OSPI Plan: 5-Year Challenge to Cut Chronic Absence in Half

Introduction

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has joined 15 other states in a national initiative to cut chronic absence in half over five years. This ambitious target aligns with the OSPI's priorities and is a key system and student indicator of future success in school. Our goal is to decrease chronic absence from 27% to 14%.

Strategic Priorities

SESP will strive to achieve this goal by pursuing these five high leverage strategies:

- **District Challenge:** Invitation to districts to make attendance one of their goals, gain access to resources, a peer learning network, and public recognition on OSPI's website
- **District Community of Practice:** Participate districts will learn and implement promising practices and strengthen district systems, implementing promising practices learned from other networks in the country. (See RAISE Chronic Absenteeism Foundational Change Package- Five Foundational Practices).
- **Access to Visualized Attendance & Early Warning Data:** SES will coordinate with Data Strategy and Student Information to partner with vendors to create needed dashboards that ease the burden on schools and districts to analyze trends and intervene early.
- **Community Engagement Board (CEB) Support:** Disseminate resources and training modules to support effective implementation of Community Engagement Boards.
- **Reducing Health-Related Absences:** Collaborate with Kaiser Permanente, Department of Health, and OSPI's School Nurse Consultant to host district workshops and promote guidance on illness (e.g. When is your child too sick for school?) and sleep hygiene.
- **Alignment among SESP Programs:** In addition to the high leverage strategies above, all of SE & SP programs can influence and increase student attendance and engagement, including bullying prevention, ninth grade success, social emotional learning, to school safety. Our efforts will include awareness raising and evaluation efforts that assess programmatic impact on attendance.

Impact

By pursuing the high leverage strategies above, we aim to improve regular attendance by 13 percentage points. Achieving this goal would recover millions of instructional hours statewide. This would have monumental effects on student learning, including reading and math achievement and graduation, as we know that attendance is a critical underpinning to student learning.

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION