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Volume 8, Issue 1

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 **Chronic Absence and Early Warning Systems**.

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Stories

[Students Share Perspectives on Chronic Absence: A Summary of the Findings from Reasons for Chronic Absenteeism Among Florida Secondary Students](#)

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ISSUE

Students Share Perspectives on Chronic Absence: A Summary of the Findings from *Reasons for Chronic Absenteeism Among Florida Secondary Students*

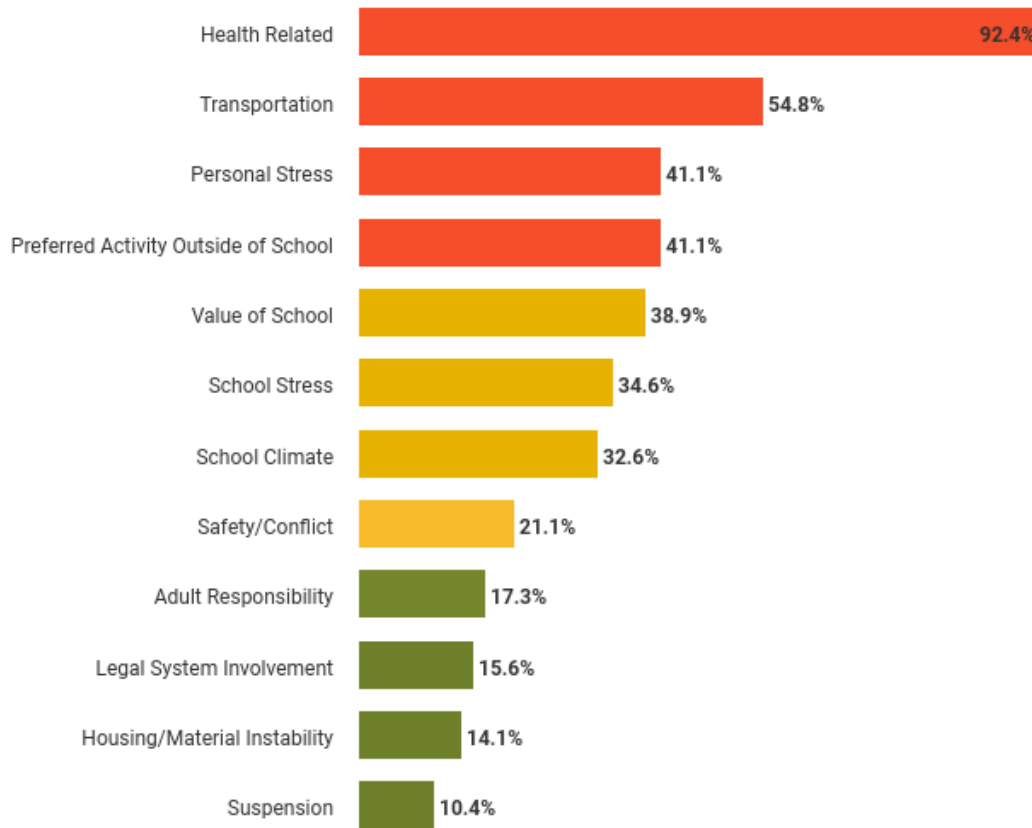


Florida's Problem Solving and Response to Intervention Project (PS/RtI) coordinated research to gather survey data from 4,772 secondary school students on the topic of chronic absenteeism. The students represent 10 school districts and 62 middle and high schools in Florida. The participating school districts ranged in size from small to very large with chronic absenteeism rates spanning 5.6% to 32.8%.

The goal for PS/RtI researchers, Brundage, Castillo and Batsche (2017), was to more clearly define the causes of chronic absenteeism from the perspective of the students. Understanding the school attendance challenges that students face can assist school and district personnel to ". . . efficiently and effectively match interventions to student needs" (p. 5).

What are the reasons students reported for missing school?

