



## Whole School Strategies that Encourage Attendance

Schools want to create a climate that promotes positive, trusting relationships between students and staff, engages students in their education, and identifies and removes barriers to attendance. This document outlines some school wide strategies that can help establish this kind of climate around attendance. It is only a partial list of ideas and resources that schools can use to create a learning environment for all students that will promote regular attendance and engagement. The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) would be happy to provide technical assistance to districts regarding attendance policies, data, interventions, or early warning systems. If you have resources that you would like to share, I would be happy to add them to the list and share them with the other districts to help address chronic absenteeism in Kansas.

### School Climate

- [Cultivating a School Wide Culture of Attendance](#) <sup>1</sup>, Attendance Works (webpage)
- [Creating a Local Toolkit](#) <sup>2</sup>, Attendance Works (webpage)
- All students have a positive, trusting relationship with at least one adult in the building.
  - [Don't Quit on Me: What Young People Who Left School Say About the Power of Relationships](#) <sup>3</sup>, America's Promise Alliance (webpage)
  - [Reducing Chronic Absenteeism through PEOPLE: Priority Early Outreach for Positive Linkages and Engagement](#) <sup>4</sup>, Attendance Works (PDF).
- Consistent rules
  - Analyze policies and procedures to make sure that all students, parents and staff know what it means to be tardy, absent, what constitutes excused and unexcused absences, and that all policies are enforced consistently.
- Make sure students, parents and staff understand the importance of regular attendance and the school's expectations regarding attendance.
- Recognize and reward good and improving attendance
- [School-wide attendance incentives](#), Attendance Works (PDF): [https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/incentives1.9.17\\_2-1.pdf](https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/incentives1.9.17_2-1.pdf)
- Offer before and after school programs

<sup>1</sup> Cultivating a School Wide Culture of Attendance, Attendance Works (webpage): <https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/for-principals-leading-attendance/cultivate-a-school-wide-culture-of-attendance/>

<sup>2</sup> Creating a Local Toolkit, Attendance Works (webpage): <http://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/for-principals-leading-attendance/creating-a-local-toolkit/>

<sup>3</sup> Don't Quit on Me: What Young People Who Left School Say About the Power of Relationships, America's Promise Alliance (webpage): <https://www.americaspromise.org/report/dont-quit-me>

<sup>4</sup> Reducing Chronic Absenteeism through PEOPLE: Priority Early Outreach for Positive Linkages and Engagement, Attendance Works (PDF): [https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Positive-Priority-Outreach-Toolkit\\_081914.pdf](https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Positive-Priority-Outreach-Toolkit_081914.pdf)

- [Kansas Afterschool Grants](#) <sup>5</sup> KSDE (webpage)
- Make students feel welcome and create a reason for students to come to school.
  - Greet students at the door – set the tone by starting the day with a positive interaction.
  - Increased opportunities for extracurricular and co-curricular involvement.
  - Provide enrichment activities for students such as field trips, assemblies and dances.
- Grade level transition teams.
  - Purpose is not to “warn” next grade level teacher about certain students, but to make sure that any and all supports that students need are in place from day 1.
- Reflecting on School Climate.
  - [Kansas School Climate Survey](#) <sup>6</sup>(PDF)

## Health and Safety.

- Bullying prevention:
  - [Anti-Bullying Resources](#) <sup>7</sup>, KSDE (webpage)
- Social, emotional and character education.
  - [KSDE Social, Emotional and Character Development](#) <sup>8</sup> (webpage)
- Mental health services (substance abuse prevention, conflict resolution and peer mediation, anger management, coping skills for students of divorce/family conflict/substance abuse).
  - [School Mental Health: A Resource for Kansas School Communities](#) <sup>9</sup>, TASN (webpage)
  - [Resource Mapping in Schools and School Districts: A Resource Guide](#) <sup>10</sup>, Center for School Mental Health, University of Maryland School of Medicine (PDF)
  - [Evidence-Informed School Mental Health Interventions](#) <sup>11</sup>, TASN (webpage)
  - [Mental Health Resources](#) <sup>12</sup>, TASN (webpage)
  - [Accommodations to Help the Anxious Child at School](#) <sup>13</sup>, Psycom (webpage)
- Stress the importance of nutrition, physical activity, physical education, and wellness.
  - [Healthy Kansas Schools](#) <sup>14</sup>, KSDE (webpage)
  - [School Nutrition Programs](#) <sup>15</sup>, KSDE (webpage)
  - [School Wellness Policies](#) <sup>16</sup>, KSDE (webpage)
  - [Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) <sup>17</sup>, KSDE (webpage)
  - [Summer Food Service Program \(SFSP\)](#) <sup>18</sup>, KSDE (webpage)
  - [Farm to School](#) <sup>19</sup>, KSDE (webpage)
- Create a school health and wellness committee
- Work with local agencies to emphasize, and if possible facilitate, flu shots, dental checkups, asthma management plans, lice management plans, services for those with chronic medical conditions.

