

Lansing Central School District



Comprehensive Attendance Policy

Improving Attendance Matters Because It Reflects:

Exposure to language: Starting in Pre-K, attendance equals exposure to language-rich environments especially for low-income children.

Time on Task in Class: Students only benefit from classroom instruction if they are in class.

On Track for Success: Chronic absence is a proven early warning sign that a student is behind in reading by 3rd grade, failing courses middle and high school, and likely to drop-out.

College Readiness/ employment: Attendance patterns predicts college enrollment and employment persistence.

Engagement : Attendance reflects engagement in learning.

Effective Practice: Schools, communities and families can improve attendance when they work together.

(For research, see: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/research/>)



Comprehensive Attendance Policy Commissioner's Regulations

1. *Objective*
2. *Strategies*
3. *What will be excused and unexcused*
4. *Coding system*
5. *Course Credit*
6. *Family notice description*
7. *Interventions*
8. *Identification of person designated to be responsible*
9. *Must annually review if we show a decline in attendance*
10. *Provide plain language (handbooks. Code of Conduct)*
11. *Copies available to all stakeholders*



Lansing Attendance Record

<https://lansing.schooltool.cnyric.org/iq>

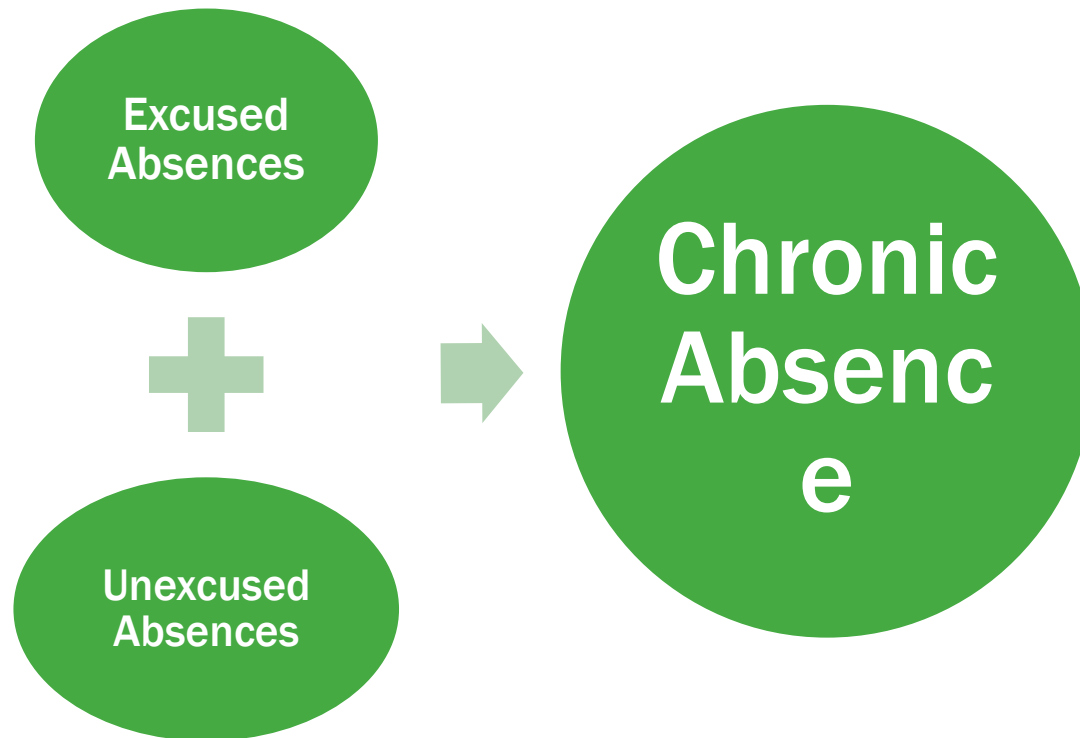
Lansing Central School District average annual attendance for the last 5 years is 96%.

Lansing Central School District average annual tardiness for the last 5 years is 2%.



What is Chronic Absence?

Chronic Absence is missing 10% or more of the school year for **any reason** – this includes excused and unexcused absences.



In the 2015-2016 school year, less than 2% students were considered to have chronic absenteeism.



Chronic Absence: A Hidden National Crisis

- ❑ Nationwide, as many as 7.5 million students miss nearly a month of school every year. That's 135 million days of lost time in the classroom.
- ❑ In some cities, as many as one in four students are missing that much school.
- ❑ Chronic absenteeism is a red alert that students are headed for academic trouble and eventually for dropping out of high school.
- ❑ Poor attendance isn't just a problem in high school. It can start as early as pre-kindergarten.



