



# **Community of Practice: Attendance**

January 25, 2017



#### Agenda



#### Part I

- I. Intro to the Truancy Taskforce
- II. Role of Public Agencies
- III. Strategic Plan
- IV. Data
- **V. Best Practices**

Part II

**VI. Resources** 

VII. Deep Dive





## Part I





# Introduction to the Truancy Taskforce

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#### Who Composes the Truancy Taskforce?

The Truancy Taskforce is a partnership of diverse District of Columbia agencies and stakeholders that collectively advance and coordinate strategies to increase student attendance and reduce truancy. The group includes representatives from education, justice, and health clusters of the Administration, allowing for holistic development and implementation of attendance policy.

## Introduction to the Truancy Taskforce



#### Goals

 Reduce chronic absenteeism and truancy by crafting and implementing a coordinated, data-driven citywide strategy

#### **Approach**

- Bi-monthly meetings
- Measure, Monitor, Act





## Role of Public Agencies

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# Juvenile Justice and Law Enforcement (CJCC, DMPSJ, MPD, OAG, JGA)

 Revise punitive and court-based truancy interventions to better support school- and community-based interventions for struggling students

# Health Care, Public Health & Human Service Agencies and Providers (CFSA, CSSD, DBH, DHS, DOH, DOT)

 Understand the relationship between chronic absenteeism and unmet health and behavior health needs of children and youth in the local community that affects students' daily school attendance

#### Role of Public Agencies



# State and School District Leaders and Staff, and School Personnel (PCSB, DCPS, public charter school leaders)

 Communicate with parents and students that attendance matters, monitor the attendance patterns of individual students to identify children and families who might need support

Mayor, Council, State Board of Education, and Other Local Government Entities (DMGEO, OSSE, SBOE, Office of Chairmen Phil Mendelson, Office of Councilmember Grosso)

 Learn about what chronic absenteeism is and invest in the systems and structures (e.g., early warning prevention and intervention systems) that can identify youth who are chronically absent from school





## **Strategic Plan**

#### Strategic Plan: SY2015 - 2016 Year in Review



- Mapped truancy policy challenge dependencies (code, practice, regs)
  - Researched model LEA system for addressing absenteeism
  - Adopted a citywide "plan" by agency role to address absenteeism
  - Inventoried current investments in addressing truancy
  - Coordinated Attendance Awareness Month (Sept. 2015)
  - Drafted Truancy Taskforce Strategic Plan
  - Developed Truancy Taskforce Data Plan
  - Adopted **common methodology** for calculating truancy across sectors
  - Reported quarterly on Attendance Accountability Amendment Act
  - Informed School Attendance Clarification Amendment Act of 2016
  - Hosted a **Design Challenge** engaging youth, educators, and agencies
  - Attended the National Conference on Attendance as a state team









**Program Cmte** 

## Strategic Plan: SY2016 – 2017 Activities



#### **Advancing**

- Advance Citywide Planning
- Incorporate Youth Input
- Align Agency Work

#### **Improving**

- Strengthen Strategic Use of Data
- Expand attendance.dc.gov
- Increase Community Outreach

#### Scaling

- Focus on Evidence
- Communicate/Implement Best Practices



Jan. 2017

Apr. 2017

June 2017

Apr. 2017

June 2017

June 2017

Dec. 2017

Dec. 2017

Dec. 2017

Dec. 2017

Strategic Plan: Overview SY2016 - 2017							* * *
Phase	Activity	Taskforce	Steering	Policy	Data	Program	Timeline
Advancing	Advance Citywide Planning						
	Identify agency/entity strategies	X					Jan. 2017
	Plan FY18 budget needed		X				Mar. 2017
	Incorporate Youth Input						
	Select and onboard student reps		Х				Nov. 2016
	Identify opportunities for youth input		X				Jan. 2017
	Support Design Challenge II					X	Mar. 2017
	Align Agency Work						
	Incorporate attend. in new work			Х			Mar. 2017
	Identify existing opportunities			Х			Mar. 2017
	Provide guidance where needed			Х			Mar. 2017
	Strengthen Strategic Use of Data						

