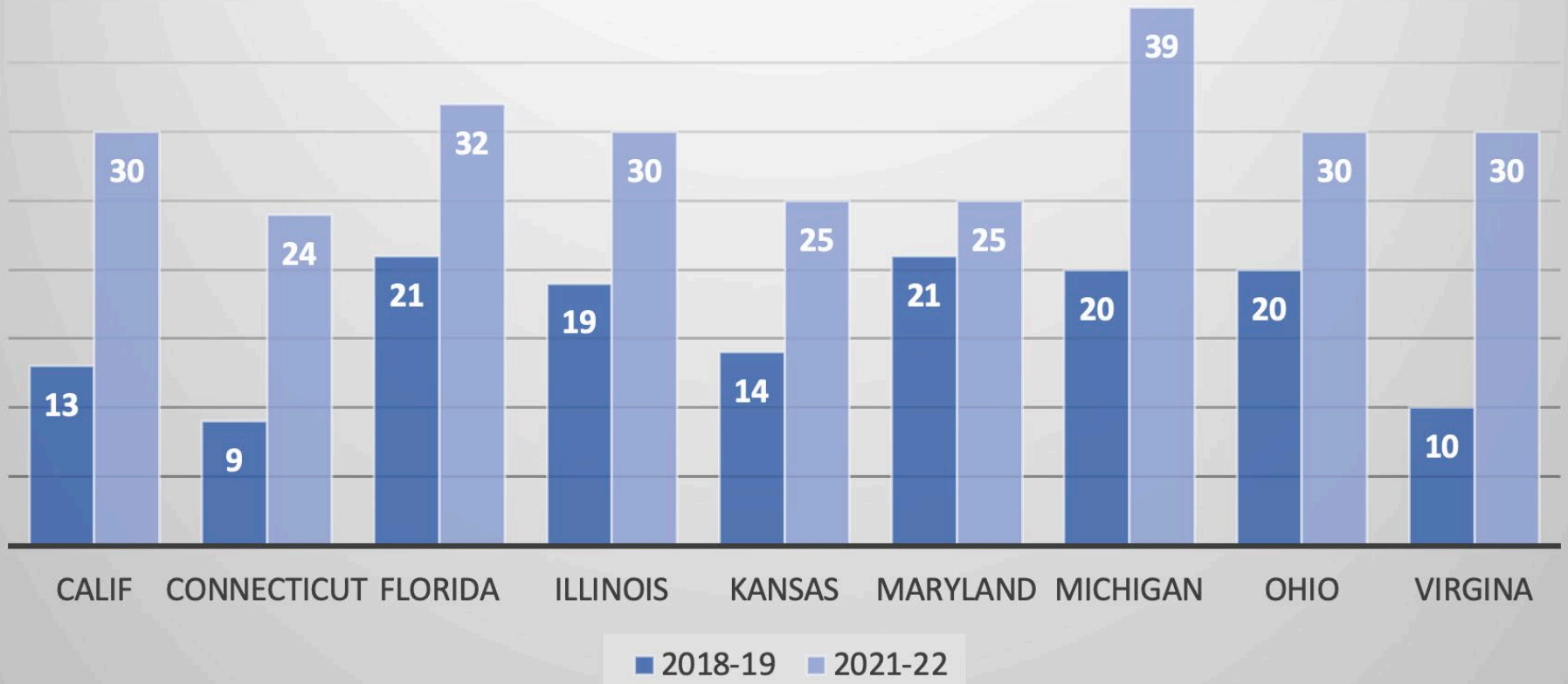


Future*Ed*

Independent Analysis, Innovative Ideas

Increasing Rates of Chronic Absenteeism



Demographic Trends of Absenteeism

Rates are consistently highest among:

- Homeless and foster students
- Students from low-income families
- Students with disabilities
- Students of color

Rates are highest in:

- High school
- Preschool and kindergarten
- Transition years

Lessons from the Pandemic

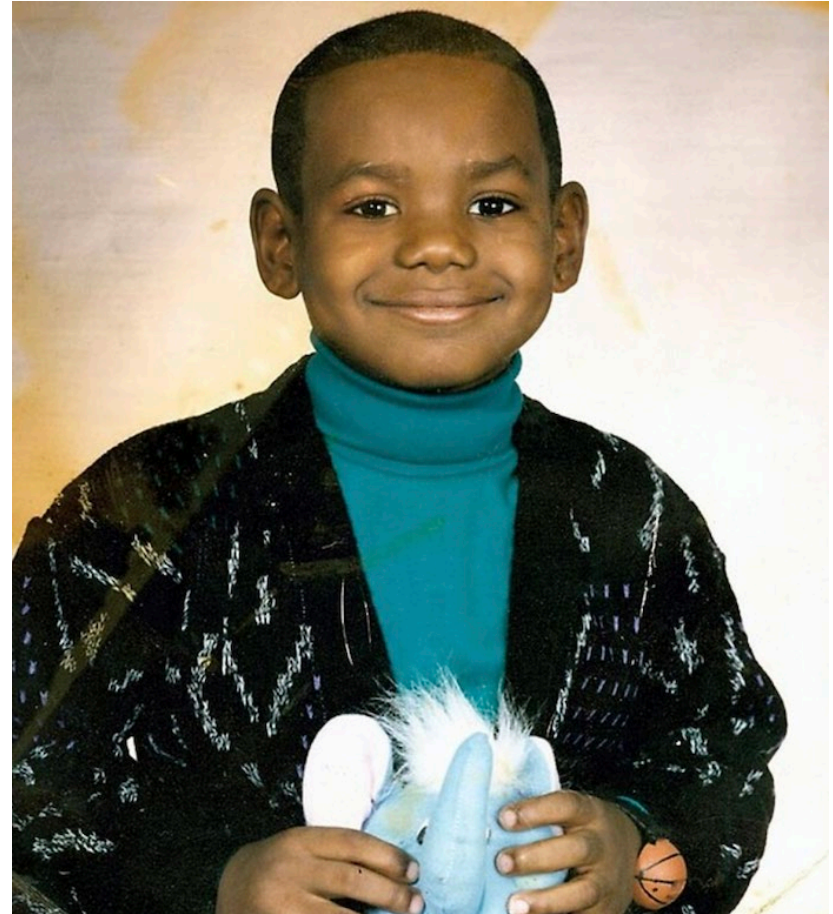
- Chronic absenteeism rates **doubled** and remain high
- Turning these trends around is **central** to addressing learning loss and student mental health
- **Barriers**, like transportation, health and housing, persist and in some places are worse
- School needs to be a **safe, welcoming place** for students and families.
- **Connection**—to teachers, peers, classrooms, and activities—is key to improving attendance
- Student and families want a **voice** in the classrooms and decision-making process

INTERVENTIONS THAT WORK



Attendance Barriers: Housing Instability

- Homeless students have high rates of chronic absenteeism, likely double that of other students
- Nationally rates are higher among students in shelters vs. those doubled up with families
- Solutions:
 - Coordinators at schools/shelters
 - Wrap-around services/ Connected Schools
 - Transportation options



Attendance Barriers: Transportation

- Missing the school bus can mean missing school for students with unreliable transportation
- Heavy traffic and community violence can keep students from getting to school
- Transit passes work if bus and trains run on reliable schedules



Solutions

- Targeted transportation
- Safe Passage
- Walking School Bus
- Public transit passes

Attendance Barriers: Health

- Nationwide, illness is the No.1 cause of absenteeism, especially asthma, which accounts for 14 million missed days annually
- Unhealthy buildings—with mold, mildew or poor ventilation—can contribute to illness
- Mental health concerns can contribute to misconduct and school refusal—leading to more absenteeism



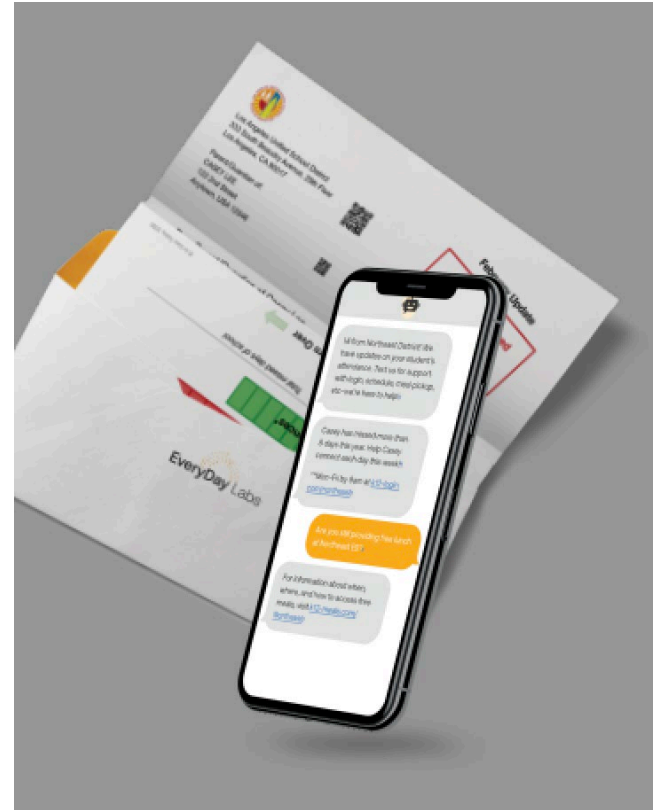
Solutions

- Attention to asthma
- Immunization clinics
- Handwashing protocols
- Telehealth

Communicating With Families

Direct, personalized outreach to families—through letters or texts—can reduce absenteeism. These should:

- Research shows families don't know how much school their children have missed
- A combination of letters and texts seem to work best
- Focus on empathy, how the school can help families, rather than punitive messages
- Send repeated communications notices throughout the year



Targeted Home Visits

During the pandemic, some districts began targeting home visits to families of students with high rates of absenteeism.

Connecticut's \$10.7 million LEAP program:

- Reached 8,700 students in 15 districts
- Led to a 15 percentage-point increase in attendance after 6 months



Connecting with Teachers, Mentors

Numerous studies show that connections to teachers, tutors and mentors can influence attendance—and, with it, academic success

What Matters:

- Knowing the teacher from past years
- Working in small groups or advisories
- Fair discipline practices
- A diverse workforce



Instruction That Matters

Students become more engaged when they believe what they're learning matters.

This works best when interventions:

- Help students see the relevance of lessons
- Connect to a students' culture
- Offer a viable career track
- Offer students a voice

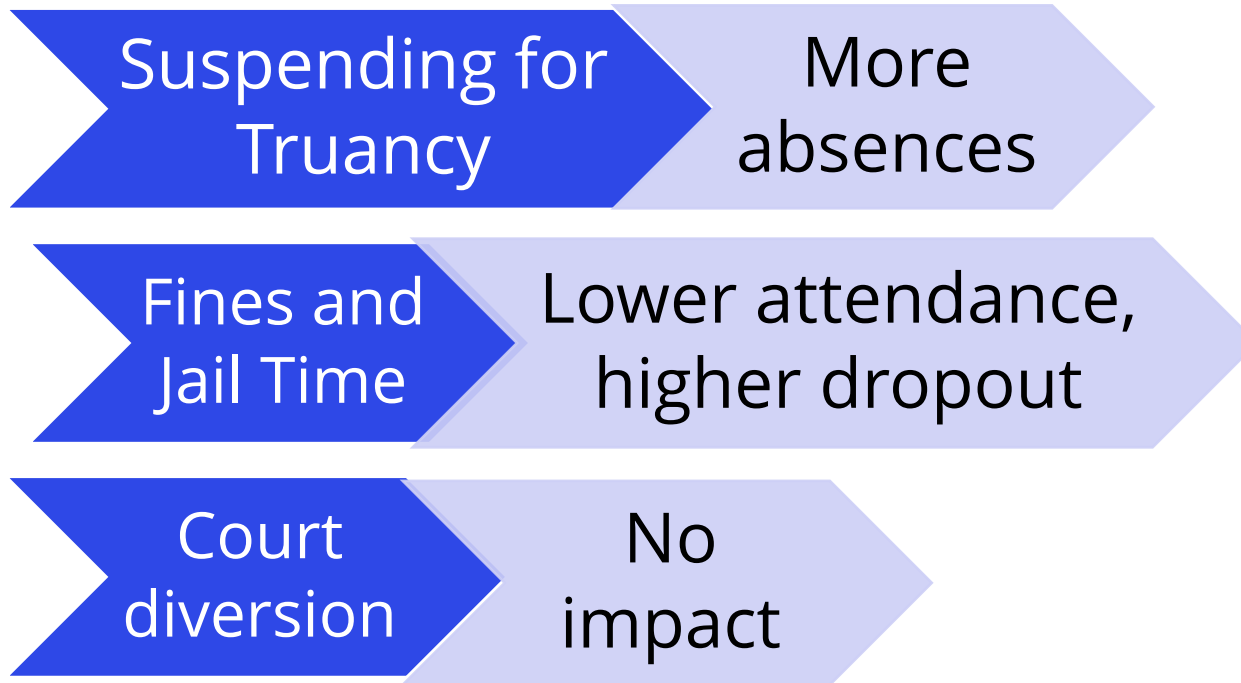


Community Schools

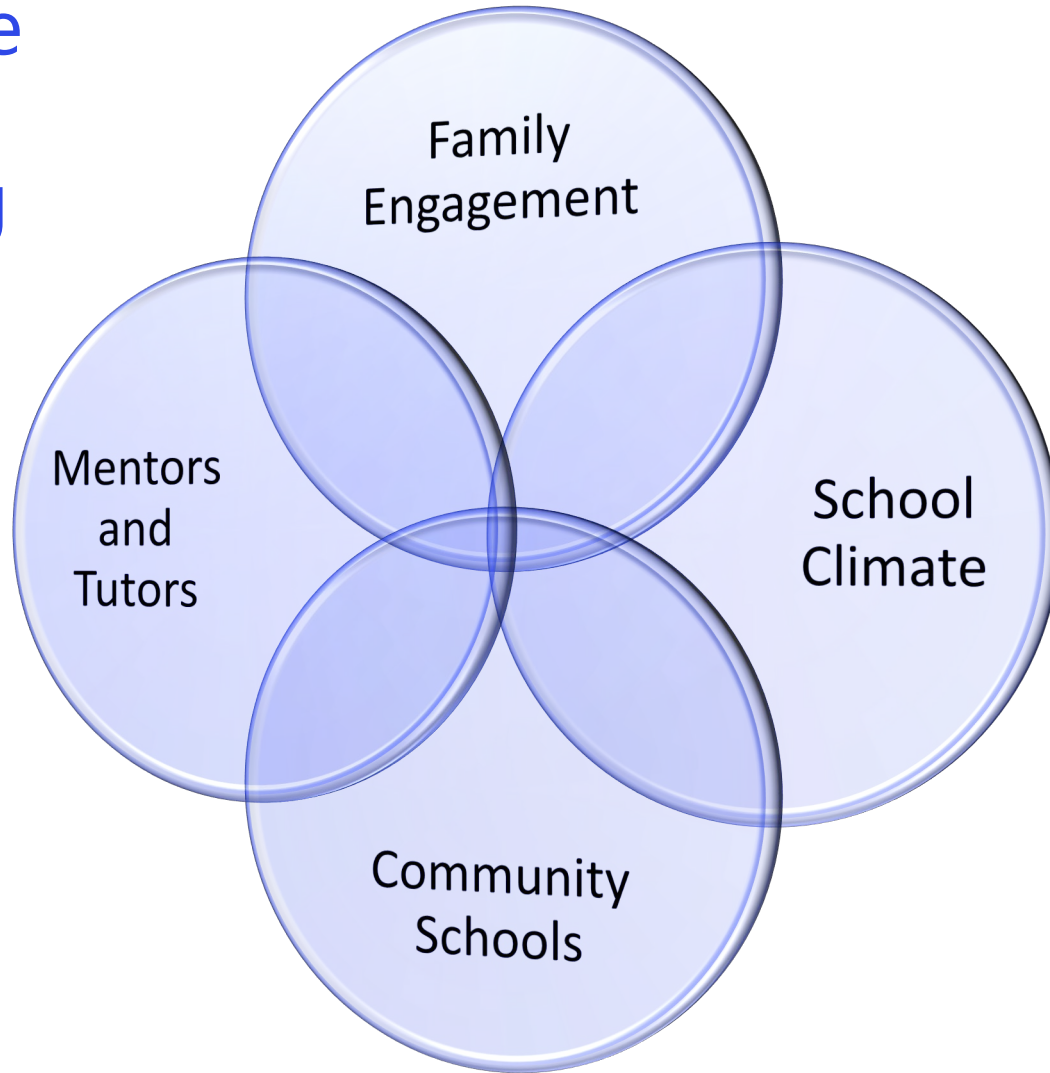
- Community Schools model in New York City led to improved attendance over 3 years
- Wrap-around services provided by Communities in Schools led to improved attendance for elementary students



What Doesn't Work: Punitive Approaches



Attendance
Touches
Everything

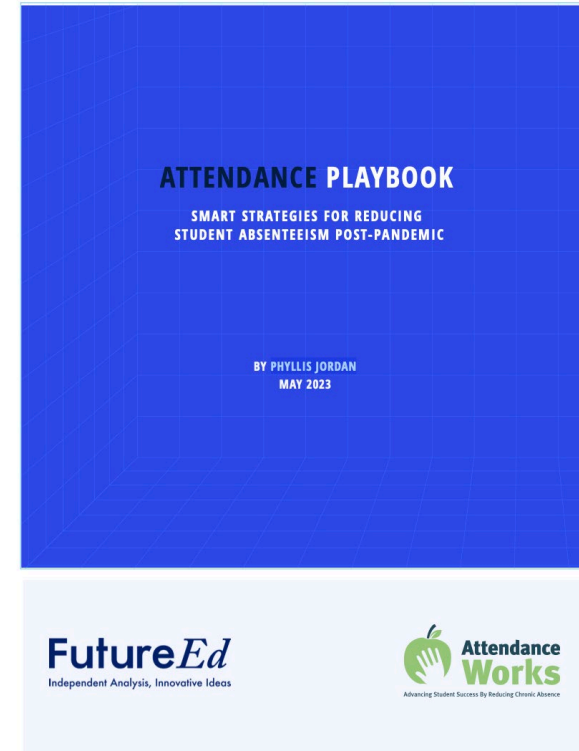


IMPLEMENTATION



Attendance Playbook 3.0

- A joint project by FutureEd and Attendance Works
- Offers interventions for reducing chronic absence
- Provides:
 - ✓ ESSA research level
 - ✓ MTTS tier of support
 - ✓ Research and resources



LINK: <https://www.future-ed.org/attendance-playbook/>

Research and Resources

RESEARCH

- School-located influenza vaccination and absenteeism among elementary school students in a Hispanic community: **PROMISING**
- Impact of school flu vaccine program on student absences: **EMERGING**
- Burden of asthma in inner-city elementary schoolchildren: **PROMISING**
- The Relationship Between School-Based Health Centers, Rates of Early Dismissal from School, and Loss of Seat Time: **PROMISING**

RESOURCES

- The Cost Benefit of Comprehensive Primary and Preventive School-Based Health Care
- School-Based Health Care Support Toolkit

