Chronic Absenteeism and the Whole Child

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What is Chronic Absence?

ESSA: Chronic absence is defined as missing 10 percent or more of school for **any** reason.

Excused absences + **Unexcused absences** + **Suspensions** → **Chronic Absence**

Attendance Works

Chronic absence is **different** from truancy (unexcused absences only) or average daily attendance (how many students show up to school each day).
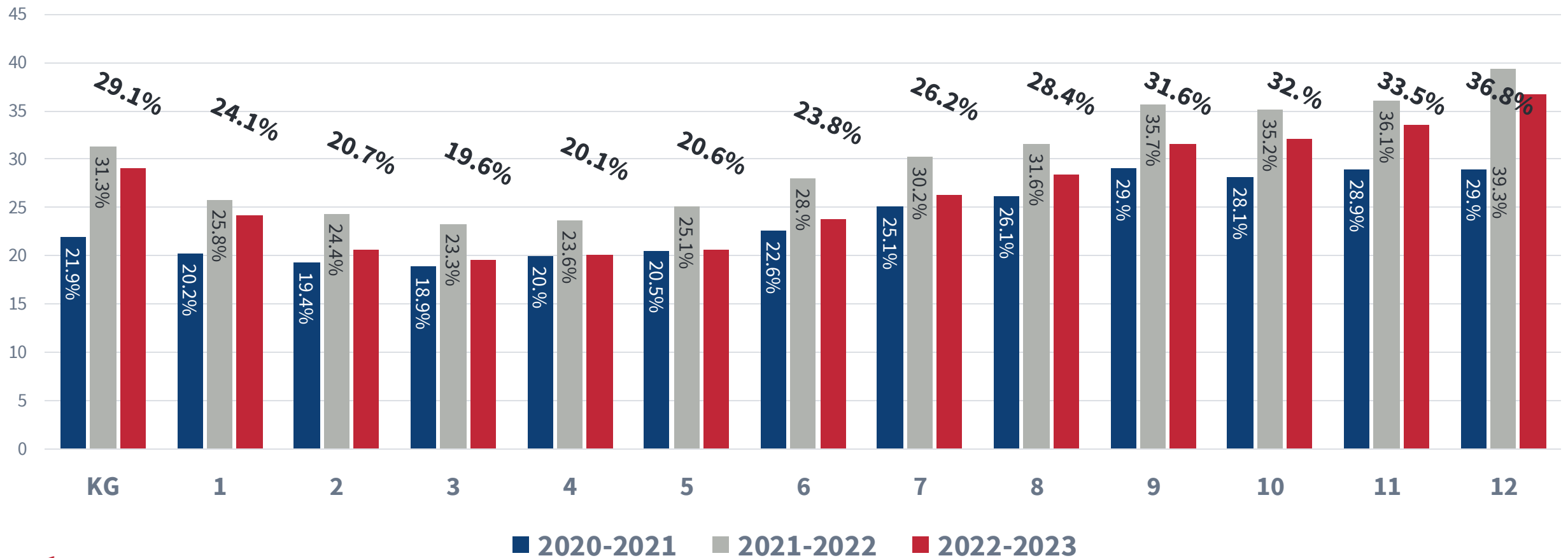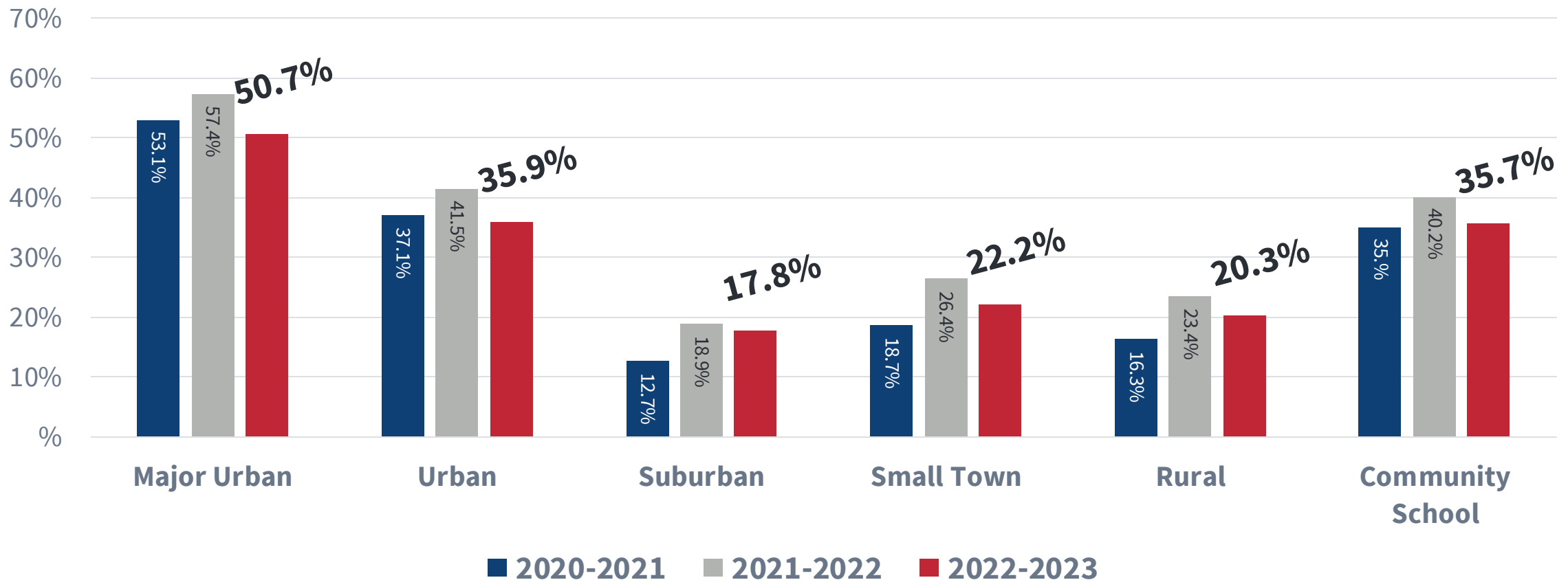
Why Focus on Attendance Data?