Student Reasons for Missing School



The color-coded bars show the top, middle and bottom third of the reasons students selected to explain their school absences. Through the surveys, students also suggested ideas for improving attendance, including:

- Reduce levels of school difficulty/strictness
- Create engaging classroom environment with more hands-on, relevant class instruction
- Illness prevention
- Improved school climate with nicer peers/adults and less bullying
- Increased academic support through tutoring, improved instruction and extra help from teachers (p. 4)

Researchers identified questions for consideration.

How can districts be supported to accomplish the following:

- Focus on evidence-based practices that promote both physical and mental health?
- Develop alternative systems and methods to transport students to school when the primary transportation method is unavailable?
- Engage with family and community partners to promote access to services students need?
- Design meaningful, engaging instruction that is relevant to all students?
- Develop multi-tiered systems of support to address academic, behavioral

How will you use this information to support student attendance?

Source: *Reasons for Chronic Absenteeism Among Florida Secondary Students*

Highlights from *Data Matters: Using Chronic Absence to Accelerate Action for Student Success*

5 Key Facts about Chronic Absence

Fact 1: ESSA Recognizes Impact of Chronic Absence



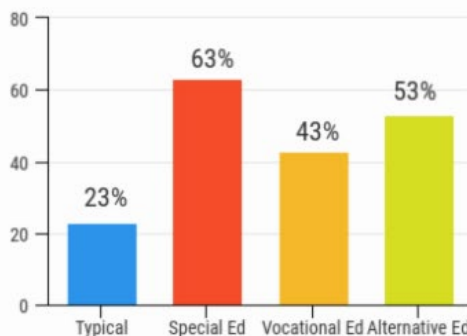
In 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) incorporated chronic absence as a requirement for school reporting

Fact 3: Chronic Absence in 2015-16 > 2013-14

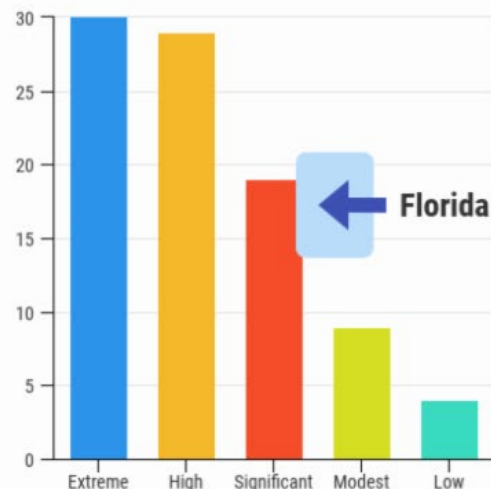


800,000 more chronically absent students were reported nationally in 2015-16 than in 2013-14

Fact 4: Chronic Absence is Higher in Specific School Types

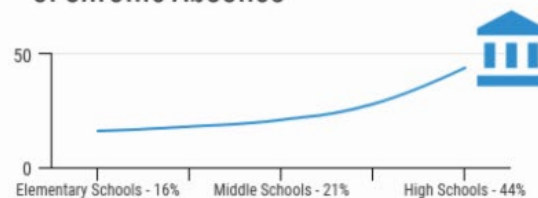


Fact 2: Identifying Ranges of Chronic Absence



Extreme Chronic Absence - >30%
High Chronic Absence - 20% - 29%
Significant Chronic Absence - 10% - 19%
Modest Chronic Absence - 5% - 9%
Low Chronic Absence - <5%