X

Χ

X

X

X

Χ

Χ

Χ

X

Χ

X

Χ

Develop timeline for Ed Stat

Improve agency data sharing

**Expand Attendance.dc.gov** 

Increase site usage

**Focus on Evidence** 

Expand resources → LEAS/families

**Increase Community Outreach** Add new campaign elements

Continue building evidence base

Build support for effective strategies

**Comm./Implement Best Practices** Share practices w/ practitioners

Plan FY19 budget support

Improving

Scaling

Revisit codes/regulations to match evidence

#### Strategic Plan: SY2016 - 2017 Progress



- Reported out using common methodology at the district and state levels
- Launched the Every Day Counts! citywide attendance campaign
- Launched attendance.dc.gov
- Conducted learning sessions on attendance SST meetings and health resources
- Selected 4 high school Truancy Taskforce student representatives from across the city
  - Developed timeline for Ed Stat
- Identified agency/entity strategies
- Identified opportunities for youth input





## Data

#### Data: Annual Truancy and Chronic Absenteeism

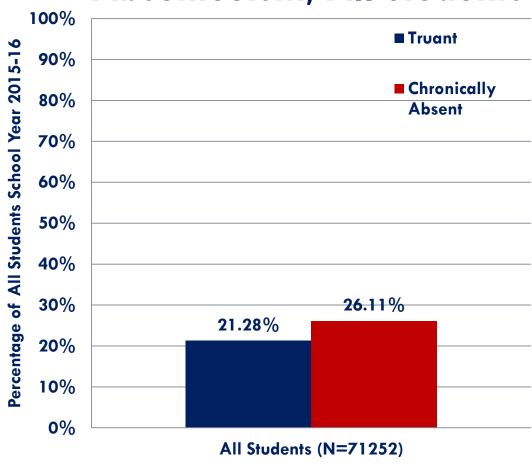


#### SY2015-16

 21.28% of students were truant.

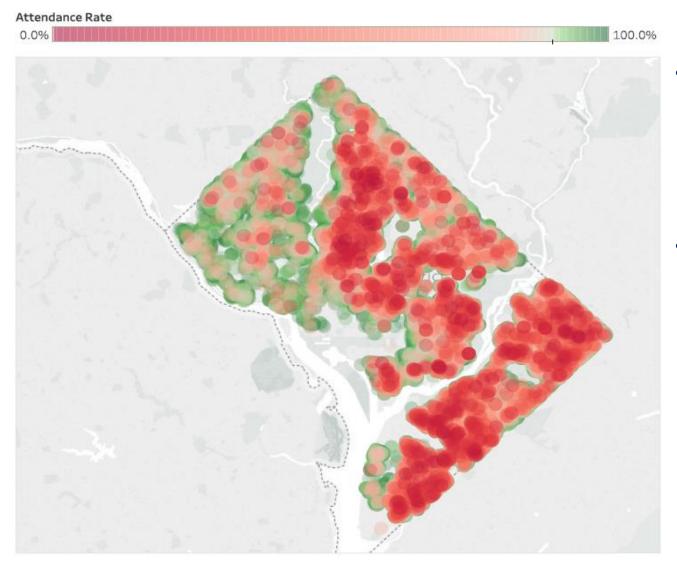
 26.11% of students were chronically absent.

# Truancy and Chronic Absenteeism, All Students



#### Data: Absenteeism Heat Map



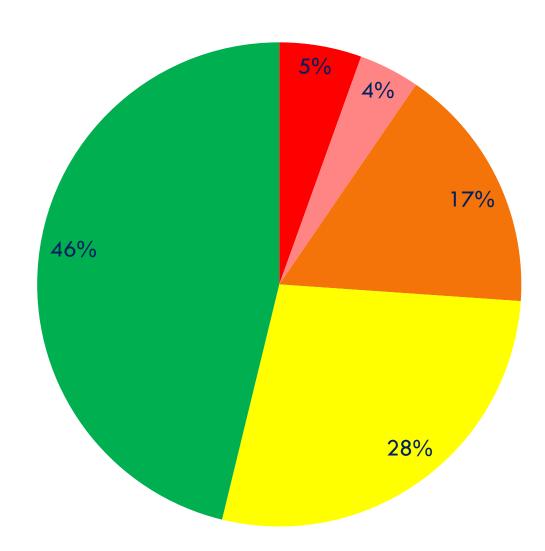


- DC students are colorcoded according to their levels of absenteeism, with darker shades of red indicating more severe chronic absence.
- High levels of chronic absence are observed throughout Wards 1, 4, 5, 7 and 8 with Wards 7 and 8 home to both the greatest number of students who are chronically absent and students with the greatest severity in chronic absence level.