A student in grades K-3 who were never chronically absent was nearly 7x more likely to read proficiently

High school students who were never chronically absent were 9x more likely to graduate on time
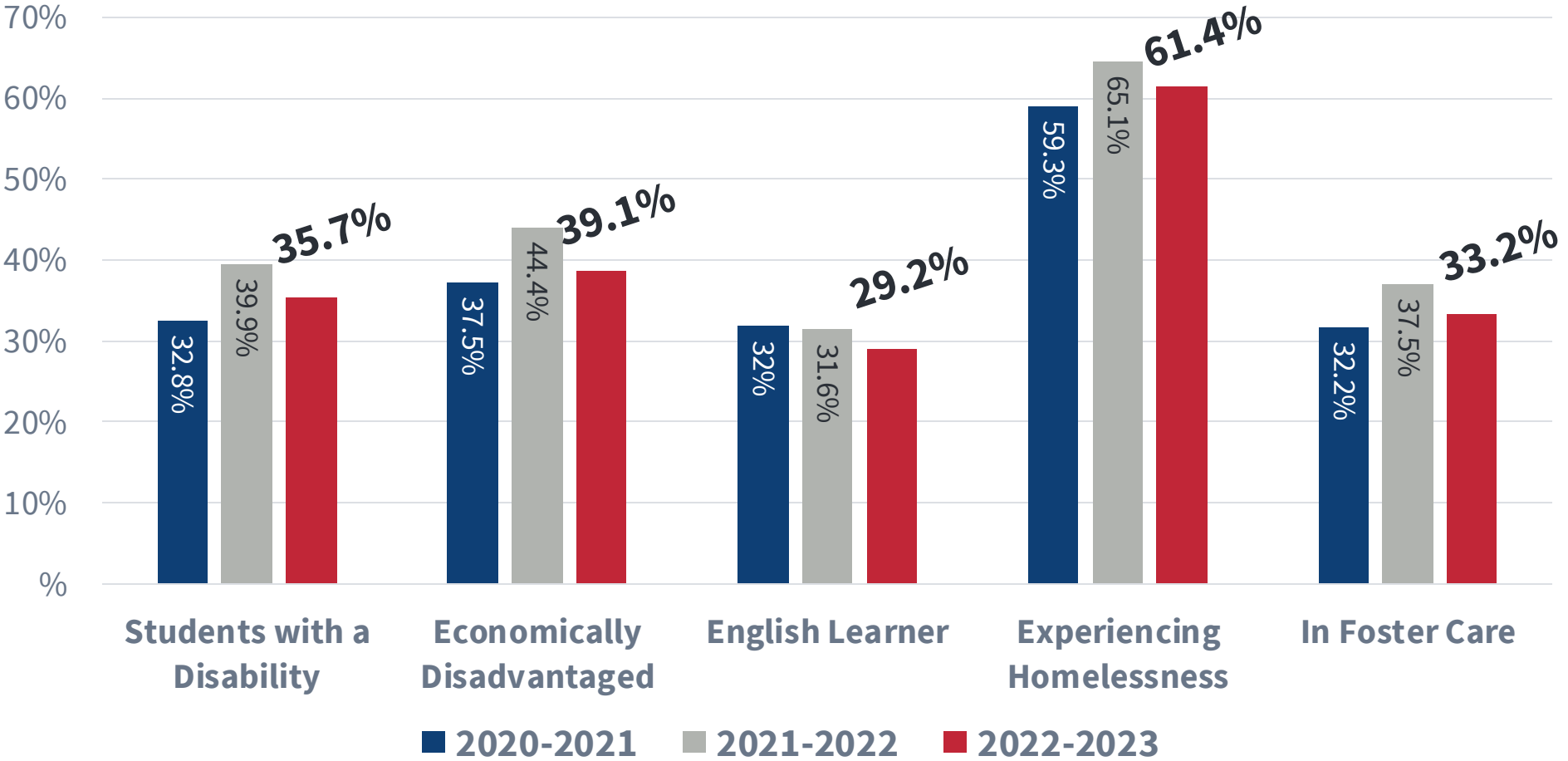
Chronic Absence in Ohio by Typology

