McKinney-Vento and Attendance

May 9, 2024

10:00am – 11:00am

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Vision

All students prepared for post-secondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.

Mission

Transform K–12 education to a system that is centered on closing opportunity gaps and is characterized by high expectations for all students and educators. We achieve this by developing equity-based policies and supports that empower educators, families, and communities.

Values

- Ensuring Equity
- Collaboration and Service
- Achieving Excellence through Continuous Improvement
- Focus on the Whole Child

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Equity Statement

Each student, family, and community possesses strengths and cultural knowledge that benefits their peers, educators, and schools.

Ensuring educational equity:

- Goes beyond equality; it requires education leaders to examine the ways current policies and practices result in disparate outcomes for our students of color, students living in poverty, students receiving special education and English Learner services, students who identify as LGBTQ+, and highly mobile student populations.

- Requires education leaders to develop an understanding of historical contexts; engage students, families, and community representatives as partners in decision-making; and actively dismantle systemic barriers, replacing them with policies and practices that ensure all students have access to the instruction and support they need to succeed in our schools.

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Tribal Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the Indigenous people who have stewarded this land since time immemorial and who still inhabit the area today, the Steh-Chass Band of Indigenous people of the Squaxin Island Tribe.

Meet Today's Presenters

Melissa Rilette Burnce,
OSPI
McKinney-Vento Training Supervisor,
Student Services and Systems
Improvement

Vicki Wood,
OSPI
Attendance & Truancy Program Supervisor,
Student Engagement & Support (SES)

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Agenda

- McKinney-Vento

- Attendance and Guiding Principals

- Activity/Discussion

- A look from the inside.

- Questions and Announcements

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Who is here?

Attendance Poll

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

What is the McKinney-Vento Act?

The McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act is a federal law that ensures immediate enrollment and educational stability for homeless children and youth.

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

How Does the McKinney-Vento Act Define Homelessness?

The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." The act provides examples of children who would fall under this definition:

- Children and youth sharing housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason

- Children and youth living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative accommodations

- Children and youth living in emergency or transitional shelters

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (per Title IX, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act

How Does the McKinney-Vento Act Define Homelessness? Cont.

- Children and youth abandoned in hospitals
- Children and youth whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g., park benches, etc)
- Children and youth living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations
- Migratory children and youth living in any of the above situations

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (per Title IX, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act

What Are the Requirements of the McKinney-Vento Law?

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Every district MUST have a dedicated McKinney-Vento Liaison.

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, every local educational agency (LEA, hereafter school district) **must appoint a local homeless education liaison** (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii), hereafter local liaison)

The law states that local liaisons will ensure that:

- Homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination with other agencies.

- Homeless children and youths are enrolled in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in school.

42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)

The law states that local liaisons will ensure that (cont.):

- Homeless families, children, and youths have access to and receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start programs, early intervention services under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and other preschool programs administered by the LEA.

- The parents or guardians of homeless children and youths are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.

The law states that local liaisons will ensure that (cont. 2):

- Homeless families, children, and youths receive referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services.

- Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated in locations frequented by parents or guardians of homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens, in a manner and form understandable to parents and guardians and unaccompanied youth.

The law states that local liaisons will ensure that (cont. 3):

- The parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied homeless youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin.

- Enrollment disputes are mediated according to 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E).

42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

The law states that local liaisons will ensure that (cont. 4):

- Unaccompanied homeless youths are enrolled in school, have opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic standards established for other students, and are informed of their status as independent students and assisted to receive verification of their status for completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

- School personnel who serve homeless children and youths receive professional development and other support.

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Differentiating Terms

Chronic Absence

A student missing 10% or more of their school days, excused and unexcused

Truancy

Unexcused absences

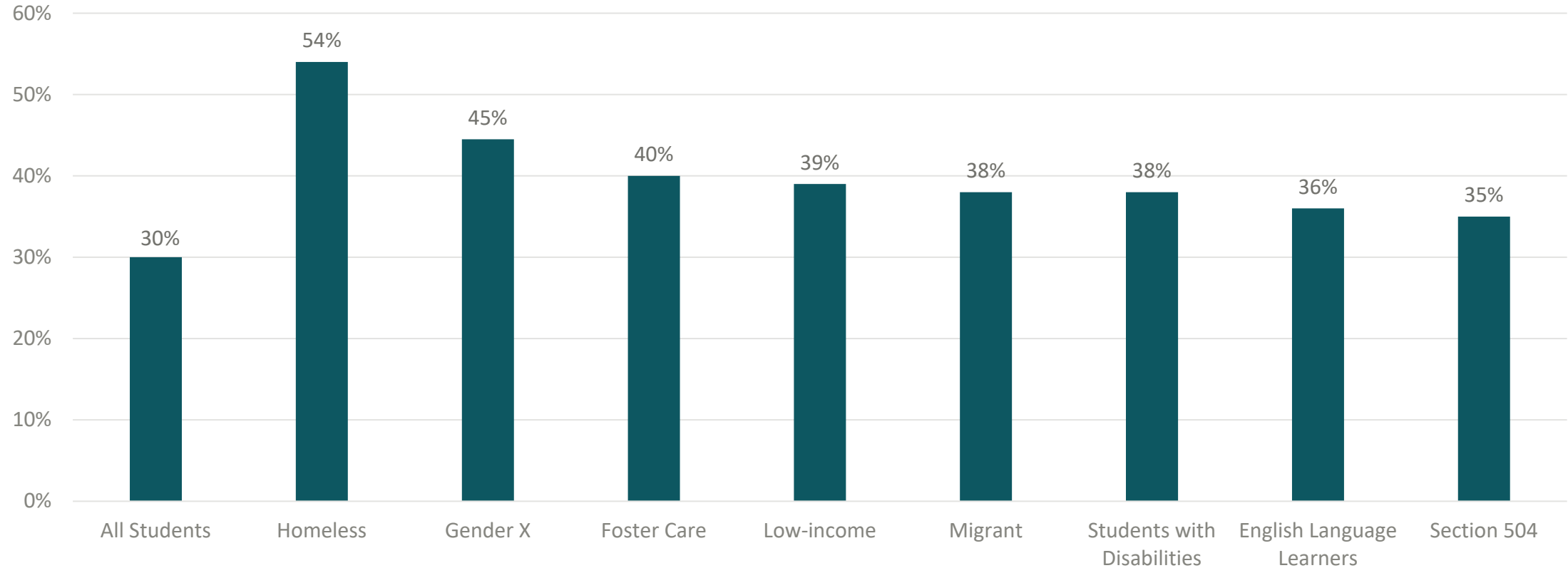7 unexcused absences in a month or 15 unexcused absences in a year

WAC 392-401-020

- **Excused absences.**

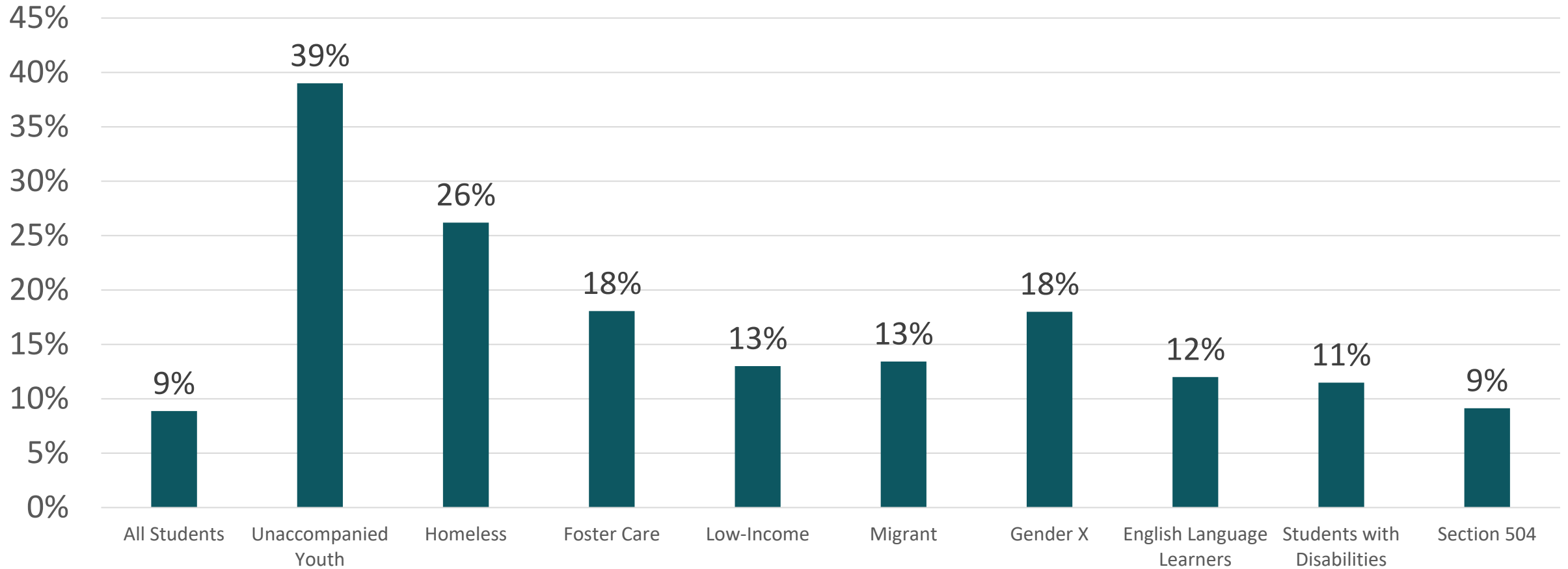 <mark>(1) Absences due to the following reasons must be excused:</mark>

