project10 transition education network

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PROJECT 10 TOPICAL BRIEFS are published on a bi-monthly basis. Each issue focuses on a specific topic or theme, highlighting current and upcoming information and events related to secondary transition. This month the Topical Brief is focused on Attendance Awareness.

Use the green button below to share this Topical Brief with someone who would benefit from this edition.

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Stories

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ISSUE

Attendance Awareness: All Year Long

Schools are well into the first quarter of the 2021-22 school year and there are so many things demanding your attention. Amid the fray of preparing your classroom, school or district, welcoming new students, meeting parents, writing lesson plans, following new legislative requirements, attending IEP meetings, managing technology and more, we want to say, "Thank you for your excellence and commitment!" Your students depend on you in many ways. The common tasks you perform are uncommonly influential in their lives. Your role is especially crucial in regard to creating connections with your students This Topical Brief will focus on student attendance and engagement.
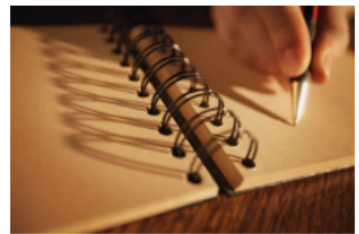
Relationships: Keeping Students and Families Engaged

According to an Attendance Works blog article on communications with families, "How [schools] welcome and support families is more important than ever this school year. As the Delta variant continues to upend schooling and family lives, there are lessons learned from last year's experiences that can guide [school] outreach." Connections between school staff and students as well as their families help to create an environment that feels welcoming and safe. Suggestions for communicating with families are summarized as follows:

- Assure families of school cleanliness and safety.
- Encourage families to strive to keep their children healthy.
- Build relationships that ease the difficulties of health and attendance issues.
- Keep student learning as the top priority regardless of whether students are learning in-person or online.
- Monitor the five key metrics of student attendance carefully.

1. Contact.
2. Connectivity.
3. Relationships.
4. History of chronic absence.
5. Take attendance consistently and use data strategically.

Bring a problem-solving attitude to issues around student absences. Helping students to show up for school helps prepares them to stay engaged, achieve their educational goals and show up for life in a big way.

Paying Attention to Student Attendance: All Year Long

The Bureau of Exceptional Student Education (BESE) Directors' Call on July 27, 2021 highlighted the importance of attendance in schools this year. Beverly Wilkins, School Social Work Consultant reminded everyone that, "Attendance Awareness Month highlights the importance of schools and districts to address the root cause of attendance issues and its effect on academic performance and the . . . needs of all students." Wilkins also referenced the attendance awareness campaign, "[Take Action](#)". This campaign calls for schools and districts to do the following:

- Prioritize Attendance: Make clear that improved student attendance is one of your top priorities.
- Mobilize the Community: Reach out to make improved student attendance a broadly owned and widely shared civic priority.
- Drive with Data: Use data to raise public awareness, establish goals, track progress, and assure accountability.
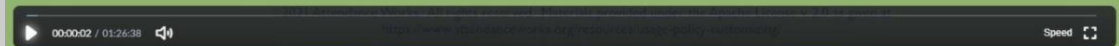
Rebound with Attendance Webinar Series

The Attendance Works webinar series featured the, "Welcomed: Embracing Students, Families and Educators in the New School Year" which was shared on August 4, 2021 and includes a panel of speakers who represent a variety of community organizations at the local level who promote and support students to attend school.

Reviewing Florida's Attendance Data

The Attendance Works webinar series featured the, "Welcomed: Embracing Students, Families and Educators in the New School Year" which was shared on August 4, 2021 and includes a panel of speakers who represent a variety of community organizations at the local level who promote and support students to attend school.

Below is a summary of Florida's attendance data points to consider when learning from your district's attendance patterns in 2019-20.

- Students with disabilities represent 14.8% of total student enrollment in the state. However, students with disabilities represent 20% of total chronic absenteeism.
- Students with disabilities are more likely to have lower attendance than students without disabilities.
- Males were more likely to have lower attendance than females.
- Black and Hispanic students were more likely to have lower attendance than White and Asian students.
- English Language Learners (ELL) were more likely to have lower attendance than students who have learned English as their first language.
- Consider using the "Know Your Schools Online Tool" to study the attendance data in your district or in your school. Find the portal home on the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) website at https://edudata.fldoe.org/index.html. Use your data to craft interventions that promote and encourage attendance in the areas of need identified in your school and/or district. To guide you in your analysis of the data, use the "Questions to Ask When Looking at Your Data" handout in step two of the "Pathways to Engagement: A Toolkit for Covid-19 Recovery Through Attendance."