#### Data: Severity of Chronic Absenteeism



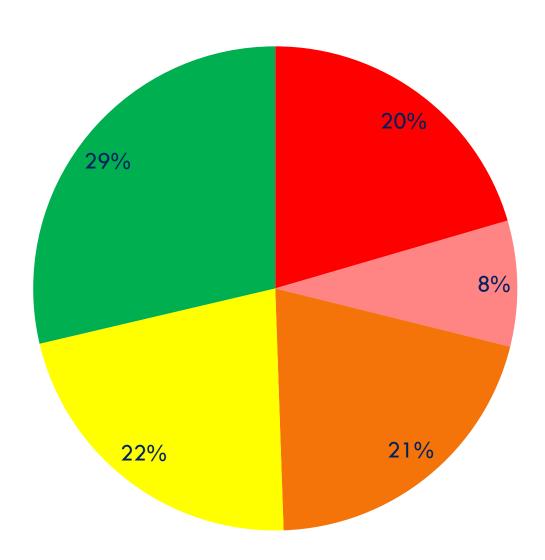
- Profound Chronic Absence (missed 30%+)
- Severe Chronic Absence (missed 20% 29.99%)
- Moderate Chronic Absence (missed 10% 19.99%)
- At-Risk Attendance (missed 5% 9.99%)
- Satisfactory Attendance (missed <5%)



## Data: Severity of Absenteeism for 9th Graders



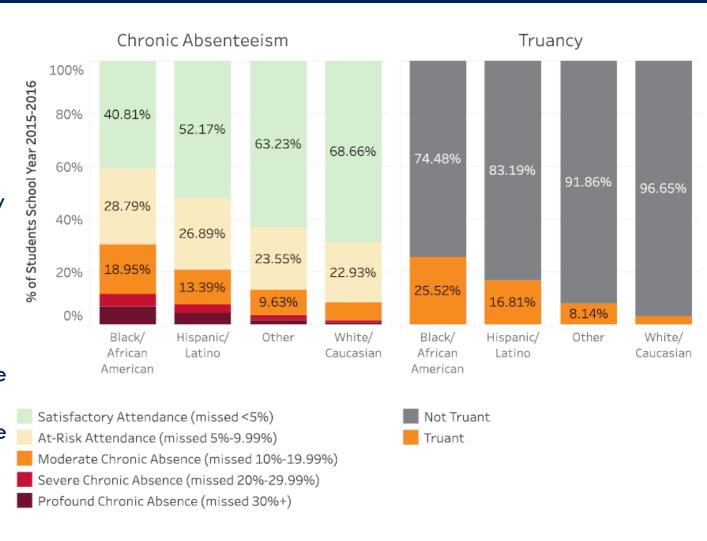
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#### Data: Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy by Race



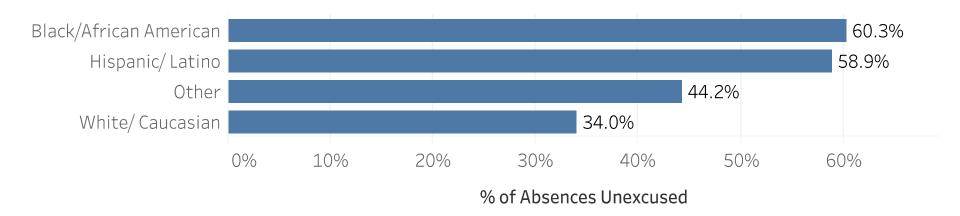
African American students are 2.9 times more likely to be truant compared to White students, but only 1.6 times more likely to be chronically absent. Similar trends are seen among Hispanic or Latino students with Hispanic or Latino students 2.4 times more likely to be truant but only 1.3 times more likely to be chronically absent compared to White students.



Why? (See next slide)

#### Data: Absent Students by Excuse Status by Race





- Examining the proportion of absences which are excused versus unexcused by race reveals that African American and Hispanic or Latino students have a disproportionate number of unexcused versus excused absences compared to White students.
- This pattern persists even among students who are not identified as being chronically absent, indicating that White students are more likely to have an absence recorded as excused compared to African American and Hispanic or Latino students, even among students who are present on 90% or more of enrolled days.





