

## Attendance Works - Research

Retrieved on August 13, 2012 from <http://www.attendanceworks.org/research/>

- **Allensworth, E. M., & Easton, J. Q. (2007).**, *[What Matters for Staying On-track and Graduating in Chicago Public High Schools: A Close Look at Course Grades, Failures, and Attendance in the Freshman Year](#)*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, Consortium on Chicago School Research. Retrieved November 8, 2008. In this study of the freshman year of high school, researchers found that attendance in this pivotal transition year was a key indicator of whether students would finish high school. A high rate of absenteeism, described as missing 10 percent or more of the school year, was identified as a key warning sign for freshmen. The study also found attendance and studying more predictive of dropout than test scores or other student characteristics. In fact 9th grade attendance was a better predictor of dropout than 8th grade test scores.
- *[Attendance in Early Elementary Grades: Association with Student Characteristics, School Readiness and Third Grade Outcomes](#)*, Applied Survey Research. May 2011. A new study commissioned by Attendance Works suggests that attendance in the early grades is critical to sustaining the school readiness skills that preschool or Head Start programs can help children to develop. The report found that students who arrived at school academically ready to learn— but then missed 10 percent of their kindergarten and first grade years—scored , on average, 60 points below similar students with good attendance on third-grade reading tests.
- **Balfanz, R., & Byrnes, V.** *[The Importance of Being in School: A Report on Absenteeism in the Nation's Public Schools](#)*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Center for Social Organization of Schools. May 2012. Researchers evaluated chronic absence data from six states—Georgia, Florida, Maryland, Nebraska, Oregon and Rhode Island—to assess trends and predict the size of the nation's attendance challenge. A national rate of 10 percent chronic absenteeism seems conservative and it could be as high as 15 percent, meaning that 5 million to 7.5 million students are chronically absent. The six states reported chronic absenteeism rates from 6 percent to 23 percent, with high poverty urban areas reporting up to one-third of students chronically absent and rural areas showing one in four students.
- **Balfanz, Robert, Lisa Herzog and Douglas J. MacIver.**, *[Preventing Student Disengagement and Keeping Students on the Graduation Path in Urban Middle-Grades Schools: Early Identification and Effective Interventions](#)*, EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST, 42(4), 223–235 Copyright 2007, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. In this study of the freshman year of high school, researchers found that attendance in this pivotal transition year was a key indicator of whether students would finish high school. A high rate of absenteeism, described as missing 10 percent or more of the school year, was identified as a key warning sign for freshmen. The study also found attendance and studying more predictive of dropout than test scores or other student characteristics.
- **Basch, Charles.**, *[Healthier Students Are Better Learners: A Missing Link in Efforts to Close the Achievement Gap](#)*, March 9, 2010 Equity in Education Forum Series, Spring 2010, Teachers College, Columbia University. This report concludes that “six

educationally relevant disparities”—vision problems, asthma, teen pregnancy, aggression and violence, physical inactivity, poor nutrition, and concentration problems—have negative academic outcomes for minority students in urban settings. “Compared with children without the condition, some studies have also found, children with asthma tend to have more problems with concentration and memory, to have their sleep disrupted, and to miss more days of school. One 2003 estimate, in fact, blamed the disorder for 12.8 million school absences across the country that year.”

- **Bruner, Charles, Anne Discher and Hedy Chang,** [\*Chronic Elementary Absenteeism: A Problem Hidden in Plain Sight\*](#), Child and Family Policy Center and Attendance Works, November 2011. This study confirms the premise that districts and schools may fail to detect high levels of chronic absence because the problem is easily masked by average daily attendance, one of the most commonly calculated attendance measures. While many educators assume a 95 percent ADA rate is an indicator of good attendance, our research found that is often not the case.
- **Buehler, Melanie Hart, Tapogna, John, and Chang, Hedy,** [\*Why Being in School Matters: Chronic Absenteeism in Oregon Public Schools\*](#), Attendance Works, June 2012. Although many states collect data on attendance in their longitudinal student data bases, the majority fail to make effective use of this data to analyze how many and which students are chronically absent. Demonstrating the value of such an analysis, ECONorthwest used data from the state’s Department of Education to determine that 23 percent of students K-12 in Oregon were chronically absent in 2009-10, with low-income students at the highest risk of missing significant amounts of school. Attendance problems in the early years predicted absenteeism in later grades, and students with the highest absenteeism typically scored lower on state assessments. This research also showed that poor attendance is a solvable problem by identifying schools that beat the odds by maintaining lower than expected chronic absence rates despite serving high risk populations.
- **Chang, Hedy; Romero, Mariajose,** [\*Present, Engaged and Accounted For: The Critical Importance of Addressing Chronic Absence in the Early Grades\*](#), National Center for Children in Poverty: NY: NY, September 2008. This report documents the consequences, prevalence, potential causes and possible solutions to children missing extended periods of school in grades K-3rd. Although students must be present and engaged to learn, thousands of this country’s youngest students are academically at-risk because of extended absences when they first embark upon their school careers. Nationally, an estimated one in 10 kindergarten and first grade students are chronically absent (i.e. miss nearly a month or more of school over the course of a year). Absenteeism in the early grades can reach even higher levels in particular schools and districts. The good news is that chronic early absence can be significantly reduced when schools, communities and families join together to monitor and promote attendance, as well as to identify and address the factors that prevent young students from attending school every day.
- **Connolly, Faith and Olson, Linda S.(2012),** [\*Early Elementary Performance and Attendance in Baltimore City Schools’ Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten\*](#), Baltimore Education Research Consortium, Baltimore, MD, March 2012. The brief looks at attendance in the early grades of elementary school. In particular, we focus on Pre-Kindergarten (PreK) and Kindergarten (K) and follow these young students over time, examining their pattern of chronic absence (CA) in PreK and K, and their later attendance