The [Pathways to Engagement](#) toolkit from Attendance Works is organized by four steps that connect the user with additional information through handouts, templates, assessments and activities. See the toolbox matrix below that will guide you through all of the steps and included resources.

Pathways to Engagement: A Toolkit for Covid-19 Recovery Through Attendance

Guiding Matrix

Steps	Resources Included at Each Step
Step 1: Establish Your Team. Convene a small group of leaders if you are just starting or integrate into the work of an existing team.	How to Organize an Effective School Team Handout
	How to Organize an Effective District Team Handout
	School and District Team Self-Assessments of Practice
Step 2: Review Data and Establish Priority Groups. Use data to identify which group(s) of students or schools most need additional engagement and to better understand their strengths and challenges.	Using Chronic Absence to Map Interrupted Schooling, Instructional Loss and Educational Inequity
	Emerging Attendance Data Reveals Troubling, Early Trends
	Monitoring Attendance in Distance Learning
	Questions to Ask When Looking at Your Data
	Are Students Present and Accounted For? An Examination of State Attendance Policies During the Covid-19 Pandemic
	Monitoring Attendance in Distance Learning
	Resources for Identifying Assets and Challenges for Attending School
Step 3: Craft Engagement Strategies. Take a multi-tiered approach to engagement, especially for priority student groups, that starts in the spring, continues in the summer and is amplified in the fall.	Chronic Absence: 3 Tiers of Intervention
	Belonging to School: Phase I, Spring
	Belonging to School: Phase I, Spring (Blank)
	Bridges to School (Phase II Summer)
	Bridges to School (Phase II Summer) (Blank)
	Attendance Playbook: Smart Solutions for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism in the Covid Era
	Guide to Using the Attendance Playbook: Smart Strategies for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism in the Covid Era
Step 4: Reflect, Learn and Improve. After each phase of work, invest in taking stock to assess what worked and what can be improved for the future	Possible issues to explore include: • Where have we seen the greatest improvements in attendance and engagement? • What were the short- and long-term unintended consequences, positive and negative, of past attendance interventions? • Which attendance improvement interventions do we want to continue? • Which interventions do we want to modify?

Announcement

NEW! A calendar of events is now available on the Project 10 website. These events vary from district specific to statewide. Click **here** to view.

Project 10: Calendar

usfsp-project10@usf.edu

Today ◀ ▶ Friday, September 3 ▼		Print Week Month Agenda ▼

Friday, September 3
11:00am   T16 Compliance Self-Assessment Training

Tuesday, September 7
8:00am   Transition IEP Self-Assessment Compliance Training
12:00pm   Transition IEP Self-Assessment Compliance Training
1:00pm   The Future Starts Now: Preparing for Secondary Transition in Middle School

Thursday, September 9
8:30am   Transition IEP Self-Assessment Compliance Training
12:30pm   Transition IEP Self-Assessment Compliance Training

Friday, September 10
10:00am   Discovery Process for Students in Transition
11:30am   T16 Self Assessment Compliance

Monday, September 13
8:00am   Transition IEP Self-Assessment Compliance Training

Tuesday, September 14
10:00am   Using School-level Data to Increase Graduation Success of Students with Disabilities (EWS)

Wednesday, September 15
8:00am   Transition IEP Self-Assessment Compliance Training
12:00pm   Transition IEP Self-Assessment Compliance Training

Friday, September 17
10:00am   Getting to Know Project 10's Family Guide to Secondary Transition Planning for students with Disabilities

Friday, October 1
10:00am   Introduction to Secondary Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities

Tuesday, October 12

Events shown in time zone: Eastern Time - New York

+ Google Calendar

Resources

Attendance Works – Making the Case
This webpage provides multiple handouts that explain how to work with school partners to encourage student attendance.

Attendance Works: Take Action
This webpage gives advice to school superintendents regarding an action plan to address the re-engagement of students in light of COVID-19 challenges.