	Major Urban	Urban	Suburban	Small Town	Rural	Community School
2020-2021	53.1%	37.1%	12.7%	18.7%	16.3%	35.%
2021-2022	57.4%	41.5%	18.9%	26.4%	23.4%	40.2%
2022-2023	50.7%	35.9%	17.8%	22.2%	20.3%	35.7%

■ 2020-2021 ■ 2021-2022 ■ 2022-2023

Chronic Absence – Students At-risk

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Students with a Disability	32.8%	39.9%	35.7%
Economically Disadvantaged	37.5%	44.4%	39.1%
English Learner	32%	31.6%	29.2%
Experiencing Homelessness	59.3%	65.1%	61.4%
In Foster Care	32.2%	37.5%	33.2%

Chronic Absence - Economically Disadvantaged
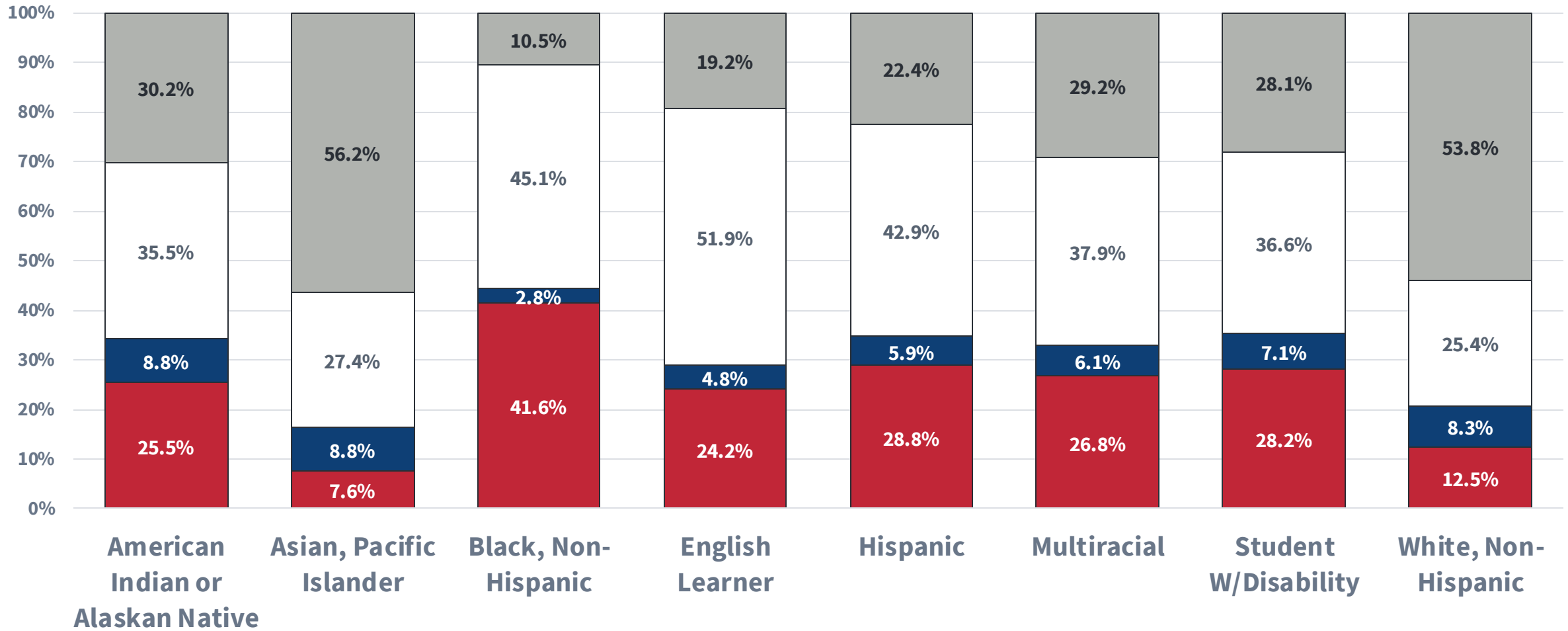
American Indian or Alaskan Native: 30.2% / 35.5% / 8.8% / 25.5%