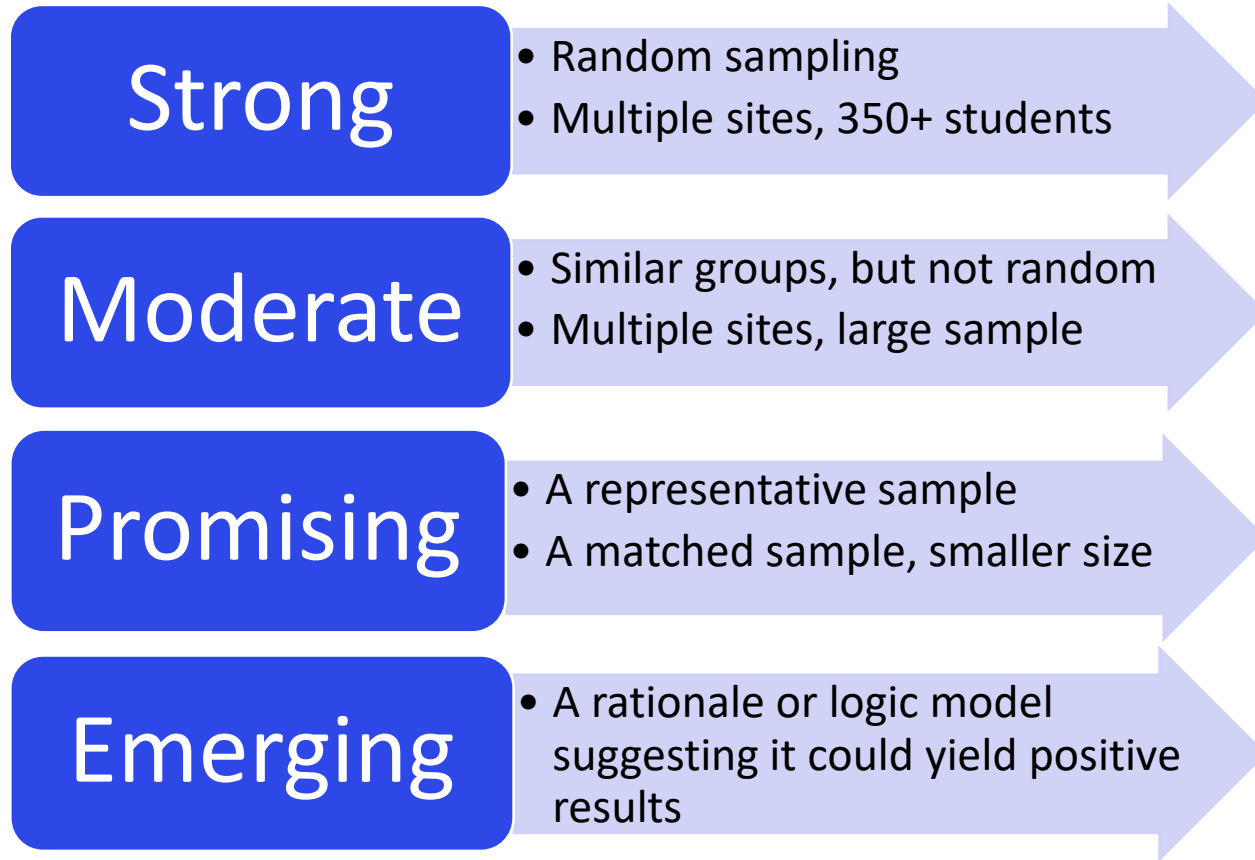
RESEARCH

- Can Restorative Practices Improve School Climate and Curb Suspensions? **MODERATE**
- The Promise of Restorative Practices to Transform Teacher-Student Relationships and Achieve Equity in School Discipline: **EMERGING**
- A Cluster-Randomized Trial of Restorative Practices: **EMERGING**

RESOURCES

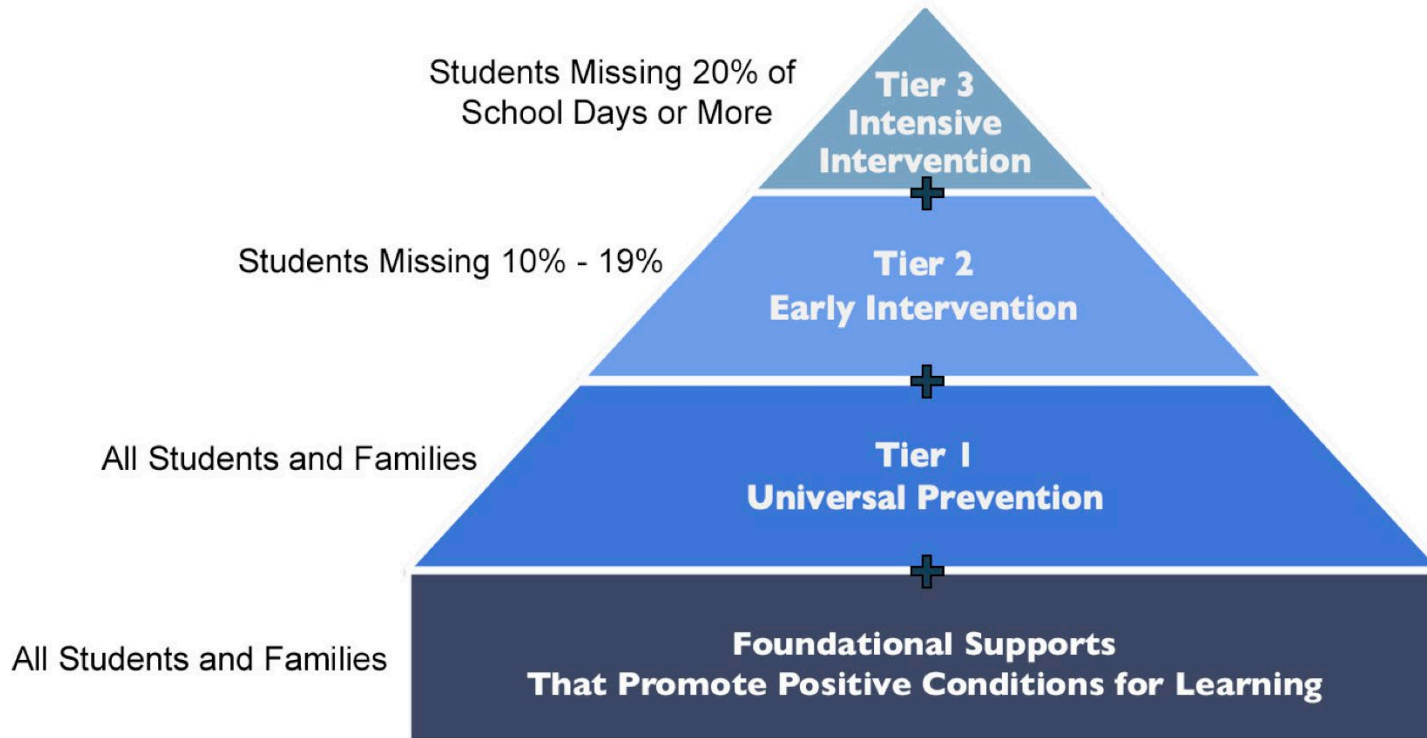
- Restorative Justice in U.S. Schools: A Research Review