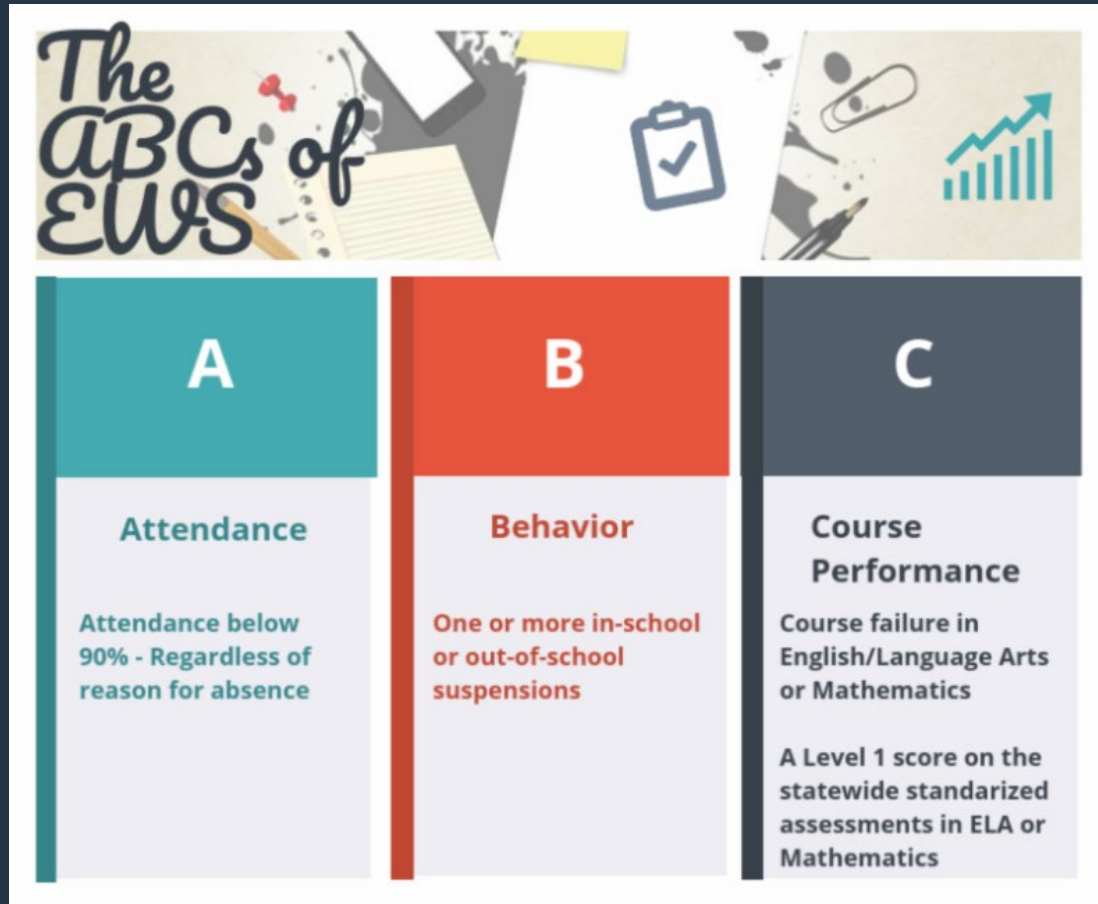
Fact 5: A Greater Percentage of High Schools Have Extreme or High Levels of Chronic Absence



Source: *Data Matters: Using Chronic Absence to Accelerate Action for Student Success*

Chronic Absence: Part of the ABC's of Early Warning Systems

Chronic absence is an important piece of any early warning system (EWS). The primary goal of an EWS is to identify students who may be at risk of not graduating from high school. Students identified early can receive assistance to get back on track and graduate on time. Disengaged behaviors such as school absence, behavioral issues and course performance are the best predictors of dropout. From the opposite view, positive performance in attendance, school behavior and course performance represent positive predictors of school and post-school success.



Project 10 EWS

The Project 10 EWS has shown that, when implemented with fidelity, students at risk of dropping out of school can be helped to get back on their graduation path. The Project 10 EWS has four phases with multiple steps that can guide a school toward providing the assistance that students at risk of dropping out of school desperately need. These phases include the following:

1. Review graduation data from the previous year
2. Run school-level reports
3. Sort and color-code student data
4. Share data findings with the school-level team for implementation of interventions

Right now is an excellent time to review your graduation data and predict your

graduation rate for the current year. Contact your Regional Transition Representative (RTR) to schedule technical assistance that can help you to evaluate how well your EWS is being implemented and identify ways to improve those practices. Or if you haven't implemented an EWS throughout your district, schedule a training.