#### **Best Practices**

#### **Best Practices: DC in Practice**



#### **Data Collection**

- Teachers must keep accurate daily records of attendance but attendance is recorded and verified differently across schools (e.g., taken at start vs. end of period; varied excuse codes; varied verification periods).
- Attendance data is collected by a centralized statewide system (OSSE) but it is not crosswalked with other academic, health and safety data to inform an early warning system.
- Some, but not all, schools use low-cost interventions like calls or texts home for each absence.

#### Level One Intervention SST Meeting

- Parents of students with five (5) unexcused absences will be requested to participate in a truancy conference and referred to the Student Support Team (SST).
- At SST an attendance plan will be developed and agreed to.
- Parents of students with ten (10) total absences – excused or unexcused will be requested to participate in an Attendance SST and will be referred to OSSE.
- The same SST process is prescribed for all with little variation based on age, history, or other data.
- •Due to lack of capity not all requried SSTs are held or based on students' needs.

#### Level Two Intervention Letter Home

•All Ages: After 10 unexcused absences, school must: (a) notify MPD and send a letter home notifying the parent that he or she may be subject to prosecution; (b) notify OSSE so it can provide the parent a truancy resource guide.

#### Level Three Intervention Referral

- Ages 5-13: Mandated reporters including schools must report to CFSA any child with 10 or more unexcused absences.
- •Ages 14 17: Schools must refer to CSSD and OAG any child with 15 or more unexcused. Within 3 days of this, OAG must send a letter to the parent notifying him he may be subject to prosecution.

#### Reporting

- Each year, the OAG must submit to the Mayor and Council a truancy status report, including the number of referrals and cases it filed, as well as number of children in a court diversion program.
- •DCPS and PCSB submit annual reports documenting truancy rates, interventions and in seat attendance rates.

#### **Best Practices: National**



#### Baseline (All Students)

- Unexcused as well as excused absences are monitored.
- Recognize good and improved attendance
- Educate & engage students and families
- Clarify attendance expectations and goals
- Establish positive and engaging school climate
- Low cost automated intervetions like wake up calls and texts are used to prompt attendance.

#### Tier I Intervention (Approaching 10% Absence)

- Attendance history, educational progress, and demographic information is used to inform personalized early outreach like a call by teacher/staff member.
- Offer attendance Mentor/Buddy
- Connect to walk-to-school companion
- Provide small rewards to improve attendance (e.g., event access).
- Recruit for engaging before or after-school activities
- Offer basic resources (e.g., Rain gear, alarm clock)

#### Best Practices Policy Landscape

#### Tier II Intervention (Chonically Absent-Missing 10%)

- Face-to-Face meeting to establish absence intervention plan with the family, student and school
- Assessment is conducted to determine the root cause(s) of absence
- Solutions are discussed and agreed upon by all parties.
- All parties (family member, student and school representative) sign off on the plan.
- School success mentor assigned (helped improve motivation, attendance and confidence of students)
- Student referred to support groups focused on students at risk of becoming chronically absent

#### Tier III Intervention (Severe Chronic Absence- Missing 20%)

- Another face-to-face is conducted.
- · Possible home visit.
- Referral to Truancy Prevention Social Worker for regular checkins until attendance pattern changes.
- Intensive case management begins; collaborate with public agencies
- Students/Families jointly earn incentives (e.g., rent reduction in public housing), or earn back privileges (after school activities, parking, off campus lunch, athletic and other school events) based on attendance.

#### Monitor and Support

 Continue to monitor and support until attendance pattern holds.





#### **Best Practices: Similarities with Model**



# Similarities between Current Framework and School/LEA Model Framework

- Teachers and schools monitor student attendance as an early intervention mechanism
- Student records of unexcused absences are kept to inform an early warning system
- Low cost interventions like calls and texts (some schools DC)
- Notification and face-to-face meeting with parents after unexcused absences

#### **Best Practices: Differences with Model**



# Differences between Current Framework and School/LEA Model Framework

- No use of CFSA (or equivalent) as primary or required response to chronic absence
- No CSSD/criminal justice referral/prosecution
- No MPD (or equivalent) involvement
- Tiered interventions that are more intensive as needed (more of a response to intervention approach)
- Early warning identifies students likely to need intensive intervention early instead of waiting for full sequence to occur
- Use of incentives to reward behavior instead of punish