Asian, Pacific Islander: 56.2% / 27.4% / 8.8% / 7.6%

Black, Non-Hispanic: 10.5% / 45.1% / 2.8% / 41.6%

English Learner: 19.2% / 51.9% / 4.8% / 24.2%

Hispanic: 22.4% / 42.9% / 5.9% / 28.8%

Multiracial: 29.2% / 37.9% / 6.1% / 26.8%

Student W/Disability: 28.1% / 36.6% / 7.1% / 28.2%

White, Non-Hispanic: 53.8% / 25.4% / 8.3% / 12.5%

Legend:
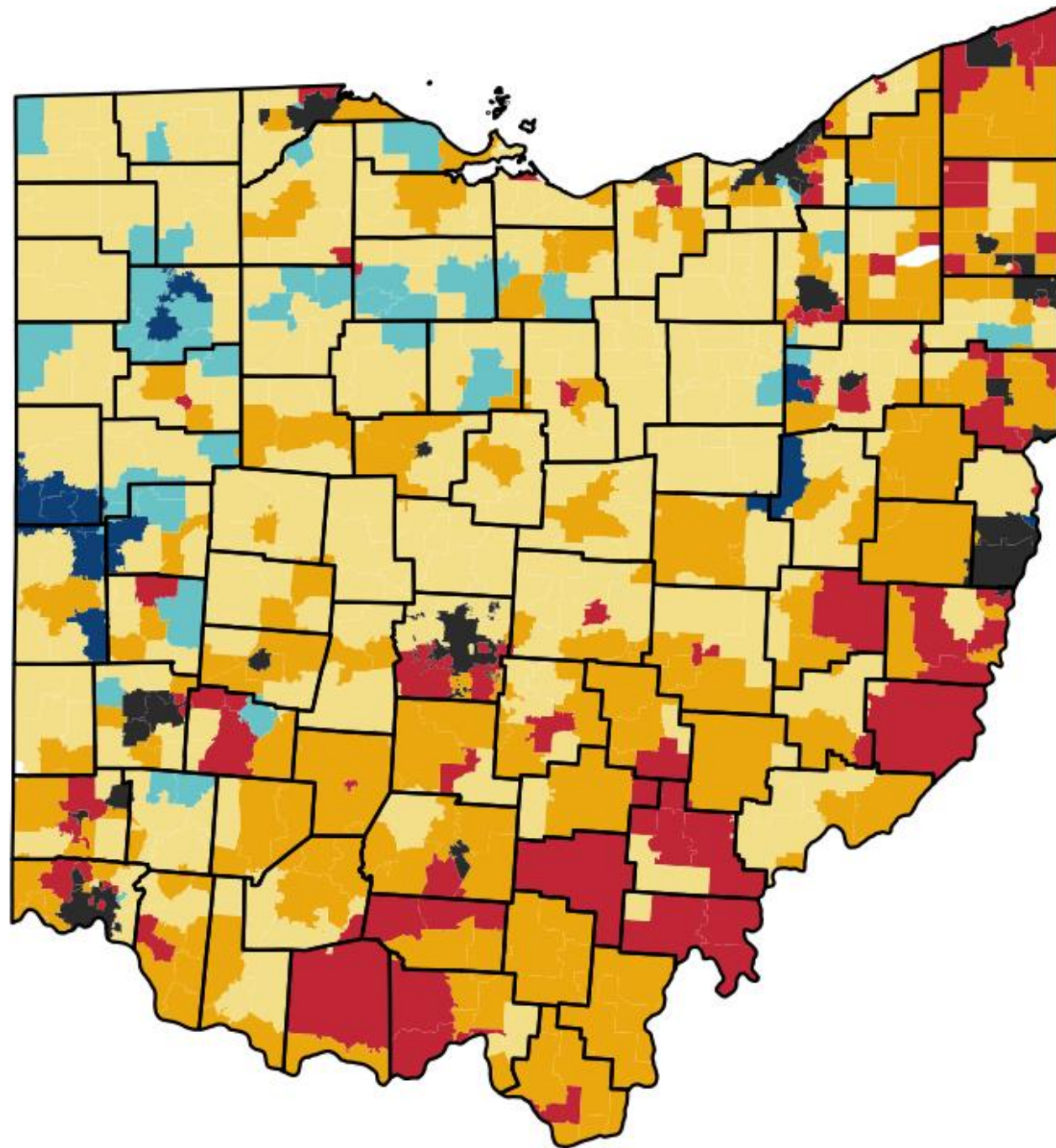- ■ Chronically Absent - Economically Disadvantaged
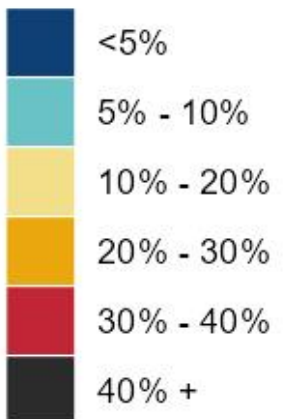- ■ Chronically Absent - Not Economically Disadvantaged
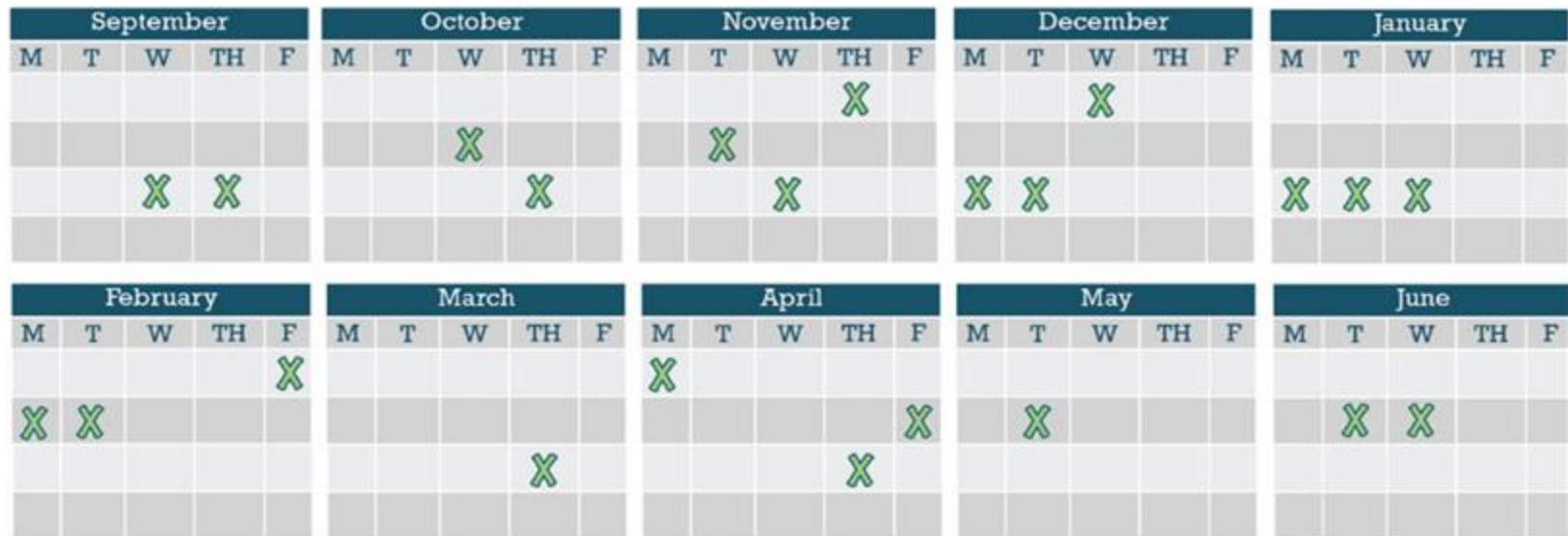- □ Not Chronically Absent - Economically Disadvantaged
- ■ Not Chronically Absent - Not Economically Disadvantaged