Resources

[Absences Add Up](#)

This website is aimed at informing parents about the importance of school attendance.

[Attendance Works: Advancing Student Success by Reducing Student Absence](#)

This website is chocked full of information, research and resources on chronic absence and how decreasing it can positively impact the lives of students.



[Attendance Works Data Tools](#)

This section of the Attendance Works website contains data tools that assist with tracking attendance at the school- and district-level.

[Attendance Works Messaging Materials](#)

This section of the Attendance Works website contains messaging materials, including flyers and infographics that can help you to motivate a variety of stakeholder groups to become involved with decreasing chronic absence.

[Attendance Works Toolkits](#)

This section of the Attendance Works website contains toolkits designed to engage all of the stakeholders related to decreasing chronic absence and increasing student success.

[Everyone Graduates Center](#)

This website shares resources and research that supports schools to educate, challenge, support and graduate students ready to succeed in the world.

[Improving Student Attendance](#)

This presentation was given at the Florida Organization of Instructional Leaders (FOIL) in May 2017 and provides a K-12 perspective on the importance of student attendance.

[Preventing Student Disengagement and Keeping Students on the Graduation Path in Urban Middle-Grades Schools: Early Identification and Effective Interventions](#)

This article by Balfanz, Herzog and Mac Iver (2007), explores the effectiveness of using predictive indicators to identify students who may not graduate from high school and how to use interventions to increase graduation rates.

[Promote Prevent Early Warning Systems: Helping to Prevent School Dropouts](#)

This article emphasizes the need for early warning systems to detect signs of the gradual changes that lead to dropping out of school.

Using Data to Build Early Warning Systems

This webinar features Dr. Robert Balfanz who explains how districts can build an early warning system based on timely student data that is regularly collected.

Upcoming Events

2018 Educational Strategies and Student Engagement Institute (ESSEI)

Date: November 14-16, 2018

Location: DoubleTree Hilton at the Entrance to Universal Orlando in Orlando, FL

Description: This year's theme is Destination Graduation: Together Ensuring Every Student Succeeds. The 2018 gathering features keynote speakers Keeth Matheny, national award-winning teacher, and Jacob Oliva, our own Executive Vice Chancellor, K-12 Public Schools, Standards, Instruction and Student Services. In addition to the Keynote Luncheons, the conference includes Breakout Sessions, Special Group Meetings, Exhibits. Two new activities appearing on ESSIE's schedule are the College and University Panel Discussion and the "What's New in My District?" Forum. Click [here](#) to register.



Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD) Annual Statewide Conference

Date: January 18-20, 2019

Location: Florida Hotel and Conference Center in Orlando, Florida

Description: The seven regional CARD centers and the Partnership for Effective Programs for Students with Autism will host their 26th annual statewide conference. The statewide meeting for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) District contacts is scheduled from 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. on January 17, 2019. In addition the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule Second Edition (ADOS-2) training will be held January 17-18, 2019. The ADOS-2 is for those who evaluate students with ASD.

Click [here](#) to register.

Save the Date for the 2019 Regional Winter Institutes

Hear the latest transition updates and reports on transition progress and activities since last year. Registration information coming soon!



Region 3 - East Central Florida | Monday, February 4, 2019

Region 5 - South Florida | Tuesday, February 5, 2019

Region 4 - West Central Florida | Wednesday, February 6, 2019

Region 2 - Northeast Florida | Thursday, February 7, 2019

Region 1 - Northwest Florida | Monday, February 11, 2019

Save the Date for the 2nd Annual Making Wellness a Priority: Healthy Minds and Healthy Futures Conference which is sponsored by SEDNET (the Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities) and Florida APSE (Association of People Supporting Employment First).