Levels of Evidence



Tiers of Support

Three Tiers of Attendance Support



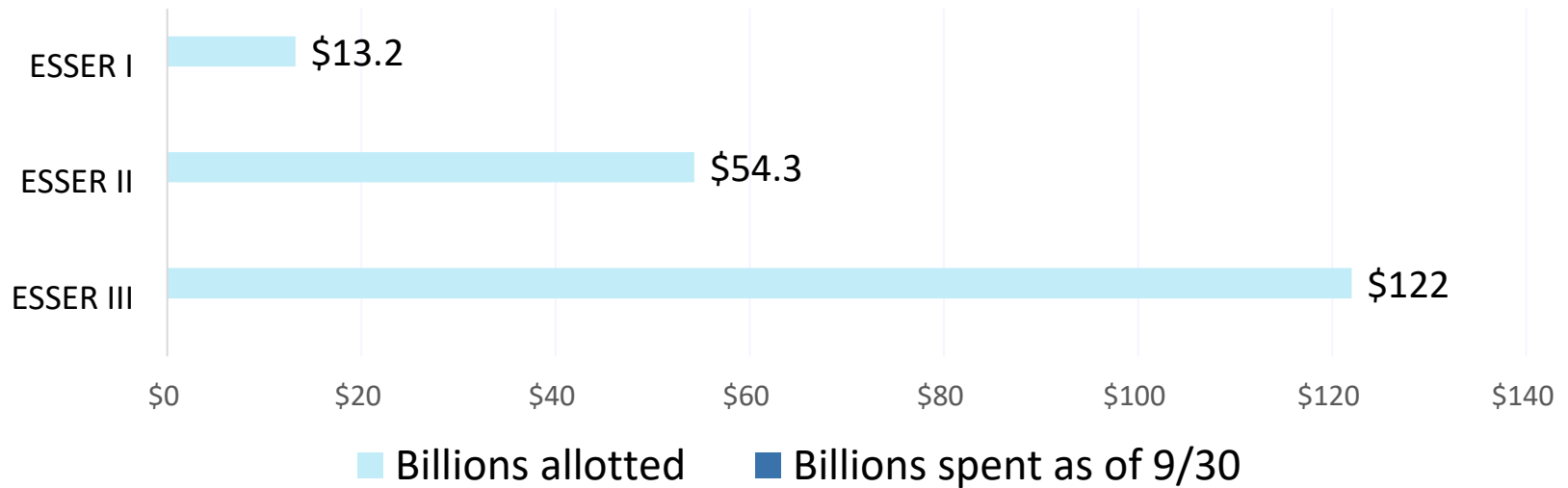
www.attendanceworks.org

PAYING FOR IT



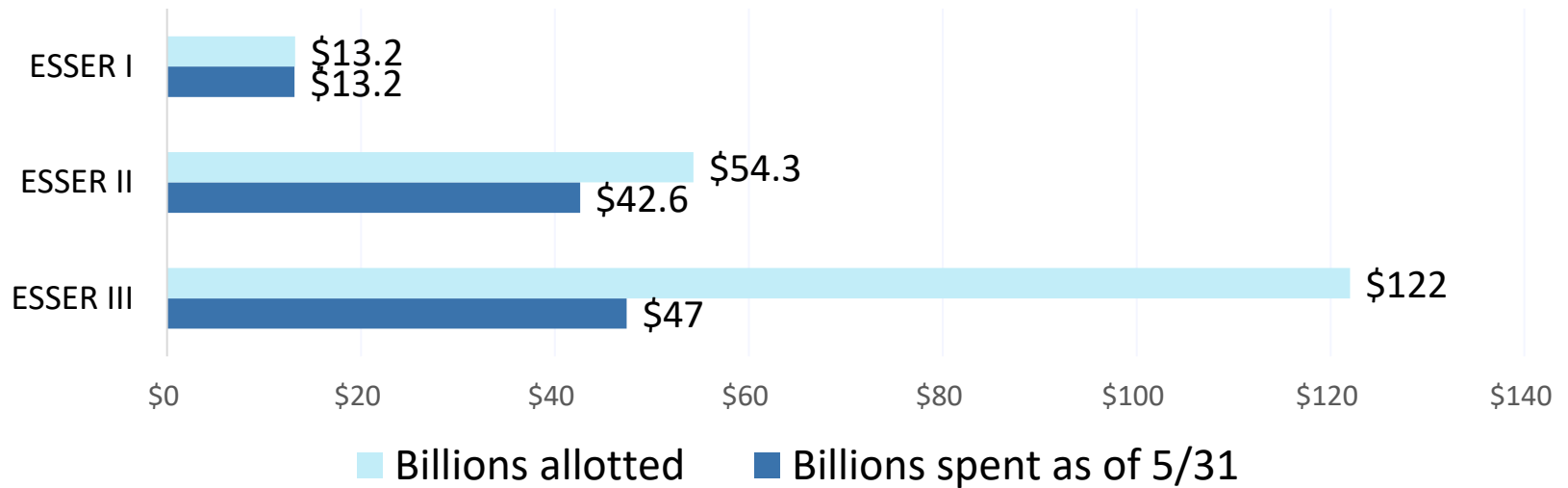
Three Rounds of ESSER

Covid-Relief Spending

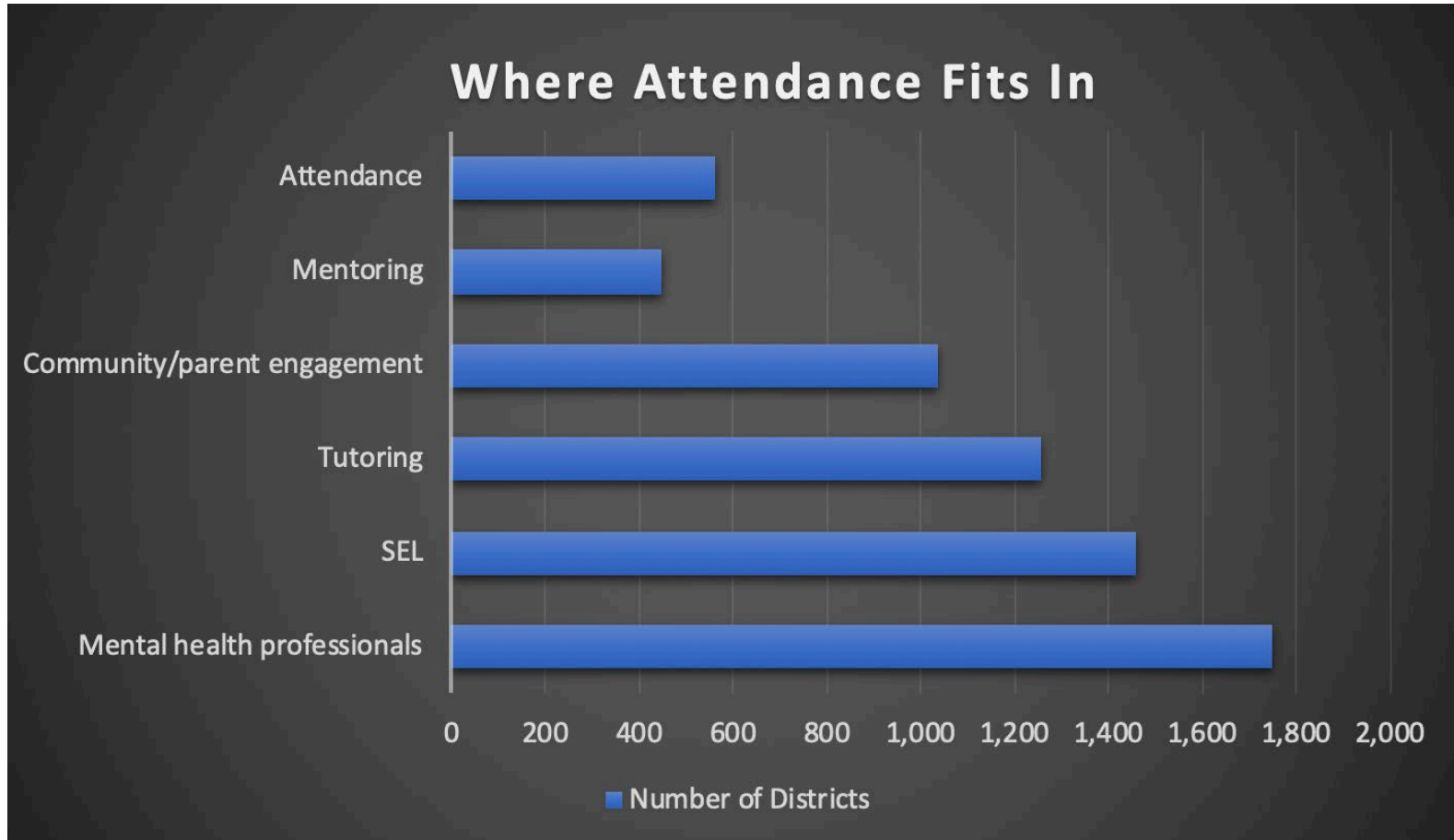


Three Rounds of ESSER

Covid-Relief Spending



Planned ESSER Spending

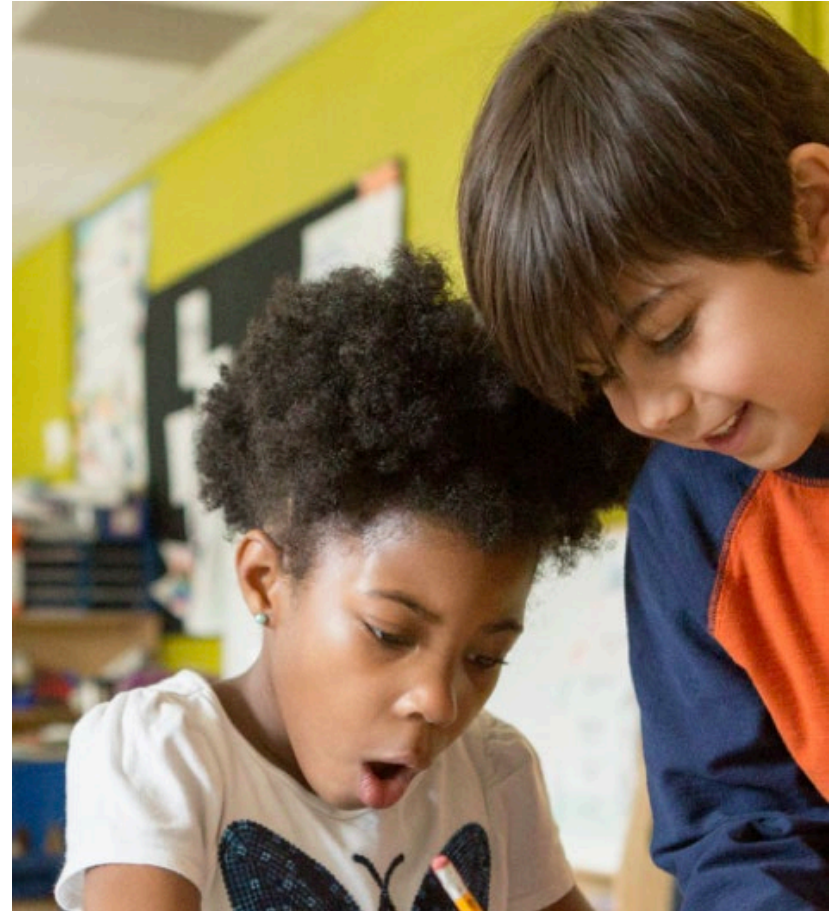


ESSER Examples

- **Connecticut** is spending \$10.7 million on home visiting.
- **Fort Worth** spent \$3.2 million last year on “family engagement specialists.”