Attendance Works Toolkits
This webpage provides descriptions of and links to several attendance toolkits.

Check & Connect – Online Mentoring Guide
This mentoring guide contains three focus areas: Creative Relationship Building; Structured Conversations; and Interactive Interventions.

[**Data Matters: Using Chronic Absence to Accelerate Action for Student Success**](#)
This article explains why chronic absence has become a central focus for student success and identifies the legislative step that brought chronic absence to the forefront.

[**Freshman Year: The Make-it or Break-it Year**](#)
This brief article demonstrates the connection between attendance, grades and high school graduation for students in the ninth grade.

[**New Federal Study Finds that Text Messages to Parents Can Reduce Chronic School Absences in Elementary School**](#)
This news brief summarizes a study by the American Institutes for Research on the use of text messaging strategies to reduce absenteeism.

[**Project 10 – Attendance Webpage**](#)
Find more information and resources here.

References

Attendance Works. (n.d.). *Monitoring attendance in the 2021-22 school year.* https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/monitoring-attendance-in-distance-learning/

Attendance Works. (n.d.). *Update your communications with families for back to school 2021-22*. https://www.attendanceworks.org/update-your-communications-with-families-for-back-to-school/

Florida Department of Education. (n.d.). *Know your schools.* Know Your Schools Portal. https://edudata.fldoe.org/.

Upcoming Events

**Educational Strategies & Student Engagement Institute (ESSEI) Conference**
The ESSEI Conference unites professionals from school districts, agencies and other sectors of the community to build knowledge and enhance skills on educational strategies proven to promote student achievement and college and career readiness. Attendees learn, share, network and identify tools to help counter and prevent academic struggles, school disengagement, and dropout.
Dates: November 16-18, 2021
Location: Orlando, FL
Click **here** for more information.
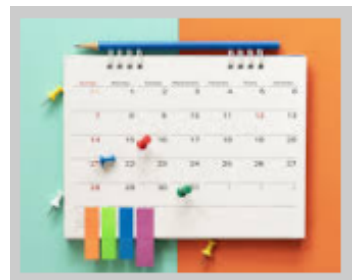
Upcoming Webinars

PACER's Children and Young Adults Mental Health Conference and Simon Technology Tech Expo
Join PACER for this free virtual event. Participants will be able to attend sessions on mental health as well as learn about the PACER Simon Technology Center and options in assistive technology. Attendees may attend all or portions of the conference. More information on specific presentations can be found **here**.
Date/Time: October 2, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.
Click **here** to register.

Rare Diseases: From Diagnosis to Care Plan
Erica Barnes of the UMN Medical School discusses MN CHLOE BARNES Rare Disease Advisory Council, dedicated to understanding the rare disease community's needs, increasing care access and coordination and reducing diagnosis time.
Date/Time: October 5, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.
Click **here** to register.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) **Preparation for Students with Disabilities**
In this webinar provided by Education Associates, the speaker, Karen Squires will discuss ways to help prepare students with disabilities to participate in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. Hands-on programs for multiple levels of learners and the preparation needed to encourage students to try for CTE classes. Participants will also learn how to develop a multi-year plan that includes career skills, life skills and job prep.
Date/Time: October 6, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.
Click **here** to register.

Tips and Tools for Talking with School Staff
This workshop provides parents of students receiving special education services practical tips and interactive problem-solving experiences to build the skills necessary to communicate effectively with school staff and resolve differences.
Date/Time: October 7, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Click **here** to register.

Trends in Disability Employment (nTIDE) Lunch & Learn
The national Trends in Disability Employment (nTIDE) team offers a live broadcast via Zoom Webinar to share numbers and the latest news about disability employment. Join this webinar to hear from the hosts and expert panelists from the field that will discuss current topics, findings and events.
Date/Time: October 8, 2021 at 12:00 p.m.
Click **here** to register.

Inspiring Possibilities Part One: Living, Learning, and Working After High School
Join this webinar for part one of our free transition-to-adulthood mini-conference series for Minnesota parents. Hear from community experts and PACER transition specialists on a variety of topics. Ask questions and connect virtually with other parents.
Date/Time: October 8, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.
Click **here** to register.