and academic outcomes. We found that students with low attendance in both PreK and K often go on to continue to have low attendance. Also, they are more likely to be retained by grade 3 and have lower academic outcomes compared to their peers who attend school more regularly. The impact can be minimized, however, by improved attendance in later grades, suggesting it's never too late to improve attendance. Head Start students began with and maintained high rates of attendance compared with comparable students. They underperformed in reading and math in Grades 1 and 2, but by Grade 3, they performed as well as their peers on the state assessment.

- [\*Destination Graduation: Sixth Grade Early Warning Indicators for Baltimore City Schools, Their Prevalence and Impact\*](#), Baltimore Education Research Consortium, Baltimore, Md. February 2011. This report examines data from the Baltimore City Public Schools to identify statistically significant, highly predictive Early Warning Indicators of non-graduation outcomes, i.e., dropout. The concentration of Early Warning Indicators identified in the report—including chronic absence, past retentions, suspensions, course failure in English and/or math—is presented for a recent cohort of Baltimore sixth graders to describe the current level of need in City Schools. Policy makers and practitioners can use this report to determine whether Early Warning Indicators might be used for targeted interventions and educational supports.
- **Durham, Rachel and Plank, Stephen B.**, [\*Maintaining High Achievement in Baltimore: An Overview of the Elementary School Trajectories of Four Recent City Schools First Grade Cohorts\*](#), Baltimore Educational Research Consortium, March 2010. The results from this study of four elementary schools show increased academic achievement and reduced chronic absence. It suggests that many recent reform efforts—among them improved development conditions from birth to age 5, universal PreK, reduced class sizes in the early grades and standardized curricula—are succeeding in keeping Baltimore students on track for success in the middle grades and beyond.
- **Epstein, J. L. & Sheldon, S. B. (2002).**, [\*Present and accounted for: Improving student attendance through family and community involvement.\*](#), Journal of Educational Research, 95, 308-318. This study discusses the results of an analysis of longitudinal data collected on schools' rates of daily student attendance and chronic absenteeism and on specific partnership practices that were implemented to help increase or sustain student attendance. The data suggest that schools may be able to increase student attendance in elementary school by implementing specific family and community involvement activities.
- **Feldman, Alison et al.** [\*A CLOSER LOOK AT ATTENDANCE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES IN OUSD\*](#), Urban Strategies Council. Oakland, Calif. May 2012. This report examines data, best practices, and policies related to attendance and chronic absence and offers recommendations for reducing the levels of chronic absence for African American boys in the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD.) The report analyzes one year of attendance data (2010-2011) for African American males and finds that they were almost twice as likely as general OUSD population, and more than three times as likely as White boys, to be chronically absent. The report also examined and analyzed reasons for attendance disparities and made recommendations for addressing them from a survey of research literature and a review of state and local policy.
- **Fredricks, Jennifer A., Phyllis C. Blumenfeld, and Alison H. Paris.**, [\*School Engagement: Potential of the Concept, State of the Evidence, Review of Educational\*](#)

[Research](#), Spring 2004; vol. 74, 1: pp. 59-109. This article reviews definitions, measures, precursors, and outcomes of engagement; discusses limitations in the existing research; and suggests improvements. The authors conclude that, although much has been learned, the potential contribution of the concept of school engagement to research on student experience has yet to be realized. They call for richer characterizations of how students behave, feel, and think—research that could aid in the development of finely tuned interventions.

