

Maryland's Largest School District

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential



ALL TOGETHER NOW:

In Schools Together, Learn Together, Achieve Together

Attendance Action Plan



VISION

We inspire learning by providing the greatest public education to each and every student.

MISSION

Every student will have the academic, creative problem solving, and social emotional skills to be successful in college and career.

CORE PURPOSE

Prepare all students to thrive in their future.

CORE VALUES

*Learning
Relationships
Respect
Excellence
Equity*

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850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org

Introduction

Chronic absenteeism is a critical issue that affects the academic success and well-being of students. To address this challenge, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) presents the action plan "ALL TOGETHER NOW: In School Together, Learn Together, Achieve Together." This plan aims to address chronic absenteeism through a data-driven, collaborative, and multi-faceted approach. By implementing proactive and responsive strategies, we aim to reduce barriers to school attendance, enabling students and families to attend school consistently.

Theory of Action

MCPS believes that by addressing chronic absenteeism with a comprehensive approach, which includes data-driven strategies and collaboration among stakeholders, we can create a positive impact. By reducing barriers to school attendance, we can foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students.



In school together:

Attending school regularly ensures that our children are present in the classroom, actively participating in lessons, and engaging with their peers and teachers. By being physically present in school, our children have access to valuable resources, facilities, and a supportive learning environment that promotes growth and development.



Learn together:

Regular attendance allows our children to receive consistent instruction, follow the curriculum effectively, and stay on track with their academic progress. Classroom interactions and discussions enable our children to exchange ideas, challenge their thinking, and gain a deeper understanding of the subjects they are learning.



Achieve together:

Research consistently shows a strong correlation between good attendance and academic performance. When our children attend school regularly, they have more opportunities to succeed academically and achieve their full potential. Active participation in class activities and projects fosters collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, all of which are essential for future success.

Framework:

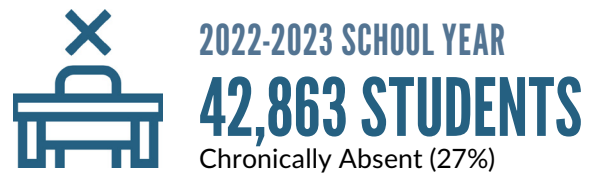
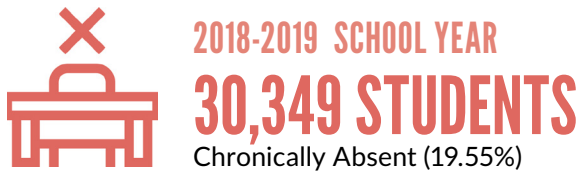
As MCPS continues to navigate the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student attendance, it is crucial to address culture and climate issues identified in the MCPS Antiracist System Audit. By focusing on systemic interventions, conducting community outreach, and targeting known root causes, each school team can improve chronic absenteeism data. A consistent and multifaceted approach implemented across all schools will allow for effective monitoring and evaluation of intervention strategies.

Key Data Driving the Work

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Chronic Absenteeism is defined as 18 or more days absent in a school year regardless of reason
(10%)

Chronic Absenteeism Data for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 School Years



Chronic Absenteeism by Level

	2021-2022 Percentage Chronically Absent in Total Population of Subgroup	2022-2023 Percentage Chronically Absent in Total Population of Subgroup
High School	27.2%	35.79%
Middle School	17.7%	22.18%
Elementary School	23.2%	19.99%
(Pre-K)	45.0%	45.63%

Note: Italicized data are data reported to the state as part of the MSDE report card. All other data are unofficial and obtained from the Performance Matters. Pre-k data is not reported to the state.

Chronic Absenteeism by Focus Group

	2021-2022 Percentage Chronically Absent in Total Population of Subgroup	2022-2023 Percentage Chronically Absent in Total Population of Subgroup
African American FARMS	28.66%	30.02%
African American Non-FARMS	14.74%	17.90%
All Other FARMS	28.43%	31.87%
Hispanic FARMS	41.63%	42.46%
Hispanic Non-FARMS	27.68%	32.24%
Non-Focus Group Students	11.40%	14.81%

Our Plan

Part One: School-Based Data-Driven Planning and Monitoring

Analysis

To establish a data-driven foundation, MCPS will undertake the following steps:

- Review the findings of the antiracist system audit, with a particular focus on school and system culture and climate.
- Create and administer a parent and student voice tool to identify root causes related to safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environments for all students.
- Analyze school-based absenteeism data based on various factors such as student group, day of the week, department, course, teacher, and period.
- Conduct affinity student focus groups using prompts from the voice tool to gather valuable insights.
- Review feedback tool and focus group responses to identify patterns related to culture/environment and factors associated with absences.
- Build staff capacity to create antiracist learning environments where all students learn, thrive, and feel a sense of belonging.
- Consistently use structures of accountability to monitor progress in order to ensure improved attendance and improved student outcomes.



Planning, Implementation, and Monitoring

MCPS will develop school-specific attendance plans rooted in the anti-racist audit data, school surveys, focus group data, and attendance data analysis. The following actions are required as part of each school's plan:

- Establish dates for regular school-based attendance data review meetings that consider subgroup attendance in the aggregate and address it accordingly.
- Identify individual students for SWBT (Student Well-Being Team) elevation.
- Conduct collaborative individual student and family attendance problem-solving through school-based attendance meetings, Student Well-Being Team meetings, and Attendance Matters meetings.
- Implement intentional and structured summer outreach programs for students who were chronically absent during the 2022-2023 school year, including the development of individual attendance monitoring plans.



Part Two: Structures, Supports, and Initiatives

Communications & Outreach

System-Wide Attendance Promotion Campaign

MCPS will create a system-wide promotional slogan, message, and community materials emphasizing the importance of regular school attendance. The campaign will target younger students and their families.

Attendance Team Member Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure effective coordination and support, the following roles and responsibilities have been identified:

- **Administrators:** Ensure outreach expectations are followed, meetings occur as scheduled, and follow-up is done by staff members identified. Ensure that relevant data is entered into the Synergy MTSS module.
- **Counselors:** Support outreach to caregivers who are not responsive to teacher outreach and participate in attendance root cause analysis and targeted interventions.
- **Social Worker:** Provide guidance and resources when mental health needs impact school attendance, making referrals to mental health services as necessary.
- **Pupil Personnel Worker:** Gather and provide attendance data, conduct outreach to unresponsive caregivers, and make recommendations for appropriate school, system, and community resources.
- **Parent Community Coordinator:** Support families when assimilation or cultural considerations impact student attendance and help families understand the importance of regular school attendance.
- **School Nurse:** Provide guidance when specific medical conditions impact attendance and recommend medical



resources for students and families.

- **Attendance Secretary:** Share information communicated by caregivers regarding student absences and send attendance letters as directed by the attendance data monitoring team.

Conclusion

The implementation of the "ALL TOGETHER NOW, In School Together, Learn Together, Achieve Together" Action Plan is a vital step toward addressing chronic absenteeism in MCPS. By adopting a comprehensive approach rooted in data-driven strategies, collaboration, and community engagement, we aim to create a positive and inclusive learning environment where all students can thrive. By reducing barriers to school attendance, we will enable our students and families to succeed together.

Together, let us build a future where every student is present, engaged, and achieving their full potential.