Families

Families aren't connecting the dots between early attendance and later outcomes

“My child shouldn't miss a day of kindergarten unless it's unavoidable.”



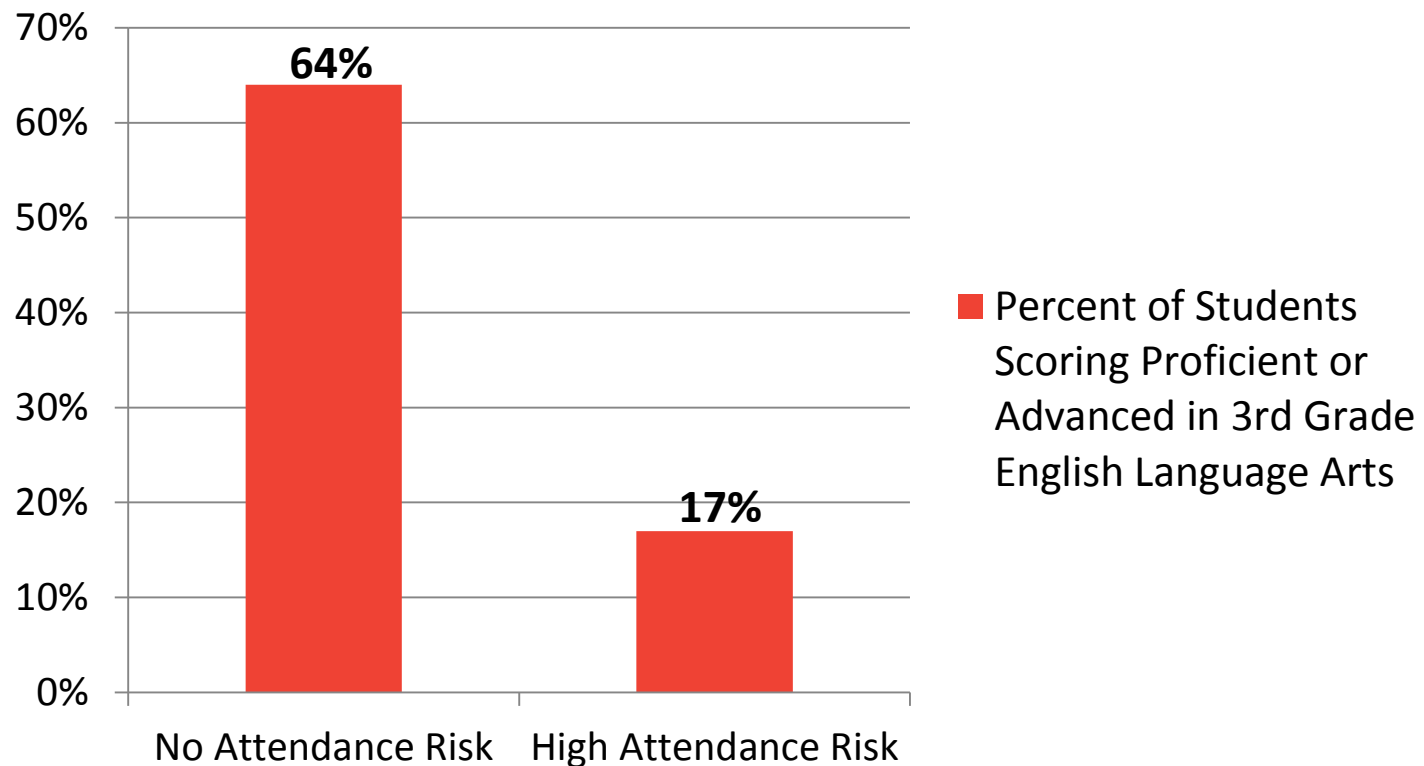
“I hope my child graduates high school and goes to college.”

If You're Not in School, You Can't Benefit From What Is Taught



Students Chronically Absent in Kindergarten & 1st Grade Much Less Likely to Read Proficiently in 3rd Grade

