

Keeping Kids in School and Out of Court

Hon. Stacy Boulware Eurie &
Hon. Donna Quigley Groman



Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye's Initiative



Strategy for Initiative

- Highlight key role that courts and judges can play.
- Highlight the importance of education and the courts collaborating.
- Begin building engaged state and local system, organization, and community will to tackle these issues in concert.



Youth Voice is Critical

Sade Daniels

**Chief Meets with Youth Court
Participants**



Goals of KKIS Initiative

- Reduce use of exclusionary discipline across California, focus on reducing disparate impact
- Reduce rates of chronic absenteeism
- Increase high school graduation rates for foster and juvenile justice youth



Suspensions Make Matters Worse

- High rates correlate with lower achievement rates (even when controlled for race and poverty)
- Suspended/expelled students:
 - 6x more likely to repeat a grade
 - 5x more likely to drop out
 - 3x more likely to have contact with juvenile justice



Racial and ethnic disparities persist

- In 2014-15, African American students were 6% of total enrollment, but 19.8% of suspended students
- Native American students were .6% of enrollment, but 1.2% of suspended students



Impact of suspensions on suspended student

- Increases risk of dropping out
- 2x as likely to repeat a grade
- 3x as likely to have contact with the juvenile justice system
- Frequency of “repeat” offenders goes up

Courtesy of Tia Elena Martinez, The Center for Civil Rights Remedies,
The Civil Rights Project, 2013



Impact of suspension on school staff & non-suspended students

- States with higher suspension rates have lower NAEP scores
- Higher suspending schools have lower test scores than demographically similar schools
- The best predictor of safety is the quality of relationships at school

Courtesy of Tia Elena Martinez, The Center for Civil Rights Remedies,
The Civil Rights Project, 2013



Key effective programs

- Restorative Justice/Practices
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)



Restorative Approach

- Inclusion
- Accountability
- Safety
- Transformation



Restorative Circles

- Check-in/out
 - How are you feeling today?
 - What is one of your academic goals for the day?
 - What is one thing you learned today?
 - Who is someone who worked hard this week?
- Classroom norms
 - What helps you learn (or stops you from learning)?
 - How can we improve behavior and how we treat one another?
 - How should we respond if an agreement broken?



PBIS - teaching behavior

- Define expected behaviors
- Communicate expected behaviors
- Rewards for positive behavior
- Clear & relevant consequences for not adhering
- Strong communication with parents



Focus on prevention

- Relationships
- Clear expectations
- Communication
- Community building



Consider external factors

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) study shows impact of stress on health
- Toxic stress influences neural pathways and interferes with executive function
- Hunger may cause irritability



Unaddressed Trauma Feeds the “Cradle to Prison Pipeline”

- Unaddressed trauma relates to higher dropout
- In SFUSD, African American students drop out 2.24 times that of district average, Latino students 1.4 times district average (2011-2012)
- Dropping out of school increases the risk of being imprisoned
- An African-American boy born in 2001 has a 1 in 3 chance of being imprisoned in his lifetime, and a Latino boy has 1 in 6



Dorado (2013), UCSF HEARTS, Child and Adolescent Services, UCSF-SFGH

Shift Your Perspective

Change the paradigm from one that asks,

"What is wrong with you?"

to one that asks,

"What has happened to you?"

Provides context, fosters compassion, helps us
to see strengths in the face of adversity



J. Dorado (2013), UCSF HEARTS, Child and Adolescent Services, UCSF-SFGH

Key Attendance Issues

- Need to focus not only on truancy (unexcused absences), but also
- Chronic absenteeism: missing 10% or more of school days for any reason



Attendance Matters because it reflects:

- Exposure to language
- On track for success
- College readiness
- Engagement



Chronic absenteeism: a critical issue

- 83% of students chronically absent in Kindergarten & 1st Grade are unable to read on-level by 3rd Grade
- Students who cannot read on-level in 3rd Grade are more likely to drop out than kids who can
- Credit to Hedy Chang, Attendance Works



Absence rates high in early grades

- 14.2% of kindergartners missed 18+ days in the 2013-14 school year
- 8.8% of first graders missed 18+ days in the 2013-14 school year



There Are Many Reasons Why Kids Are Chronically Absent. One Is Parental Misunderstandings.

