



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: June 28, 2023
To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: Attendance Office Personnel, Child Welfare Liaisons, Directors of Student Achievement, Directors of Student Personnel Services, Directors of Student Services, Educational Stability Liaisons, Intervention and Referral Services Coordinators, Principals
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services

Using Data to Decrease Chronic Absenteeism Rates

Accelerating learning without concentrated efforts to ensure students are present and ready to learn will diminish the impacts of the most effective instruction or intervention. In 2018, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) released [Getting Students to School: Strategies for Improving Attendance and Reducing Chronic Absenteeism](#), which provided local educational agencies (LEAs) a host of strategies to encourage regular attendance. NJDOE is eager to share updated guidance re-titled, [Data-based Decision Making for Addressing Chronic Absenteeism](#), which demonstrates how the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports framework can aid LEAs in their efforts to understand and address barriers to regular attendance.

Data-based Decision Making for Addressing Chronic Absenteeism was developed to provide schools and LEAs with guidance on preventing and responding to chronic absenteeism. The guidance incorporates New Jersey-specific rules and regulations, and available resources. This guidance was developed in partnership with educators and related experts in the fields of public health, youth mental health, and school district operations. Schools and LEAs can refer to this resource to develop research-based action plans that include strategies that specifically target barriers contributing to students' absences. This resource also provides a step-by-step guide that begins with identifying key district members, collecting and analyzing actionable data, and supports district in installing and operating a tiered model to address student absenteeism and encourage regular attendance.

Please note, N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25.1 requires schools to develop a corrective action plan to improve attendance when 10 percent or more of the students enrolled in a public school are chronically absent. In developing the corrective action plan, the school shall solicit input from parents/caregivers of students currently attending the school. This updated guidance has been designed to provide schools with an optional template and evidence-based interventions to address the statutory requirements.

Key steps/actions

Visit the [Student Attendance](#) webpage to view and download *Data-based Decision Making for Addressing Chronic Absenteeism*.

Contact information

For questions, please contact the Office of Student Support Services via Attendance@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group