  - (a) Physical health or mental health symptoms, illness, health condition or medical appointment for the student or person for whom the student is legally responsible. Examples of symptoms, illness, health conditions, or medical appointments include, but are not limited to, medical, counseling, mental health wellness, dental, optometry, pregnancy, and behavioral health treatment (which can include in-patient or out-patient treatment for chemical dependency or mental health);

  - (b) Family emergency including, but not limited to, a death or illness in the family;

  - (c) Religious or cultural purpose including observance of a religious or cultural holiday or participation in religious or cultural instruction;

  - (d) Court, judicial proceeding, court-ordered activity, or jury service;

  - (e) Post-secondary, technical school or apprenticeship program visitation, or scholarship interview;

  - (f) State-recognized search and rescue activities consistent with RCW **28A.225.055**;

  - <mark>(g) Absence directly related to the student's homeless or foster care/dependency status;</mark>

  - (h) Absences related to deployment activities of a parent or legal guardian who is an active-duty member consistent with RCW

Chronic Absence Rates by Student Characteristic (2022-23)

Chart showing chronic absence rates:
- All Students: 30%
- Homeless: 54%
- Gender X: 45%
- Foster Care: 40%
- Low-income: 39%
- Migrant: 38%
- Students with Disabilities: 38%
- English Language Learners: 36%
- Section 504: 35%

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Truancy Rates by Program or Characteristic (2022-23)

## Students that Met Truancy Thresholds (7 unexcused in a month/15 unexcused in year)

Category	Rate
All Students	9%
Unaccompanied Youth	39%
Homeless	26%
Foster Care	18%
Low-Income	13%
Migrant	13%
Gender X	18%
English Language Learners	12%
Students with Disabilities	11%
Section 504	9%

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Tip

Collaborate with other district programs to ensure students experiencing homelessness can fully participate and have the chance to be successful in school.

OSPI Attendance Guiding Principles

- Attendance and engagement are foundational to **student learning**
- Absences tells us when a student has **not accessed instruction,** and therefore absences matter
- Absences are a critical **early warning indicator** that:
  - can reflect **inequities** that are caused by or perpetuated by our **systems** or
  - when a student and family might need more **support**
- We have an opportunity to get **curious** about why students aren't attending
- **Students** and **families** are our best partners to understand the barriers to attendance
- The purpose of attendance and truancy interventions are to **reduce barriers** to attendance and **support students to engage**; not to punish
- Schools and districts have lots of opportunity for **prevention** and **intervention** before involving the Court
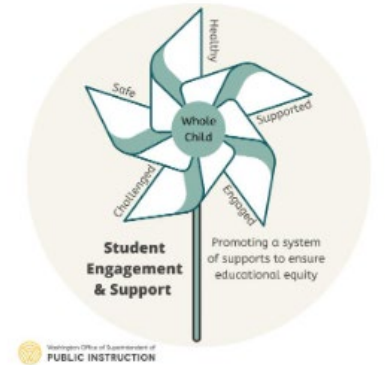
Absenteeism is an indicator with many underlying causes