- **Syracuse, NY**, earmarked \$2.3 million for attendance aides, family outreach & mentoring
- **Fulton County, Ga**, is using \$1 million to engage high school students at risk of dropping out.

ESSA Title Funding

- **Title I:** Support for high-poverty schools and students
- **Title II:** Funding for teacher training
- **Title IVa:** Safe and healthy school grants for data and school climate
- **Title IVe:** Family engagement grants
- **Title IVf:** Community Schools grants



Other Federal Sources

- **Stronger Connections** grants in gun violence law
- **IDEA dollars** to support attendance for special education students
- **McKinney-Vento** money for homeless students
- **Medicaid billing** to pay for school clinics and staffing



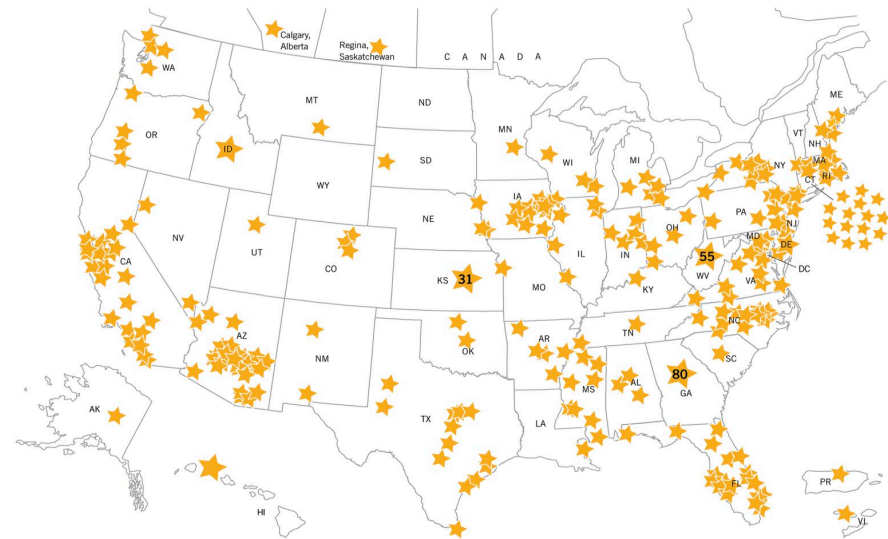
Local & State Assets

- Make the case for spending **state & local dollars** on successful interventions
- Reach out to **state service commissions** for support from AmeriCorps workers/NPSS
- Tap local university **work study programs** for tutors and mentors



The Power of Partners

- **Campaign for Grade-Level Reading** has partners in 350+ communities
- **Local foundations** are paying for attendance staff, community schools coordinators



QUESTIONS?

