Part of School Improvement.**
- 6. Support Capacity Building to Ensure Everyone Understands Data and Best Practices.**
- 7. Use For Interagency Resource Allocation and Coordination: Encourage Joint Review of Chronic Absence Data to Inform Resources Allocation and Policy Development.**

Discussion

- **Does this resonate? Does this apply to you?**
- **Any questions?**