Chronic Absenteeism
SY22-23

- <5%
- 5% - 10%
- 10% - 20%
- 20% - 30%
- 30% - 40%
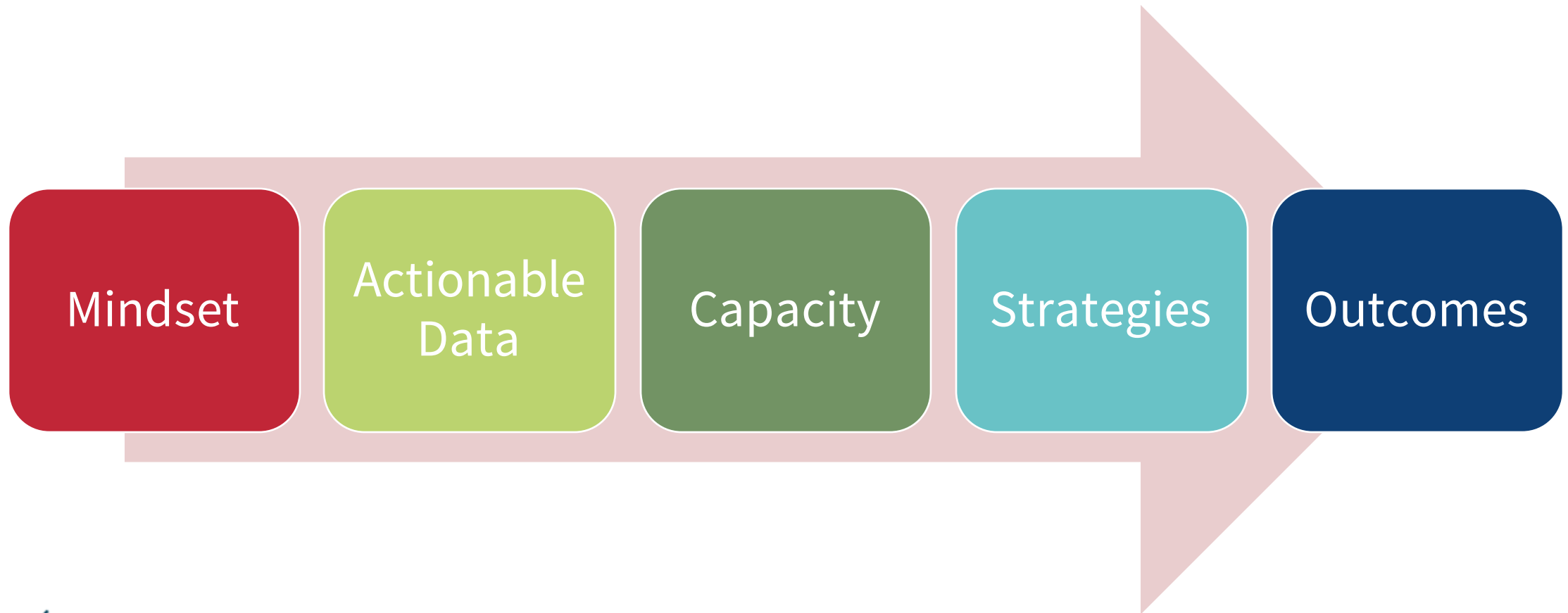- 40% +

Absences Add Up!

©Attendance Works

Missing just 2 or 3 days a month can lead to chronic absence.

10% of the school year = 18 days of absence

This translates to almost one month of missed learning

Pathway For Change

Mindset → Actionable Data → Capacity → Strategies → Outcomes

Attendance Task Force

"Teachers need to make a strong effort to connect. It helps us notice that we would be missed or knowing it matters if we're not there." - Student
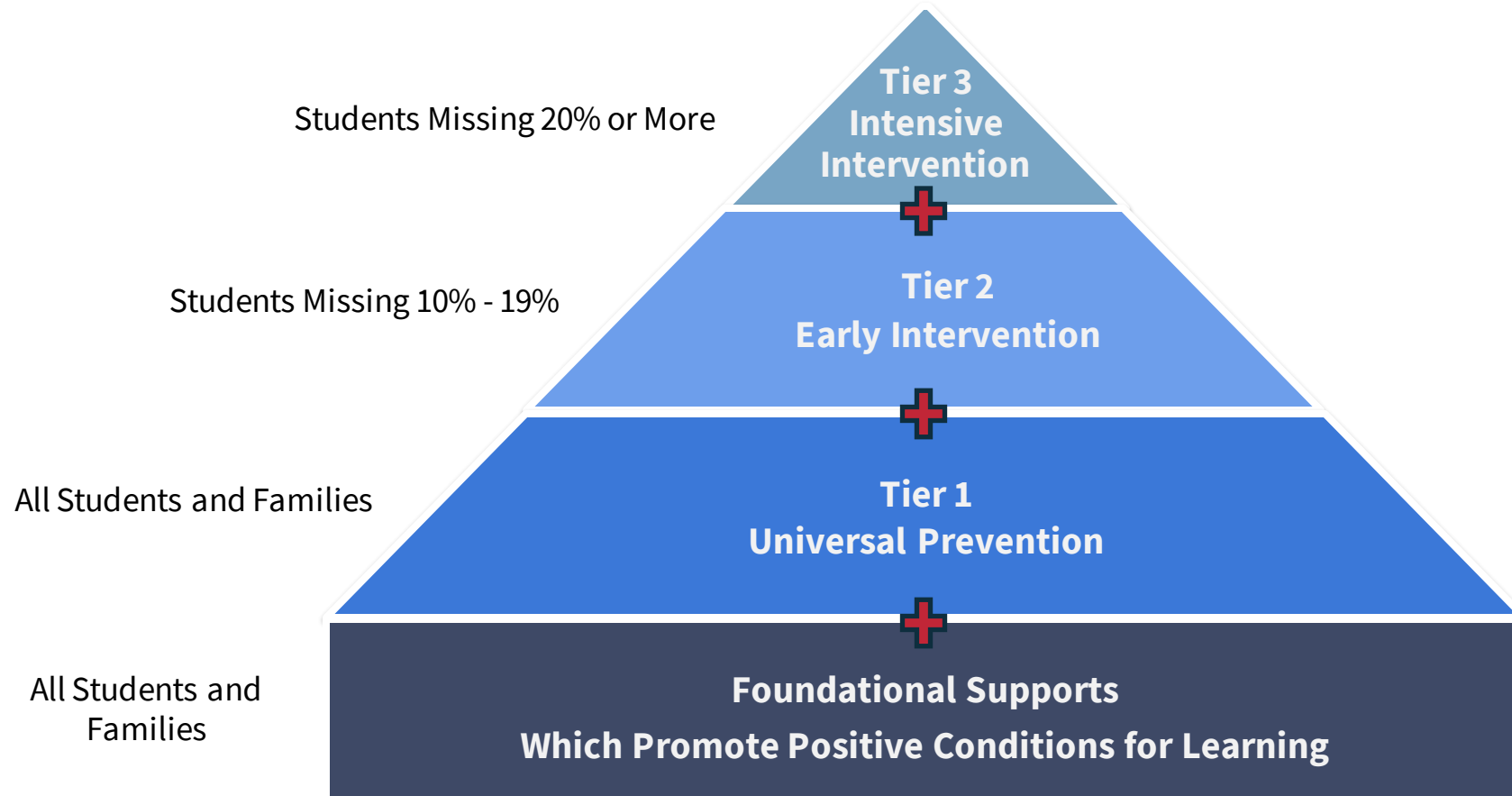
"Our school gives us a 10-minute mental break every day. It really helps with my stress during the day." - Student