Reasons:

- Parent stressors
- Transportation issues
- School/neighborhood safety (e.g. bullying)
- Chronic illness (e.g. asthma)
- Sibling effect
- **Parental misunderstandings**

Examples of Misunderstandings:

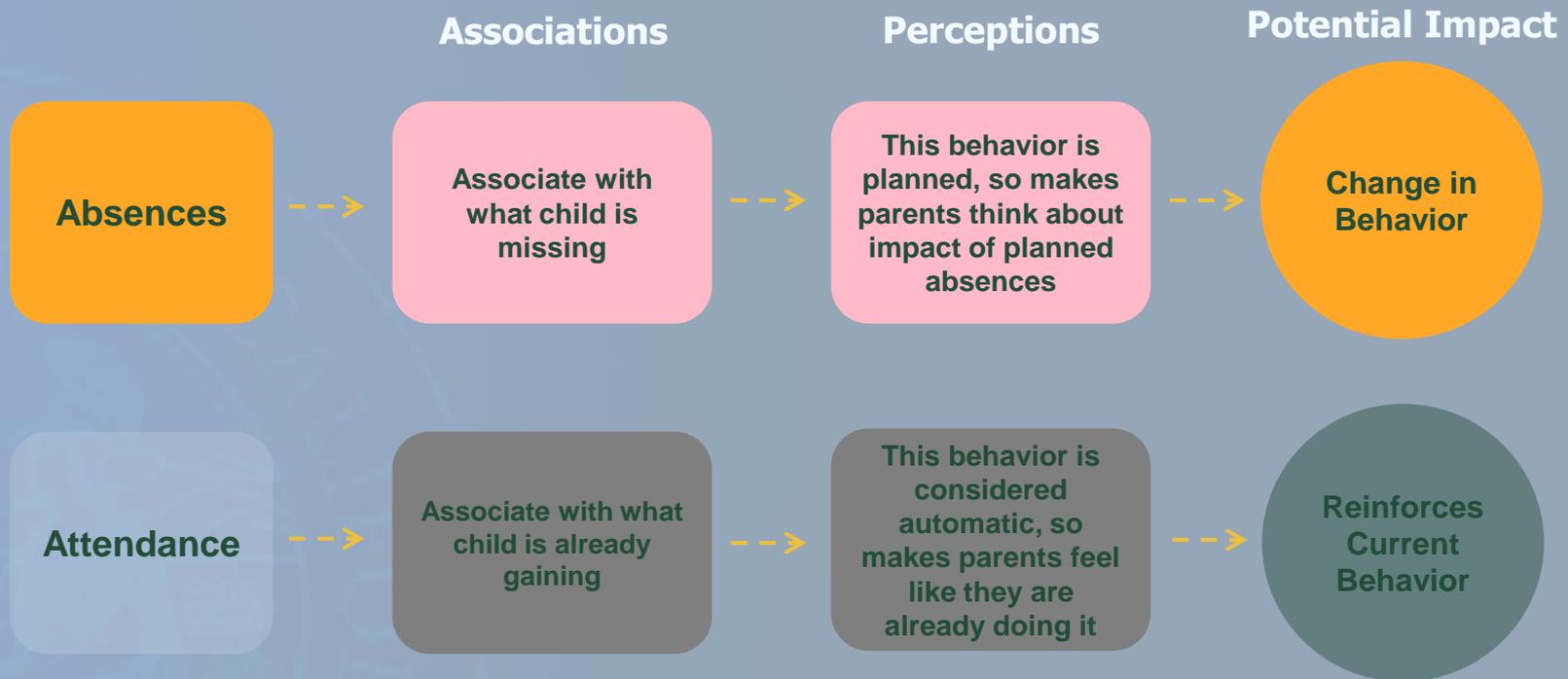
- Early grades are not as important
- Students will catch up
- Only consecutive absences have a negative impact
- Absences are fine as long as the parents sign off
- Attendance is more about legal compliance



These misunderstandings have consequences.