Hot Tips: Is Your IEP Individualized and Appropriate?
Parents will learn to use their child's special education evaluation report to determine how well the Individualized Education Program (IEP) addresses their child's needs. Parents should have the child's most current school evaluation and IEP.
Date/Time: October 12, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Click **here** to register.

Learning Ally Florida Webinar Series
Join Learning Ally and Dr. Terrie Noland, Ph.D., CALP, for a webinar series designed for Florida literacy leaders. Dr. Noland will be speaking on "How to Lead so Educators Master Their ELA [English language arts]/Reading Block." The series will take place as follows:
- Kindergarten through grade 2: October 13, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.
- Grades 3 through 5: October 19, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.
Click **here** to register.

An Introduction to Assistive Technology and PACER Simon Technology Center Services Lunch & Learn
Assistive technology refers to a category of items that can help support individuals with disabilities. This virtual workshop provides a broad overview of assistive technology tools and consideration and how the Simon Technology Center can help.
Date/Time: October 14, 2021 at 12:00 p.m.
Click **here** to register.

Working Together: Supporting Your Child's Mental Health Needs at School
This training will discuss how mental health challenges can impact children and youth engagement at school and strategies for working with schools when educational progress becomes a concern.
Date/Time: October 14, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.
Click **here** to register.

Fridays with FDLRS - Strategies to Support Homework Completion
Homework time does not have to be stressful when you know the strategies and tips to make efficient use of the time and energy spent by you and your child. Join us to learn ways to organize and facilitate your child's learning, using strategies that work for any subject area.
Date/Time: October 15, 2021 at 11:30 a.m.
Click **here** to register.

Tech for Teens Club: Intro to Coding & Video Games

In this Zoom webinar, teens with disabilities will be introduced to the fundamentals of coding through the use of MIT's Scratch online software. Teens will create interactive games and stories while developing basic programming skills. This workshop is designed for students with basic computer skills, but no previous coding knowledge is required. Students of all abilities are encouraged to attend.
Date/Time: October 16, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.
Click **here** to register.

Reading Tools for the iPad
There are many tools available on an iPad that can assist with audio reading, visual customizations and study supports. Learn about these options for use with different reading materials.
Date/Time: October 19, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.
Click **here** to register.

Tools for Students : Part One: Prepare, Organize and Research for School Projects
This workshop will address tools for defining topics, breaking into steps, researching and organizing using mind mapping, assignment calculators, task lists and notetaking tools. Tools demonstrated will be appropriate for middle school to college students.
Date/Time: October 20, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.
Click **here** to register.

Planning for Educational Inclusion: A Viewing of "Including Samuel"
This one-hour, award-winning documentary is designed to help schools, families, community groups and others work toward educational inclusion in an informed and innovative way. It examines the educational and social inclusion of youth and young adults with disabilities.
Date/Time: October 26, 2021
Click **here** to register.

Back on Track for School Success: Mental Health and Education
Many children and youth experienced new or different challenges managing their mental health and emotional wellness over the last school year. This webinar will provide parents and others information and strategies for supporting school success when mental health impacts learning.
Date/Time: November 4, 2021
Click **here** to register.

Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB) - Fall 2021 Virtual ECC Interactive Learning Series
The Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB) Virtual Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) Interactive Learning Series is for children ages 3-14 who are deaf/hard of hearing (D/HH) or blind/visually impaired (B/VI). Non FSDB Students' who have an active IEP with D/HH or B/VI as their primary exceptionality are eligible to register for these sessions. The virtual ECC sessions are available at no cost. All registered children will receive materials delivered to their homes. Note: This learning series is not currently offered to FSDB students.

Date/Time: November 6, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.
Click **here** to register.

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About Project 10 Topical Briefs:
Project 10 Topical Briefs provide informational summaries and resource links related to secondary transition.

Have a question? Want to find or recommend a resource? Have some great news to share?
Email us at **project10@stpete.usf.edu**.

For back issues of Project 10 Topical Briefs, visit our **Topical Briefs** page on the **Project 10** website.

Project 10: Transition Education Network
Assists Florida school districts and relevant stakeholders in building capacity to provide secondary transition services to students with disabilities in order to improve their academic success and post-school outcomes.

Project 10: Transition Education Network
University of South Florida St. Petersburg
Questions or comments?
Email us at **project10@stpete.usf.edu**.
www.project10.info