"Families often receive a letter that threatens truancy charges before a team approach to problem-solve is taken or a root cause is discovered. This puts families and schools against each other right out of the gate." - Parent
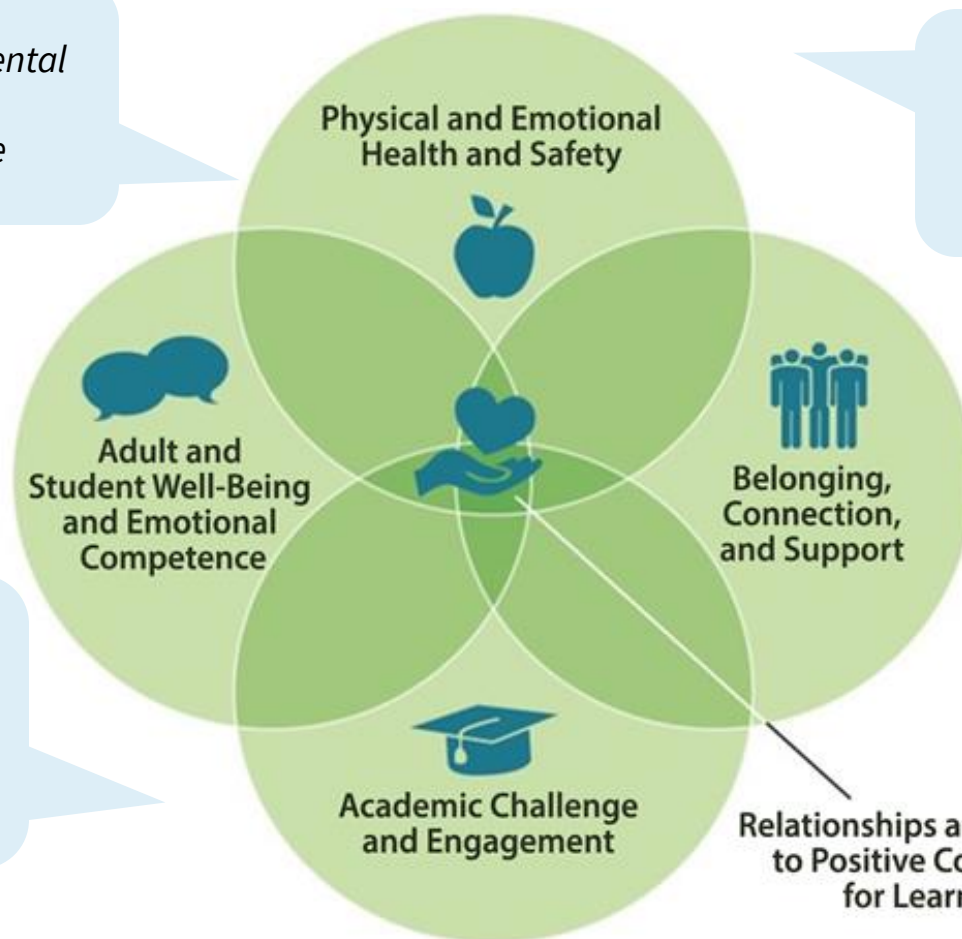
View the full Task Force report here