Credit to Attendance Works & Office of the California Attorney General

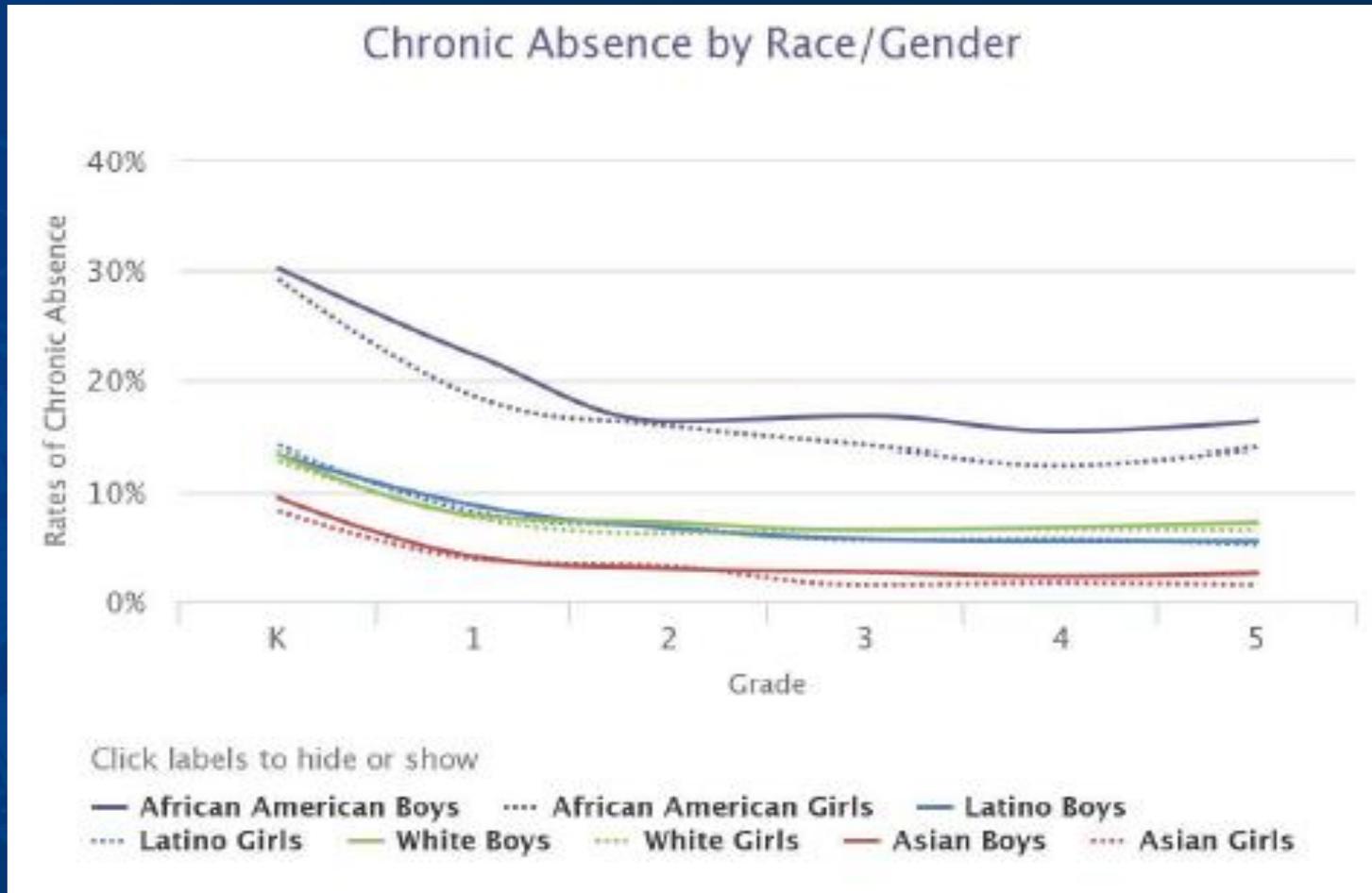
Messages About Absences Work Better than Messages About Attendance



When you say ‘attendance,’ parents think: my child attends school **most of the time**, so it’s OK.