**Percent of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced
in 3rd Grade English Language Arts**



Source: Applied Survey Research & Attendance Works



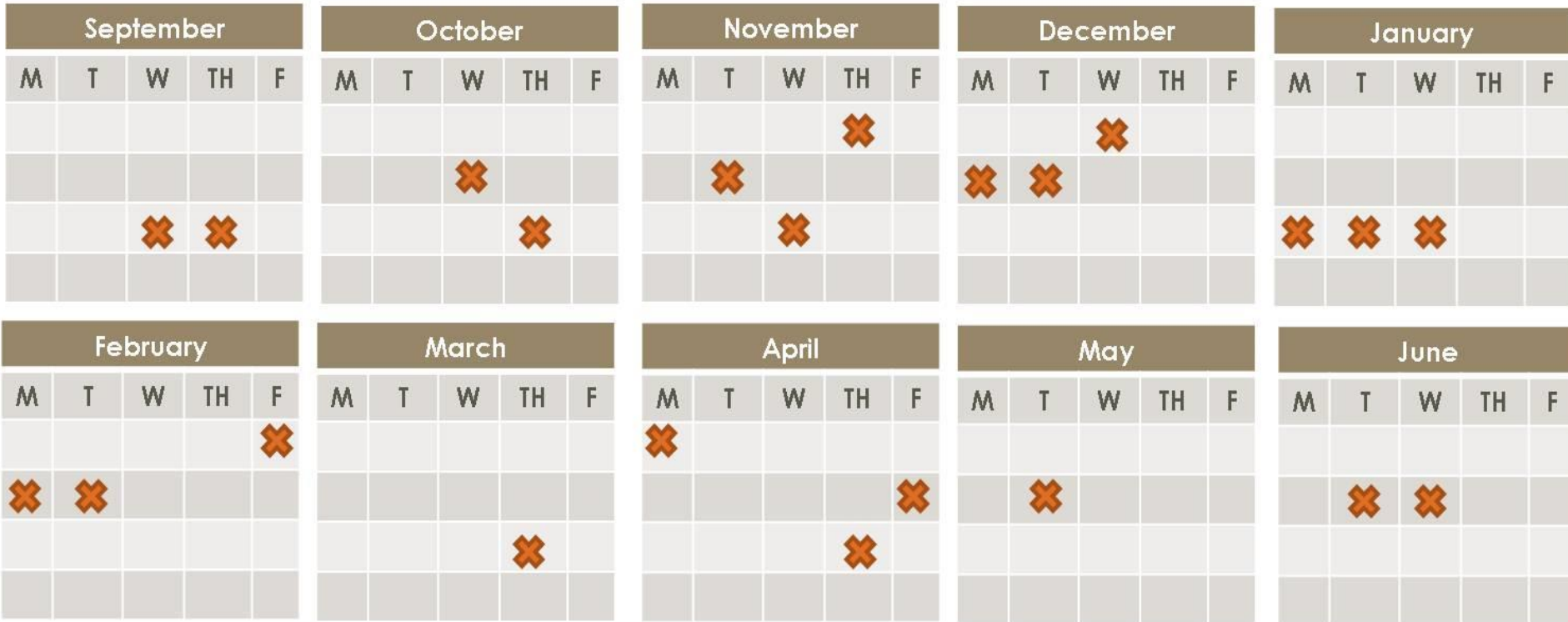
Families aren't connecting the dots between day-to-day absences and year-end totals

"A couple absences a month isn't a big deal."



"18+ absences a year is way too many."

Why We May Not Notice Chronic Absence



Absences Add Up

Chronic Absence = 18 days of absence = 2 days a month



Why Are Students Missing So Much School?