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<sup>5</sup> Kansas Afterschool Grants KSDE (webpage): <http://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Early-Childhood-Special-Education-and-Title-Services/Title-Services/State-Programs/Kansas-After-School-Programs>.

<sup>6</sup> Kansas School Climate Survey (PDF): <http://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/Title/ParentInvolv/SchoolClimateSurvey.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Anti-Bullying Resources, KSDE (webpage): <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Career-Standards-and-Assessment-Services/Content-Area-M-Z/School-Counseling/School-Counseling-Resources/Bullying-Prevention>

<sup>8</sup> KSDE Social, Emotional and Character Development (webpage): <http://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Career-Standards-and-Assessment-Services/Content-Area-M-Z/School-Counseling/Social-Emotional-and-Character-Development>

<sup>9</sup> School Mental Health: A Resource for Kansas School Communities, TASN (webpage): <https://www.ksdetasn.org/smhi/school-mental-health-a-resource-for-kansas-school-communities>

<sup>10</sup> Resource Mapping in Schools and School Districts: A Resource Guide, Center for School Mental Health, University of Maryland School of Medicine (PDF): <https://dm0gz550769cd.cloudfront.net/shape/78/7836bc25375bed7ed2bc906407be674e.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Evidence-Informed School Mental Health Interventions, TASN (webpage): [https://ksdetasn.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/resource/upload/651/Evidence-Based\\_SMH\\_Interventions.pdf](https://ksdetasn.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/resource/upload/651/Evidence-Based_SMH_Interventions.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Mental Health Resources, TASN (webpage):

[https://www.ksdetasn.org/search/resources?search\\_term=mental+health+resources&q%5Bresource\\_types\\_resources\\_resource\\_type\\_id\\_eq.any%5D%5B%5D=&q%5Baudience\\_list\\_cont.any%5D%5B%5D=&q%5Btopic\\_list\\_cont.any%5D%5B%5D=&q%5Bstudent\\_age\\_list\\_cont.any%5D%5B%5D=&q%5Bprovider\\_id\\_eq.any%5D%5B%5D=&committ=SEARCH](https://www.ksdetasn.org/search/resources?search_term=mental+health+resources&q%5Bresource_types_resources_resource_type_id_eq.any%5D%5B%5D=&q%5Baudience_list_cont.any%5D%5B%5D=&q%5Btopic_list_cont.any%5D%5B%5D=&q%5Bstudent_age_list_cont.any%5D%5B%5D=&q%5Bprovider_id_eq.any%5D%5B%5D=&committ=SEARCH)

<sup>13</sup> Accommodations to Help the Anxious Child at School, Psycom (webpage): <https://www.psycom.net/classroom-help-anxious-child-at-school/>

<sup>14</sup> Healthy Kansas Schools, KSDE (webpage): <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Career-Standards-and-Assessment-Services/Content-Area-F-L/Healthy-Kansas-Schools>

<sup>15</sup> School Nutrition Programs, KSDE (webpage): [http://www.kn-eat.org/SNP/SNP\\_Menu/SNP\\_Home.htm](http://www.kn-eat.org/SNP/SNP_Menu/SNP_Home.htm)

