The Power of Positive Connections: 
Reducing Chronic Absence Through 

**PEOPLE**

*(Priority Early Outreach for Positive Linkages and Engagement)*

**Attendance Works**

*(Version Aug 19, 2014)*
AW Recommended Site Level Strategies

Leverage Strategies C and D to Adopt the PEOPLE Strategy Starting at the Beginning of the School Year
Priority Early Outreach for Positive Linkages and Engagement (PEOPLE)

- **Priority**: Focuses on at-risk students in grades, schools and neighborhoods with high levels of chronic absence.
- **Early**: Begins with the start of school.
- **Outreach**: Connects to students and families.
- **Positive**: Promotes preventive, supportive approaches rather than punitive responses.
- **Linkages**: Taps the full community for support.
- **Engagement**: Motivates showing up to class & offers students & families a role in improving attendance.
Implementing **PEOPLE**
(Priority Early Outreach for Positive Linkages and Engagement)

1. Determine where to begin PEOPLE using a data-driven approach
2. Establish a team to implement PEOPLE
3. Examine which students need PEOPLE
4. Connect students and families to positive supports
5. Reflect and celebrate
Identifying Where To Begin Implementation

Identifies Priority Schools, Neighborhoods or Grades within School to Begin Implementation

- Low Income Students and High Levels of Chronic Absence
- School Leadership
- Supportive Community Partners
Proposed Criteria:

• Significant number of low-income students
• Elevated chronic absence rates especially in transitional grades (e.g. K/1, 6\textsuperscript{th}, 9\textsuperscript{th} 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
When to Begin Tier 1

Teacher Welcome:
Teacher contacts family to welcome them to school, remind them of 1st day, and invite to Back to School celebration

Community Partner Welcome:
Staff member reminds family of first day of school, invites to community-led Back to School celebration(s)

Back to School Celebration:
Backpack giveaway, announce attendance incentives gather families living in same area to talk about coordinating getting to school

Back to School Neighborhood or Community Rally

Tier 1: Universal

Tier 2: Early Outreach

Tier 3: Intensive Intervention
For Tier 1: Leverage Our Communication Resources

• **Count Us In Toolkit:**
  http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkit/

• **Bringing Attendance Home Parent Video:**

• **Bringing Attendance Home Toolkit:**

• **Parent flyers:**
  http://www.attendanceworks.org/tools/for-parents/
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:

- In first 2 weeks: 2 absences
- In first month (4 weeks): 2-3 absences
- In first 2 months (8 weeks): 4 absences
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.

### Percent chronically absent at the end of the school year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>&lt; 2 Days</th>
<th>2 to 4 Days</th>
<th>&gt; 4 Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prekindergarten</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades K-5</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Grades</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When to Begin Tier 2

First Month of School

Tier 1: Universal
- School-Designed Attendance Ritual
- Community Partner-Designed Attendance Ritual

Tier 2: Early Outreach

1st Day of School
- School-Designed Attendance Ritual

End of Week 1
- School-Designed Attendance Ritual

Beg. of Week 2

End of Week 4

School Staff Check-In: Personal contact if students exhibit chronic absence. Share something positive @ child, offer help with barriers & connect to positive supports.

Community Partner Staff Follow-Up: Staff follows up with families to help address barrier/offer support. Confidentiality agreement needed if data is shared.

Tier 3: Intensive Intervention

Needed Infrastructure Supports and Training

Attendance Team Meeting:
Include key community partner staff; decide which families need home visit and who will conduct it
Possible Tier 2 Interventions

1. Assign Attendance Buddies
2. Partner with families/students to develop Student Attendance Success Plan
3. Recruit for engaging Before-or After-School Activities
4. Connect to Walk-to-School Companion
5. Offer plan or contacts for Health Support

Positive Linkages and Engagement for Students and Families
PEOPLE Supports A Cost Effective Tiered Approach to Improving Educational Outcomes

**TIER 1**
All students at priority schools

- Recognize good and improved attendance
- Educate & engage students and families
  - Monitor attendance data
- Clarify attendance expectations and goals
- Establish positive and engaging school climate

**TIER 2**
Students exhibiting chronic absence (missing 10%)

- Provide personalized early outreach
- Meet with student/family to develop plan
  - Offer attendance Mentor/Buddy

**TIER 3**
Students who missed 20% or more of the prior school year (severe chronic absence)

- Intensive case management with coordination of public agency and legal response as needed

High Cost
Low Cost
Who Can Help Advance a PEOPLE Approach?

**District Leaders**
- Offer district support and data
- Identify and engage priority schools

**School Leaders**
- Make attendance a priority
- Ensure implementation team and plan

**Community Partners**
- Call for PEOPLE approach
- Link to community resources (health, afterschool, food, mentoring, family support, etc.)