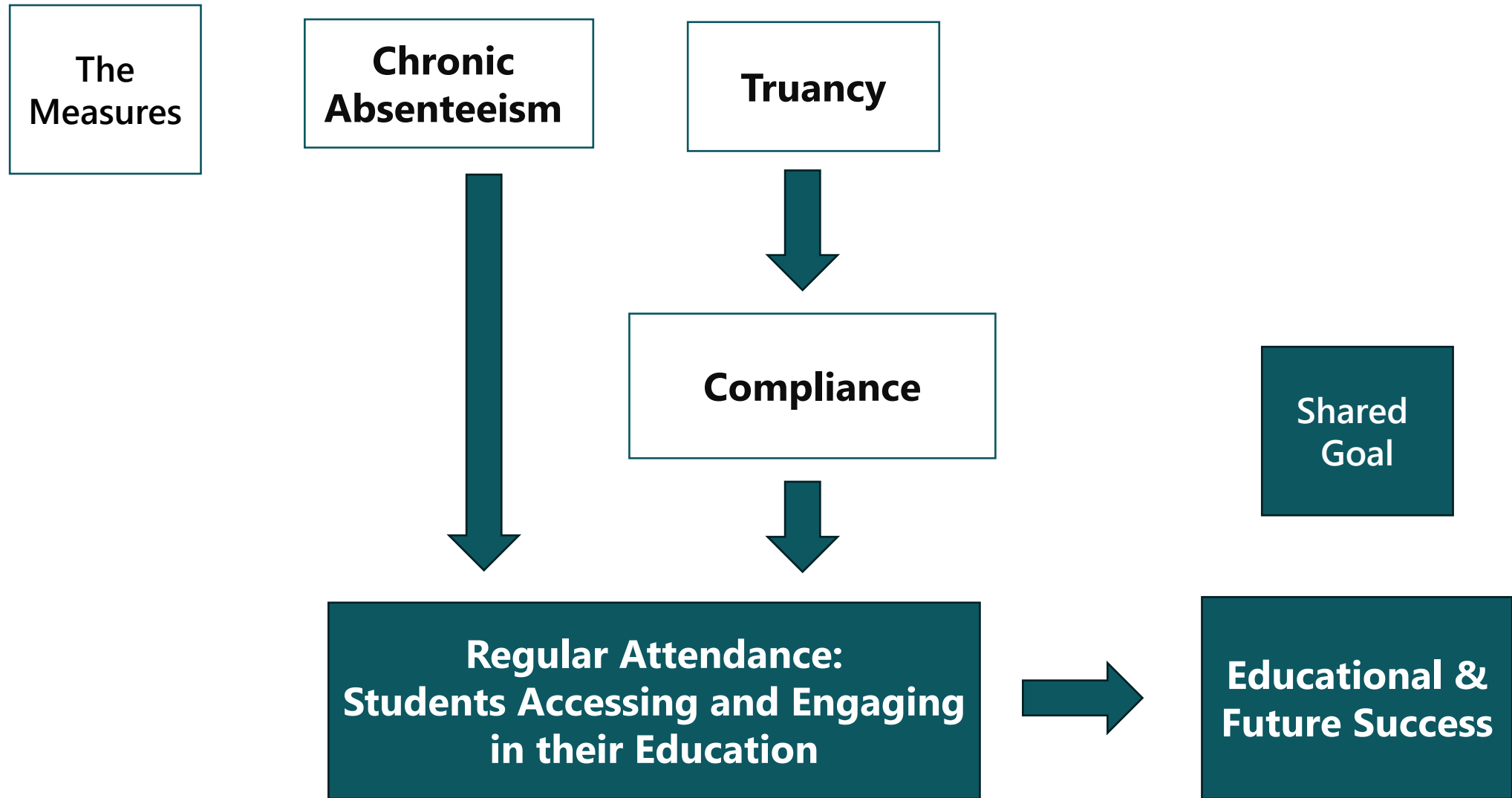Physical illness   Anxiety or depression   Caring for siblings

Transportation   Do not feel welcome or belong at school

Have fallen behind in classes

Unsafe or challenging home environment

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

The
Measures

**Chronic
Absenteeism**

Truancy

Compliance

Shared
Goal

**Regular Attendance:
Students Accessing and Engaging
in their Education**

**Educational &
Future Success**

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Chronic Absenteeism: A key
indicator of student success

All Absences Matter.
All Absences Have Reasons.
All Absences Have Impact.

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
- Community violence

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
- Caregivers 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
- Need to work conflicts with 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
- Assume students must stay home for any symptom of illness
- Attendance only matters in the older grades
- Suspensions don't count as absence

www.attendanceworks.org

Attendance Works ©

Root Causes graphic - Aug 2023

Root Causes

Activity: Discuss the following in your assigned break-out room.

Why is it helpful for your McKinney-Vento program and your district Attendance program to collaborate? Think about the below questions.