<sup>16</sup> School Wellness Policies, KSDE (webpage): [https://www.kn-eat.org/SNP/SNP\\_Menu/SNP\\_Guidance\\_Wellness\\_Policies.htm](https://www.kn-eat.org/SNP/SNP_Menu/SNP_Guidance_Wellness_Policies.htm)

<sup>17</sup> CACFP - Home Page (kn-eat.org), KSDE (webpage): [https://www.kn-eat.org/CACFP/CACFP\\_Menu/CACFP\\_Home.htm](https://www.kn-eat.org/CACFP/CACFP_Menu/CACFP_Home.htm)

<sup>18</sup> SFSP, KSDE (webpage): [https://www.kn-eat.org/SFSP/SFSP\\_Menu/SFSP\\_Home.htm](https://www.kn-eat.org/SFSP/SFSP_Menu/SFSP_Home.htm)

<sup>19</sup> Farm to School, KSDE (webpage): [http://www.kn-eat.org/F2S/F2S\\_Menu/F2S\\_Home.htm](http://www.kn-eat.org/F2S/F2S_Menu/F2S_Home.htm)

- Healthy Hands Program – emphasize hand washing to help prevent the spread of cold, flu, etc.
- Clothing drives for winter clothes, coats, shoes, hats, gloves, etc.
- Can be a service-learning project, but also helps removes a barrier for attendance for some students in the cold winter months.
- Make nutrition guidelines for foods available on campus – help students to make good choices regarding nutrition.

## Monitor the Data

- Create a school team that regularly reviews attendance data for trends for all students and which need more intensive interventions.
  - [A Principal-Led Team Overseeing Attendance - Attendance Works](#)<sup>20</sup> (webpage)
  - [Attendance Data Teams – Attendance Works](#)<sup>21</sup>(PDF)
- Decide what data you already have, and which you might want to track in order to increase engagement and decrease absences (tardies, early releases, late AM arrivals, nurse's office visits, restroom visits, etc.).
  - [Use Chronic Absence Data to Determine Need for Additional Supports - Attendance Works](#)<sup>22</sup> (webpage)
- Identify barriers to attendance and take steps to remove those barriers for students.
  - [Barriers to Attendance](#)<sup>23</sup> (image)
  - [Breaking Barriers to Attendance - Attendance Works](#)<sup>24</sup> (PDF)

## Engaging and Meaningful Curriculum

- Intentional development and use of the Individual Plans of Study (IPS) to drive student course selection and experiences.
  - [Individual Plans of Study \(IPS\) - Student](#)<sup>25</sup>, KSDE (webpage)
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) opportunities
  - [KSDE Career and Technical Education Home Page](#)<sup>26</sup> (webpage)
  - [CTE Table of Contents](#)<sup>27</sup>, KSDE (webpage)
  - [Career Clusters and Pathways](#)<sup>28</sup>, KSDE (webpage)
  - [Excel in CTE \(formerly Senate Bill 155\)](#)<sup>29</sup>, KSDE (webpage)
- Service Learning
  - [What is Service Learning or Community Engagement?](#)<sup>30</sup>, Center for Teaching, Vanderbilt University (webpage)
  - [Civic Engagement](#)<sup>31</sup>, KSDE (webpage)
  - [10 Mostly Instructional Practices to Improve Civic Engagement in Any Classroom](#)<sup>32</sup>, KSDE (PDF)

<sup>20</sup> A Principal-Led Team Overseeing Attendance - Attendance Works, (webpage): <https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/mentoring-elementary-success-mentors/what-support-is-needed-from-schools/a-principal-led-team-overseeing-attendance/>

<sup>21</sup> Attendance Data Teams – Attendance Works (PDF) <https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Attendance-Data-Teams-7-18-13-1.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> Use Chronic Absence Data to Determine Need for Additional Supports - Attendance Works (webpage): <https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/for-principals-leading-attendance/use-chronic-absence-data-to-determine-need-for-additional-supports/>

<sup>23</sup> Barriers to Attendance (image): [Screen-Shot-2017-03-04-at-10.32.47-AM.png \(898x420\) \(attendanceworks.org\)](#)