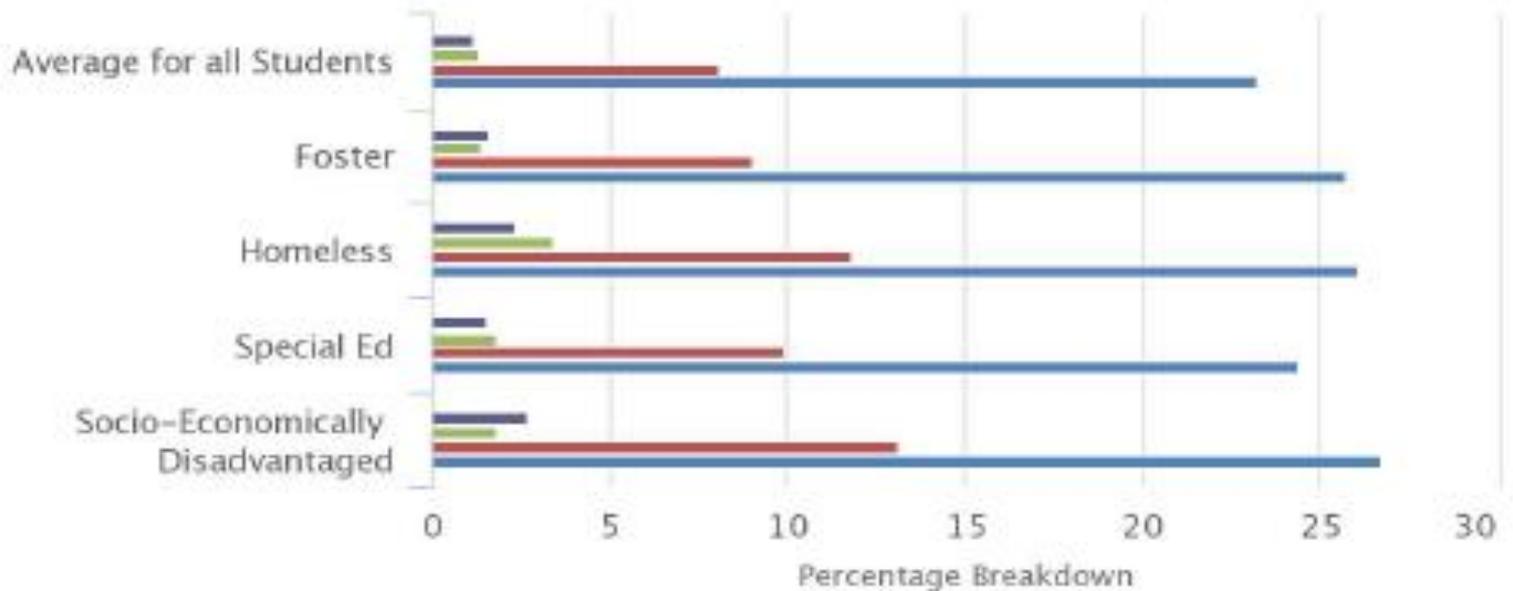


Race and gender disparities in attendance



Disparities for key subgroups

Truancy & Chronic Absence Rates by Subgroup



Click labels to hide or show

Severe Chronic Absence
Truancy

Chronic Truancy

Chronic Absence

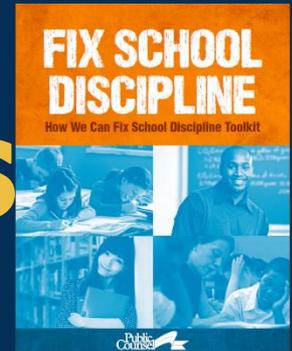


After school programs can help improve attendance

- Encourage students to attend school regularly
- Serve as a resource to parents to support good attendance
- Record program attendance
- Locate in areas with chronic absenteeism
- Hold programs accountable for participant attendance



Discipline Resources



- Fix School Discipline Toolkit
<http://fixschooldiscipline.org/>
- RJ: <http://www.saferanerschools.org/>
- PBIS: <https://www.pbis.org/>
- Trauma informed schools:
<http://traumasensitiveschools.org/>



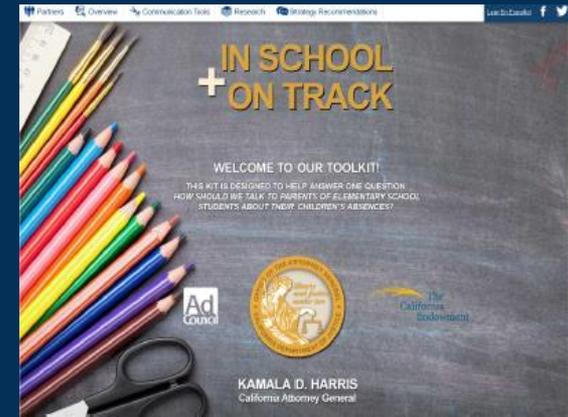
Attendance Resources

- Attendance Works

<http://www.attendanceworks.org/>

- In School and On Track

<https://oag.ca.gov/truancy>



KKIS on Twitter

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CHILDREN CAN THRIVE

Keeping Kids in School and Out of Court INITIATIVE

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@lbelonginschool

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KKISCA @lbelonginschool · 22h
2015 report by @CaAGHarris shows elementary school absences still too high, but problem is solvable! oag.ca.gov/truancy #EveryKidCounts

KKISCA @lbelonginschool · Aug 20
Getting to the 'why' of discipline disparities edsourcesource.org/2015/getting-t

View summary



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