Multi-tiered System of Support

Students Missing 20% or More

Tier 3
Intensive
Intervention

Students Missing 10% - 19%

Tier 2
Early Intervention

All Students and Families

Tier 1
Universal Prevention

All Students and
Families

Foundational Supports
Which Promote Positive Conditions for Learning

Attendance Works

Positive Conditions for Learning

- Restorative check-ins
- Access to health care & mental health supports
- Trauma-informed practice
- Staff self-care

- Healthy learning environments
- Welcoming, safe school climate
- Access to food & other basic needs
- Restorative circles

Physical and Emotional Health and Safety

Adult and Student Well-Being and Emotional Competence

Belonging, Connection, and Support

- Active student & family engagement
- Advisories/meetings to build community
- Enrichment & clubs
- Positive peer connections

- Access to tech & internet
- Learning supports
- Project-based learning
- Credit recovery opportunities
- Internships/community service
- Alternative scheduling options

Academic Challenge and Engagement

Relationships are Essential to Positive Conditions for Learning

What Can We Do To Address These?

Barriers

- Chronic and acute illness
- Family responsibilities or home situation
- Trauma
- Poor transportation
- Housing and food insecurity
- Inequitable access to needed services
- System involvement
- Lack of predictable schedules for learning
- Lack of access to tech

Aversion

- Struggling academically and/or behaviorally
- Unwelcoming school climate
- Social and peer challenges
- Anxiety
- Biased disciplinary and suspension practices
- Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations
- Parents had negative educational experiences

Disengagement

- Lack of challenging, culturally responsive instruction
- Bored
- No meaningful relationships to adults in the school (especially given staff shortages)
- Lack of enrichment opportunities
- Lack of academic and behavioral support
- Failure to earn credits
- Drawn to low-wage job vs. being in high school

Misconceptions

- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Missing 2 days per month doesn't affect learning
- Lose track and underestimate TOTAL absences
- Sporadic absences aren't a problem
- Attendance only matters in the older grades
- Suspensions don't count as absence

Ohio

Interventions in Attendance Playbook
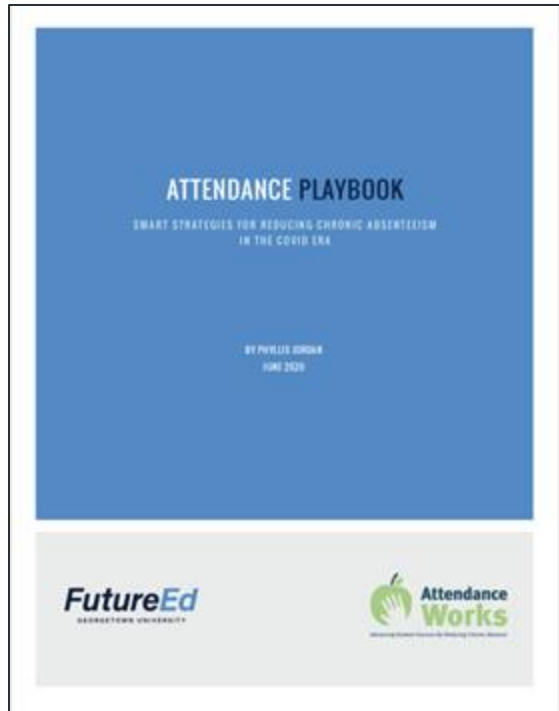
TIER I Interventions
- Engaging with Families
- Student-Teacher Relationships
- Incentives
- Healthy School Buildings
- School-based Health Services
- Telehealth
- School Buses and Public Transit
- Summer Learning and Afterschool Strategies
- A Safer Walk to School
- Free Meals for All
- Laundry at School
- Relevant—and Culturally Relevant—Instruction
- Positive Greetings at the Door
- Rethinking Recess
- Restorative Discipline Practices

TIER II Interventions
- Early Warning Systems
- Mentors and Tutors
- Targeted Youth Engagement
- Addressing Asthma
- Targeted Home Visits
- Supporting Students with Disabilities
- Mental Health Support and Understanding School Refusal
- Immigration Support

TIER III Interventions
- Truancy
- Interagency Case Management
- Aiding Housing Insecurity

Attendance Playbook: https://www.future-ed.org/attendance-playbook/

QUESTIONS?

EDUCATION.OHIO.GOV

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Ohio Department of Education & Workforce