<sup>24</sup> Breaking Barriers to Attendance - Attendance Works (PDF): <https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/BreakingBarrierstoattendance.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Individual Plans of Study (IPS) – Student, KSDE (webpage): <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Career-Standards-and-Assessment-Services/Content-Area-F-L/Individual-Plans-of-Study-IPS-Student>

<sup>26</sup> KSDE Career and Technical Education Home Page: <http://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Career-Standards-and-Assessment-Services/CSAS-Home/Career-Technical-Education-CTE>

<sup>27</sup> CTE Table of Contents (ksde.org): <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Career-Standards-and-Assessment-Services/CSAS-Home/Career-Technical-Education-CTE/CTE-Table-of-Contents>

<sup>28</sup> Career Clusters and Pathways, (webpage): <http://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Career-Standards-and-Assessment-Services/CSAS-Home/Career-Technical-Education-CTE/Career-Clusters-Pathways>

<sup>29</sup> Excel in CTE (formerly Senate Bill 155), KSDE (webpage): <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Career-Standards-and-Assessment-Services/CSAS-Home/Career-Technical-Education-CTE/Excel-in-CTE>

<sup>30</sup> What is Service Learning or Community Engagement? Center for Teaching, Vanderbilt University (webpage): <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/teaching-through-community-engagement/>

<sup>31</sup> Civic Engagement (ksde.org) (webpage): <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Career-Standards-and-Assessment-Services/Content-Area-A-F/Civic-Engagement>

<sup>32</sup> 10 Mostly Instructional Practices to Improve Civic Engagement in Any Classroom, KSDE (PDF): <https://www.ksde.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=k7o0LMeB9lk%3d&tabid=1214&portalid=0&mid=3731>

- [Service-Learning: A Dropout Prevention Strategy and MORE!](#) <sup>33</sup> (webpage)
- [Types of Service Learning](#) <sup>34</sup>, University of Central Arkansas (webpage)
- [Learning to Give](#) <sup>35</sup>(website) Service learning lessons, programs and ideas.
- [129 Great Examples of Community Service Projects](#) <sup>36</sup> (webpage)
- Work-based learning
  - Work-based learning program to enhance student learning with actual job site experiences and facilitate the transition from school to work.
- Authentic experiences for students (Project Based Learning, hands-on learning, real-world issues, etc.).
  - [MyPBLWorks](#) <sup>37</sup>, The Buck Institute for Education (webpage)

## Parental Engagement

- [Working Together: A Family Engagement Resource for Kansas Educators](#) <sup>38</sup> (PDF)
- [Engaging All Families](#) <sup>39</sup>, Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC website)
- Back to school nights – engage students and guardians early by building relationships and defining expectations
- Incentives for parents who attend parent-teacher conferences
  - Make childcare available free of charge
  - Door prizes for attendees
  - Call when students miss school to express concern
  - Explain to parents how to report an absence
- Practices in place to deal with language or cultural barriers
  - [How well is your School Bridging Racial, Class and Cultural Differences?](#) <sup>40</sup>
  - [Reaching Out to Diverse Populations: What Can Schools Do to Foster Family-School Connections?](#) <sup>41</sup> (PDF)
- Communication with guardians regarding positive behaviors and improvement
  - [Family Engagement Survey](#) <sup>42</sup> (PDF)
- Grade level transition meetings
- Distribute school information at extracurricular activities that may have more attendance
- Professional development for staff on how to engage families
  - [Beyond the Building: A Facilitation Guide for School, Family and Community Connections](#) <sup>43</sup> (webpage)
  - [Working Systemically in Action: Engaging Family and Community](#) <sup>44</sup>(webpage)
  - [Organizing Family and Community Connections with Schools: How Do School Staff Build Meaningful Relationships with All Stakeholders?](#) <sup>45</sup> (PDF)
- Commitment to graduate ceremonies – freshmen walk across the stage and sign a commitment to graduate banner... hang it up to remind students of their pledge to finish HS
- Hopes and Dreams Activity – parents write down their hopes and dreams for their child and post them around the school. Allows students and school personnel to see that all parents have hopes and dreams for their students (students could also post their own hopes and dreams)
- Parent Resources