Myths

Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused

Sporadic versus consecutive absences aren't a problem

Attendance only matters in the older grades

Aversion

Child struggling academically

Lack of engaging instruction

Poor school climate and ineffective school discipline

Parent had negative school experience

Barriers

Lack of access to health care

Poor transportation

No safe path to school



Site-Level Strategies

A. Recognize Good and Improved Attendance

B. Engage Students and Parents

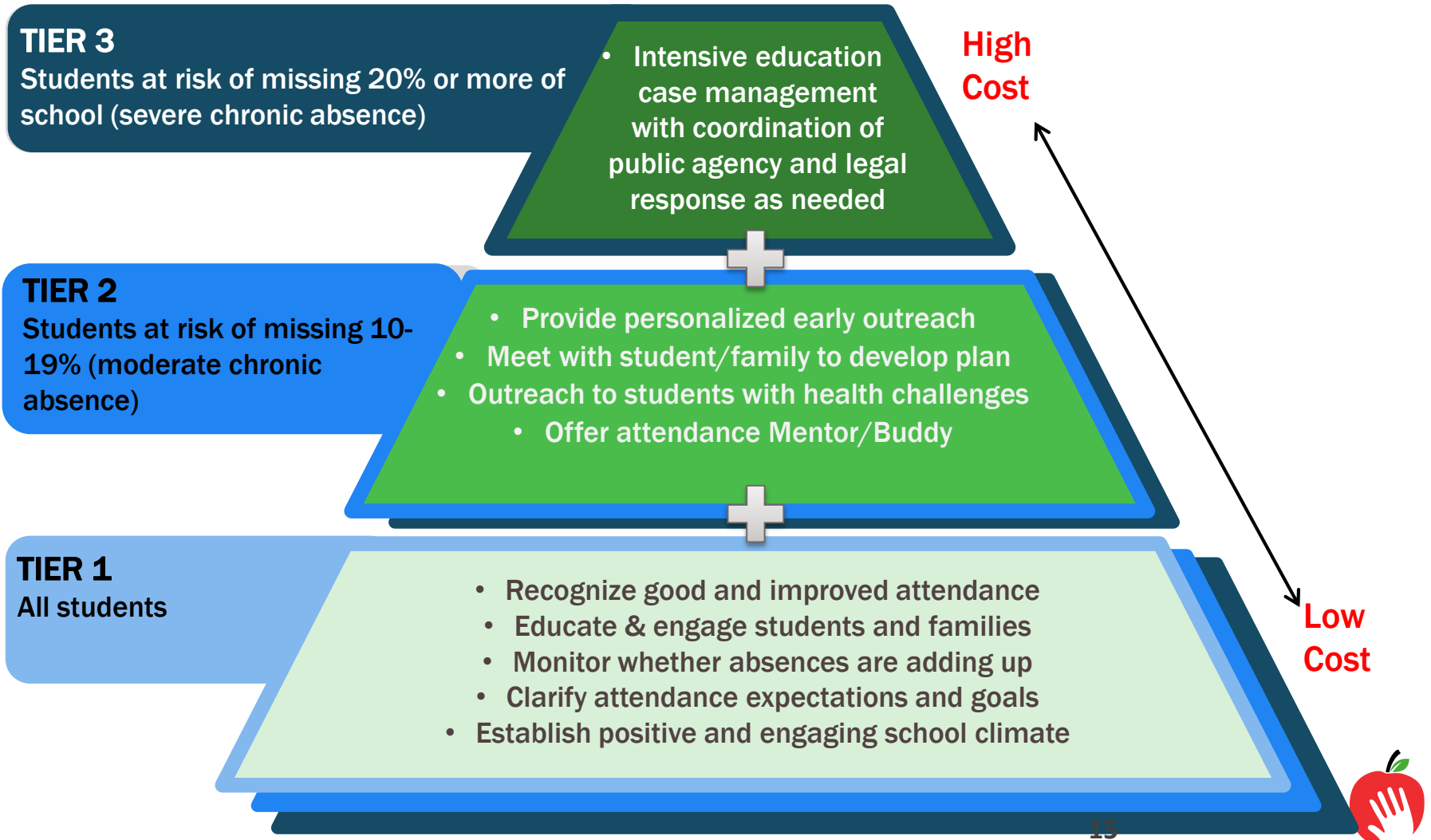
E. Develop Programmatic Response to Barriers (as needed)

D. Provide Personalized Early Outreach

C. Monitor Attendance Data and Practice



Improving attendance requires a tiered approach that begins with prevention



Tips for Attendance Incentives

- **Should be part of a more comprehensive approach.**
- **Simple, no-cost rewards - recognition, special privileges, personal connection - work. Reward families, not just students.**
- **Interclass competition is a powerful motivator.**
- **Avoid recognizing only perfect attendance.**
- **Reward timeliness.**
- **Keep families informed and engaged, not just students.**



Leveraging Parent-Teacher Conferences to Inform Families

**Satisfactory
Attendance**

**Missing less
than 5% of
school days**

At-Risk

**Missing
between 5-
10% of school
days**

**Chronic
Absence**

**Missing 10% or
more of school
days**



Framing the Conversation to Build a Relationship of Trust

1

Learn

Learn about the student's family. Ask what their vision is for their child's future. What are their hopes and dreams for them?

2

Share

Share positive things you've observed about the student. Share your own vision for student learning & development, including helping put students on a pathway to success by encouraging a habit of good attendance.

3

Inform

Review attendance report with parents. Tailor your conversation to student's level of absenteeism and inform parents of possible impacts of missing school. Connect attendance back to parents' hopes and dreams for their child.

4

Discuss

Discuss the challenges parents face in getting their children to school, as well as strengths they can build upon. For chronically absent students, try to understand the barriers that are keeping their children from school.

5

Arrive at a Plan

Think through strategies with parents for addressing absences and help them develop an attendance improvement plan. Offer referrals to services as needed and ask if there are other ways you can help.



Supports to Help Overcoming Aversions and Barriers

Counseling in and out of school

PINS - Person in Need of Supervision

Before and after school Childcare

Check-and-connect

Connect with resources

Home visits

Family meetings with counselor, principal, teacher, student, etc.

Free and Reduced Breakfast Lunch/ Back Pack Program

Booster club connections and supports – PTSO, Sports Boosters, LTAPA

Connected adults and students

Engaging Curriculum

Positive School Climate – Link Crew, Responsive Classroom, Lunch Buddies, Student of the quarter, etc.

Lunch/ Afterschool detention with resolution

