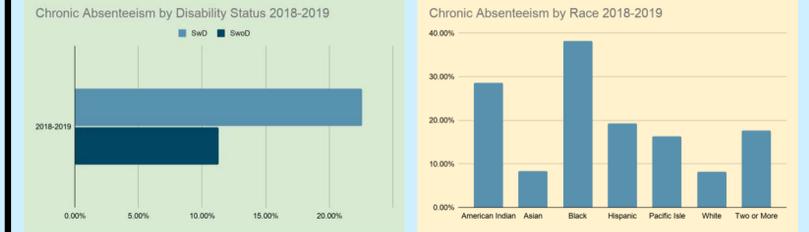


## Addressing Attendance to Increase Graduation Rates

Missing just 10% of school (2 days per month) can drastically affect a teen's academic success and reduce graduation outcomes. "Students with disabilities are among those most frequently absent from school at every grade level," (Civil Rights Data Collection 2013-2014). In fact, students with disabilities' chronic absence rate is 1.5 times higher than their non-disabled peers nationally.

The graphs below demonstrate the percent of students who demonstrate chronic absenteeism in Wisconsin, comparing both students with disabilities to their non-disabled peers as well as a comparison of students by race. In Wisconsin during the 2018-2019 school year chronic absenteeism is double for students with disabilities when compared to their non-disabled peers. Wisconsin sees disproportionate numbers of chronic absenteeism relating to race, making it imperative to utilize culturally responsive practices to support the increase of attendance with students of diverse cultural backgrounds.



Source: Wisconsin WISE Dash Public Portal, retrieved 12/20/2020



Advancing Student Success By Reducing Chronic Absence

Attendance Works shares that addressing chronic absenteeism is a whole school/community project. Attendance Works is an action research project that uses continuous quality improvement to evaluate gaps in knowledge and capacity building. Constant assessment of intervention leads to updated and new tools and approaches in reducing chronic absence.

To support students with disabilities in increasing their attendance, "districts and schools have a more direct problem-solving role" in increasing attendance rates. Teams should look at a wide range of support systems to increase attendance for students with disabilities. The below chart shares strategies and tools for educators, families, and community agency partners, brings a direct focus on attendance support for students with disabilities, as well as discusses attendance practices during the Coronavirus Pandemic. There are direct links within the chart that can bring teams to small toolkits to support attendance. In addition, teams can look at up to date information on supporting attendance during the Coronavirus Pandemic and watch a webinar of best practice strategies.

Educators	Families and Family Partners	Community Agency Partners
This section shares strategies that educators can do within the school both in the classroom and districtwide. Also available are <a href="#">specific resources</a> for increasing Middle and High School Attendance, as well as a District <a href="#">Self Assessment and Planning Tool</a> .	Attendance Works shares a variety of <a href="#">Family Engagement tools</a> to support families in supporting attendance for their youth.	Attendance Works developed a variety of <a href="#">tools and resources for community partners</a> including: Faith Based Groups, Business Leaders, City Officials, Housing Authority, and Local Foundations
<b>Strategies to Support Attendance of Students with Disabilities</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate with families in a non-accusatory manner to establish a supportive relationship and emphasize the importance of attendance.</li> <li>Identify the root cause of absenteeism and work as a team (family, school, community) to solve them.</li> <li>Investigate disciplinary policies and practices of schools relating to suspensions and expulsions.</li> <li>Include attendance and importance of it in all IEP and 504 meetings.</li> <li>Convene IEP team for chronic absences when the problem arises. Discuss and implement explicit strategies to address these needs. Include goal setting with students.</li> <li>Discuss health related needs to keep students with chronic health concerns engaged in school.</li> <li>Document and review all efforts to support students and families, utilize data to track intervention success with individual students.</li> </ul>		
<b>Attendance Interventions During the Coronavirus Pandemic</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the Coronavirus Pandemic, many schools have needed to move to virtual settings or switch back and forth from in person to virtual settings. Attendance Works has <a href="#">highlighted tools and strategies</a> to increase attendance during the coronavirus pandemic.</li> <li>The coronavirus Pandemic has also shined a spotlight on the disproportionate impact the pandemic has had on Black, Latinx, and American Indian students. As districts review data of student attendance, it is imperative to identify this disproportionality is occurring and identify interventions that are culturally responsive to the students the district needs to serve.</li> <li>To learn more about Smart Strategies for Attendance in the Age of COVID-19 view <a href="#">webinar</a>.</li> </ul>		

### Links:

Specific Resources: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/messaging/teens-and-their-families/>

Self Assessment and Planning Tool: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/District-SELF-ASSESSMENT-TOOL-7-29-18-FINAL.pdf>

Family Engagement Tools: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/take-action/community-and-agency-partners/parents-and-parent-organizations/>

Tools and Resources for Community Partners: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/take-action/community-and-agency-partners/>

Highlighted Tools and Strategies: <https://www.future-ed.org/attendance-playbook/>

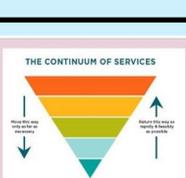
Smart Strategies Webinar: <https://vimeo.com/436840674>

Source: Attendance Works



A research study from The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory cites various strategies to make attendance interventions culturally responsive to serve all students.

The study cites that supporting attendance must be a collaborative effort including: schools, families, and community-based organizations that are directly involved in the communities in which the schools wish to serve, (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory). The infographic below shares the findings and strategies from the above-mentioned research study.

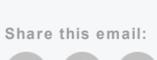
 <p><b>Consistent Attendance Practices</b> Consistent attendance practices are important to increase attendance of students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include Families</li> <li>Identify ways to pull students and families in rather than push them out.</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Continuum of Services</b> Identify ways to engage all learners based on their individual needs: Knowing students will and developing accountability and high expectations helps to increase attendance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mentoring</li> <li>Tutoring/Academic Support</li> <li>Extra Curricular Participation</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Families</b> Involve families to support attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make them a part of the team, don't place blame.</li> <li>Work with families to find positive solutions.</li> <li>Establish a contact for families to work with. Establish personal connections as problems arise.</li> <li>Utilize home visits to support families</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Communities</b> Develop community connections to support families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include community agencies and groups that represent student and family cultural identities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ie. faith based groups, mentors of same cultural background</li> </ul> </li> <li>Build upon the importance of attendance and how attendance impacts everyone</li> </ul>

In order to fully support attendance for students who demonstrate chronic absenteeism, a community approach must be utilized. Schools cannot change attendance practices alone and must work with families and community members from the communities in which students live in to develop a wrap-around approach to teaching the importance of attendance, supporting needs that may be a barrier to a student's attendance, and working together to build up students so they are not only attending, however, feel engaged and encouraged to attend school. The resources shared in this article, provide teams the opportunity to look at building this community approach to attendance support. For more information or support, please contact your [Regional TIG Coordinator](#).



[www.witig.org](http://www.witig.org)

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