<sup>33</sup> Service-Learning: A Dropout Prevention Strategy and MORE! (webpage) <https://dropoutprevention.org/webcast/19-service-learning-dropout-prevention-strategy-and-more/>

<sup>34</sup> Types of Service Learning, University of Central Arkansas (website): <https://uca.edu/servicelearning/types/>

<sup>35</sup> Learning to Give (website): <https://www.learningtogive.org/resources/lessons-units>

<sup>36</sup> 129 Great Examples of Community Service Projects (prepscholar.com): <https://blog.prepscholar.com/129-examples-of-community-service-projects>

<sup>37</sup> MyPBLWorks, Buck Institute for Education (website): <https://my.pblworks.org/>

<sup>38</sup> Working Together: A Family Engagement Resource for Kansas Educators, KPIRC and KSDE (PDF):

<https://ksdetasn.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/resource/upload/1218/wrktgthr.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Engaging All Families, KPIRC (website): <https://www.ksdetasn.org/kpirc/engaging-all-families-series>

<sup>40</sup> How well is your school bridging racial, class and cultural differences? KSDE (PDF): <https://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/Title/ParentInvolv/CulturalDifferencesChecklist.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Reaching out to Diverse Populations: What Can Schools Do to Foster Family-School Connections? National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools, Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (PDF): <https://sedl.org/connections/resources/rb/rb5-diverse.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> Family Engagement Survey, TASN (PDF): [https://ksdetasn.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/resource/upload/991/TASN\\_Survey\\_Parent.pdf](https://ksdetasn.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/resource/upload/991/TASN_Survey_Parent.pdf)

<sup>43</sup> Beyond the building: A facilitation guide for school, family, and community connections, National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools at Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (webpage): <https://sedl.org/pubs/catalog/items/fam40.html>

<sup>44</sup> Working Systemically in Action: Engaging Family and Community, National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools at Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (webpage): <https://sedl.org/pubs/catalog/items/family126.html>

<sup>45</sup> Organizing Family and Community Connections with Schools: How Do School Staff Build Meaningful Relationships with All Stakeholders? National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools, Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (PDF): <https://sedl.org/connections/resources/rb/rb4-Rel.pdf>

## WHOLE SCHOOL STRATEGIES THAT ENCOURAGE ATTENDANCE RESOURCE

- [Growing Graduates from Cradle to Career](#) <sup>46</sup> (PDF)
- [Bullying: What Families Need to Know](#) (*link does not work*)
- [Attendance Matters: Build the Habit of Good Attendance Early](#) <sup>47</sup> (PDF)
- [Attendance Matters: Keeping your Child on Track in Middle and High School](#) <sup>48</sup> (PDF)
- [Youth Suicide Awareness for Families](#) (*link does not work*)
- [Help your Child Succeed with Homework](#) <sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Growing Graduates from Cradle to Career (PDF): <https://sedl.org/connections/resources/rb/rb4-Rel.pdf>

<sup>47</sup> Attendance Matters: Help Your Child Succeed in School: Build the Habit of Good Attendance Early (PDF): [https://ksdetasn.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/resource/upload/439/Attendance\\_E\\_updated.pdf](https://ksdetasn.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/resource/upload/439/Attendance_E_updated.pdf)

<sup>48</sup> Attendance Matters: Pay Attention to Attendance: Keep Your Child On Track in Middle and High School (PDF): [https://ksdetasn.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/resource/upload/440/Attendance\\_M\\_H.pdf](https://ksdetasn.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/resource/upload/440/Attendance_M_H.pdf)

<sup>49</sup> Help Your Child Succeed with Homework, KPIRC (PDF): <https://ksdetasn.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/resource/upload/1678/Homework.pdf>

## WHOLE SCHOOL STRATEGIES THAT ENCOURAGE ATTENDANCE RESOURCE

For more information, contact:

**Dr. Robyn Kelso**

Education Program Consultant

Career Standards and Assessment Services

(785) 296-3444

[rkelso@ksde.org](mailto:rkelso@ksde.org)



Kansas State Department of Education  
900 S.W. Jackson Street, Suite 102  
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1212

<https://www.ksde.org>

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