When? May 1-3, 2019

Where? Omni Resort at Championsgate, FL

Call for Presentations
Deadline? January 18, 2019

Submit Proposals [here](#)

SAVE THE DATE



2nd ANNUAL MAKING WELLNESS A PRIORITY: HEALTHY MINDS & HEALTHY FUTURES CONFERENCE

May 1-3, 2019

Omni Resort at Championsgate, FL

For information:

[Click Here](#)

For Hotel Reservations:

[Click Here](#)

This exciting statewide conference will bring together national and local speakers and presenters to share innovative and proven practical approaches in the area of transition of youth with emotional and mental health disabilities, specifically addressing employment, community engagement and systems of care.

Call for Workshop Proposals:

[Click Here](#)



Upcoming Webinars

The Florida Consortium on Inclusive Higher Education (FCIHE) and Family Network on Disabilities (FND) Webinar Luncheon Series

The next three webinars below are on the upcoming agenda for this series.

How Do We Pay for College? Scholarships, Financial Aide and MORE!

Date/Time: Tuesday, November 13, 2018 @ 12:00 p.m.

Description: Register for this webinar to find information about how you can assist your youth to fund college.

Click [here](#) to register.



Which Florida Colleges Can I/My Young Adult Attend?

Date/Time: Tuesday, November 27, 2018 @ 12:00 p.m.

Description: Join this webinar for more information about college programs specifically designed to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities.

Click [here](#) to register.

College Coursework for Students with Intellectual Disability

Date/Time: Tuesday, December 4, 2019 @ 12:00 p.m.

Description: This webinar will provide information about college supports, such as mentoring, accommodations, modifications and other academic strategies can be implemented to assist students with intellectual disabilities.

Click [here](#) to register.

For a sneak peek at upcoming FCIHE/FND webinars in January, click [here](#).

Exploring Inclusive College Opportunities for Your Child with an Intellectual Disability from Think College

Date/Time: Wednesday, December 5, 2018 @ 1:00 p.m.

Description: Join parents, Angela Kniery and Beth Foraker, as they share valuable lessons they learned through their college search experiences with

their children.

Click [here](#) to register.

Family Engagement Strategies for Educators, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Human Service and Health Agencies Staff from the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT)

Date/Time: November 15, 2018 @ 2:00 p.m.

Description: This session will present information from an education, vocational rehabilitation, human services and health lens regarding effective practices and resources to enhance family and caregiver engagement in the transition process. Presenters will include national experts in family engagement and transition planning.

Click [here](#) to register.

Winter Research Summit: Evaluating the Impact of Dual Enrollment for Students with Intellectual Disability from Think College

Date/Time: Thursday, December 13, 2018 @ 1:00 p.m.

Description: Researchers from Education Development Center conducted a study to evaluate the effect of participation in the Think College Transition Model on transition-aged students with intellectual disabilities in Massachusetts. The presentation will focus on students' growth in self-determination.

Click [here](#) to register.

How One University Does Inclusive Coursework: Strategies and Examples from University of Kansas from Think College

Date/Time: Wednesday, January 9, 2019 @ 2:00 p.m.

Description: Join students, Dana Lattin and Georgia Campbell, as they share their experiences from the Kansas Transition to Postsecondary

Education (KU TPE) program.
Click [here](#) to register.

References

Bruce, M., Bridgeland, J.M., Fox, J.H., and Balfanz, R. (2011). *On track for success: The use of early warning indicator and intervention systems to build a grad nation*. Retrieved from http://diplomasnow.org/wpcontent/uploads/2013/06/on_track_for_success.pdf

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Chang, H. N., Bauer, L., & Byrnes, V. (2018). *Data matters: Using chronic absence to accelerate action for student success*. Retrieved from https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Data-Matters_090618_FINAL.pdf



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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