- Do you have a Student Attendance Specialist?

- Do you have a process in place?

- Do district employees know who to contact?

- What resources and supports do you use?

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

A look from the inside…

- Attendance & Truancy Program Supervisor

- Attendance & McKinney Vento Collaboration

- Examples

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Common Questions

Question: Can an unaccompanied youth excuse their own absence?

Answer: The McKinney-Vento Act requires immediate enrollment, which includes attending classes and participating fully in school activities. 42 USC 11432(g)(3)(C) and 11434a(1). The Act also requires the SEAs and LEAs revise policies to eliminate barriers to enrollment and retention in school. 42 USC 11432(g)(1)(I).

The law does not require that a youth can sign themselves out. If not the youth, then a principal, counselor, or liaison must. There has to be a policy in place that works, and that does not create barriers for the youth. (Schoolhouse Connection, Unaccompanied Youth –)

Common Questions Cont.

Question: **Are districts required to withdraw students that qualify for McKinney Vento after missing 20 consecutive days of school?**

Answer: No. OSPI does not require that districts withdraw students from enrollment for apportionment purposes on count day (e.g. the fourth school day of September and the first school day in October – June). OSPI also does not require that districts withdraw students after 20 days or at the beginning of the school year for CEDARS reporting.

Districts are encouraged to keep students in their systems as a way to continue outreach and reengagement. Attendance data is a critical way to keep students in our sphere of attention.

For additional guidance on this topic, see the OSPI Webinar on Withdrawing Students and the updated guidance: OSPI State Requirements that Impact Student Enrollment and Withdrawal.

See OSPI Withdrawing Students Guidance

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Common Questions Cont. 2

Question: How can I support a student who is not attending school?

Answer: Building positive relationships and fostering a sense of belonging are crucial for supporting students who are not attending school. Consider the following strategies:

1. **Relationship Building:**
   1. **Connect with the Student:** Reach out to the student personally. Let them know that you care about their well-being and that they are missed when they are absent.
   2. **Positive Encounters:** Encourage staff members to greet the student warmly when they arrive at school. A friendly "hello" can make a difference.
   3. **Check and Connect:** Set up a system where someone checks in with the student regularly. This could be a teacher, counselor, or other staff member. Ask how they're doing and offer support.

2. **Discover Interests:**
   1. **Learn About the Student:** Take the time to understand the student's interests, hobbies, and passions. What motivates them? What do they enjoy doing outside of school?
   2. **Create Connections:** Use this knowledge to connect the student with relevant afterschool activities. Whether it's a sports team, art club, or academic program, finding something that ali

McKinney-Vento Resources

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

- Students Experiencing Homelessness

Upcoming Webinars:

Discipline and McKinney-Vento, May 15th 10:00am-11:00am

Sign up here for Newsletter Send Melissa a quick email.

Schoolhouse Connection

- Supporting the Attendance of Students Experiencing Homelessness

National Center for Homeless Children (NCHE)

- In School Every Day: Addressing Chronic Absenteeism Among Students Experiencing Homelessness

- CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM AMONG STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN AMERICA: SCHOOL YEARS 2016-17 TO 2020-21

Attendance Resources

Attendance Newsletter
- Guidance & policy updates
- Webinars and conferences
- Resources, local examples

OSPI Attendance webpage

YouTube Playlist
- Trainings
- Brief shares from districts and schools

Community of Practice
- Monthly – open to all

- Attendance Awareness Materials
- Attendance Resources & Materials
  - ESD Attendance Support
  - Interventions
- Attendance & Truancy Frequently Asked Questions
- Attendance Works
- Best Practices for Improving Attendance
- Policies, Guidance, & Data Reporting
- Upcoming Events:
  - ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Project: Lessons Learned Series
    - Session 1: Thursday, May 16th at 1 PM
    - Session 2: Thursday, May 30th at 1PM
  - Becca Conference 2024

Melissa Rilette Burnce

McKinney-Vento Training Supervisor

OSPI Homeless Ed Inbox [Technical Assistance](#)

Vicki Wood

Attendance & Truancy Program Supervisor

OSPI Attendance: Attendance@k12.wa.us

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Thank you for attending our webinar today!

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Washington Office of Superintendent of PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Connect with us!

🌐 k12.wa.us

🐦 twitter.com/waospi

Ⓜ medium.com/waospi

🅕 facebook.com/waospi

▶ youtube.com/waospi

in linkedin.com/company/waospi