## Part II

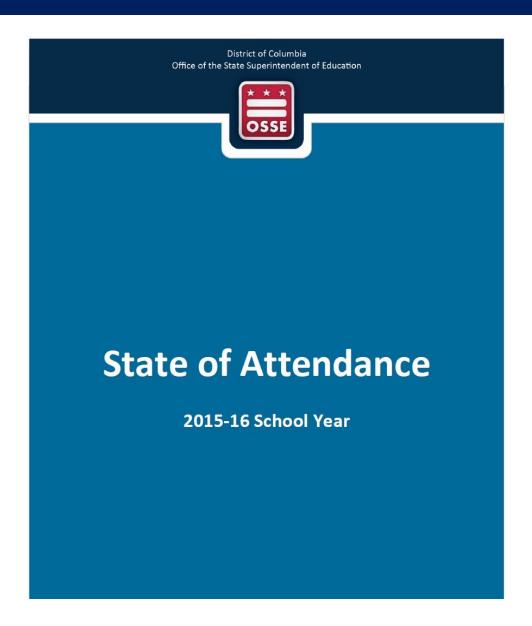




#### Resources

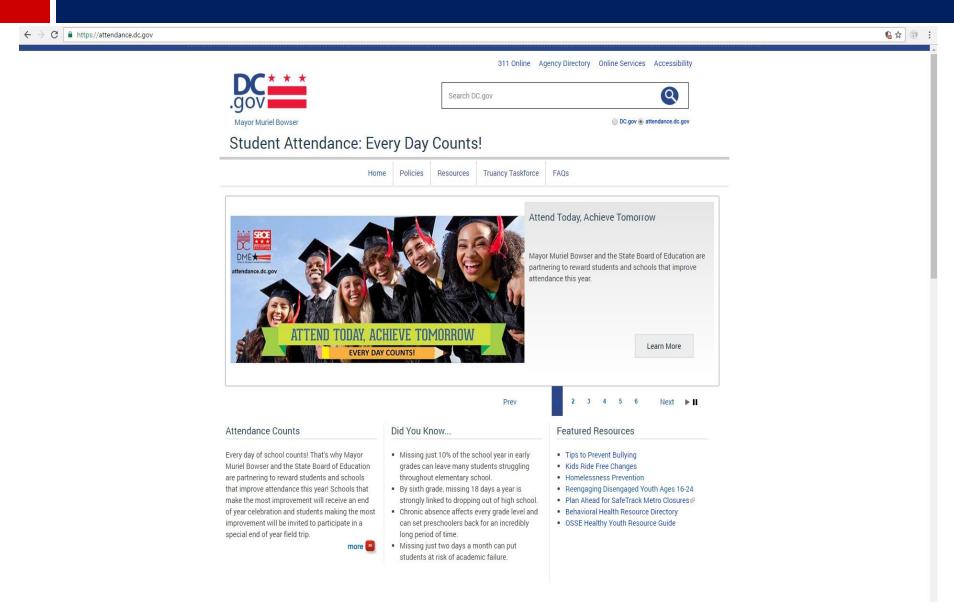
#### Resources: OSSE 15 - 16 State of Attendance





#### Resources: attendance.dc.gov









## **Deep Dive**

## **Input: Community Schools**



1) What would be most helpful to receive from DC agencies/entities to further the work of community schools on attendance issues?

2) What activities/programs have or have not been successful in your work as community schools to address absenteeism?

3) How do we incorporate the work and learning of community schools into the District's broader effort?

## Input: Resources



1) Attendance SST Resource Guide

2) LEA Spotlight

3) Guidance on attendance policies/laws

4) Sample attendance policies from leading schools

5) Parents and family FAQs?





## **Appendix**

#### Appendix A: Participating Agencies and Offices



- Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA)
- Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC)
- Court Social Services Division (CSSD)
- DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB)
- DC Public Schools (DCPS)
- Department of Behavior Health (DBH)
- Department of Human Services (DHS)
- Deputy Mayor of Greater Economic Opportunity (DMGEO)
- Deputy Mayor for Public Safety & Justice (DMPSJ)
- Department of Health (DOH)
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Justice Grants Administration (JGA)
- Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)
- Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE)
- Office of the Attorney General (OAG)
- State Board of Education (SBOE)
- The Office of Chairmen Phil Mendelson
- The Office of Councilmember David Grosso
- Public charter school leaders