- **Gottfried, Michael.**, [The Detrimental Effect of Missing School](#), *American Journal of Education*, v. 117, no. 2, Feb. 2011, p. 147-182. This article provides the first analysis aimed at reducing the family-specific omitted variable bias pertaining to measures of absences in their influence on standardized testing achievement. It does so by employing a model of family fixed effects on a longitudinal sample of siblings within the same household in a large urban school district over six years of observations. The results indicate a stronger, statistically significant negative relationship between absences and achievement than what would have been suggested otherwise.
- **Gottfried, Michael.**, [Evaluating the Relationship Between Student Attendance and Achievement in Urban Elementary and Middle Schools: An Instrumental Variables Approach](#), *American Educational Research Journal*, June 2010, Vol. 47, No. 2, pp. 434-465. This study evaluates the connection between student attendance and positive learning outcomes. The researcher uses a comprehensive data set of elementary and middle schools in the Philadelphia school district to explore the causal impact of attendance on multiple measures of achievement, including grade-point average and standardized test scores. The study showed a direct and consistent causal relationship between good attendance and good academic school outcomes in the K-5 and 6-8 schools.
- **Gunderson, Jessica et al.**, [Getting Teenagers Back to School: Rethinking New York State's Response to Chronic Absence](#), The Vera Institute, New York, NY October 2010. This policy brief looks at one response to the statewide problem of chronic school absence in New York State: reporting parents to the child protective system. It determines that the system is ill equipped to deal with school attendance and that punitive approaches fly in the face of research on adolescent development. The report concludes that the first step toward more effectively addressing chronic absence among teens may be to remove them from the jurisdiction of the child protective system.
- **Kauh, Tina J.**, [AfterZone: Outcomes for Youth Participating in Providence's After-School System](#), Public/Private Ventures, August 2011. Providence's citywide after-school effort, known as the AfterZone, produced educational benefits for students – including improved school attendance and attitudes – according to one of the first rigorous evaluations of a citywide after-school initiative. Some benefits did not last beyond a year, perhaps because many youngsters took part only briefly. The report is the second of two studies looking at the AfterZone.
- **Koester, Nancy**, [Chronic Early Absenteeism: Prevalence and MEAP Performance in Kent ISD](#), Community Research Institute, Johnson Center at Grand Valley State University, March 2012. Chronic early absenteeism is prevalent in Michigan's Kent ISD in urban areas where the percentage of the population living at or below poverty is high, and is especially prevalent among African-American and Hispanic youth. Examining data on the prevalence of chronic early absence in Kent ISD is the first step toward identifying

and understanding the issues and factors that contribute to chronic early absenteeism in Kent ISD.

- **Levy, Douglas E., Jonathan P. Winickoff, Nancy A. Rigotti,** [\*School Absenteeism Among Children Living With Smokers\*](#) Pediatrics: Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, 2 September 2011. Children of parents who smoke have worse attendance than their peers with healthier parents, according to this study. Researchers looked at data from the 2005 National Health Interview Survey to assess the relationship between adult-reported household tobacco use and child health and school attendance. Children who experienced tobacco exposure had significant academic disadvantages.
- **Mac Iver, Martha A.,** [\*Gradual Disengagement: A Portrait of the 2008-2009 Dropouts in Baltimore City Schools\*](#), Baltimore Education Research Consortium, August 2010. The majority of students who eventually drop out of high school enter 9th grade with a pattern of chronic absenteeism that goes back at least several years, the study shows. Many have been retained and are behind at least one grade. It is critical to begin interventions in middle school. A more intensive focus on intervention and prevention during the middle grades is one of the most crucial directions for reducing the dropout rate.
- **Mac Iver, Martha A.,** [\*Moving Forward to Improve Graduation Rates in Baltimore City\*](#), Baltimore Education Research Consortium, Baltimore, MD. April 2011. A study of two first-time ninth grade cohorts in Baltimore City Schools found that the probability of graduation increases steadily as ninth grade attendance rates increase. More than eight in 10 who attended school at least 95% of the time in ninth grade went on to graduate. By contrast, the graduation rate was lower than 20% for those ninth graders who attended less than 70% of the time.
- **Musser, Martha.,** [\*Taking Attendance Seriously: How School Absences Undermine Student and School Performance in New York City\*](#), Center for Fiscal Equity. June 2011. This report on New York City public school children found that student attendance is a statistically significant predictor of student performance. What's more, students are affected by the attendance rates of their schools, so that even students with high attendance rates suffer academically from being in an environment where absenteeism is a problem.
- **Nandrup-Bus, Ange.,** [\*Comparative studies of hand disinfection and handwashing procedures as tested by pupils in intervention programs\*](#), American Journal of Infection Control, Vol. 39, Issue 6, August 2011. The objective of this study was to determine the effect of mandatory, scheduled hand disinfection (HD) on actual absenteeism because of infectious illness in elementary school pupils in Denmark. A three-month experiment compared one school in which students were required to wash their hands three times a day, with another where hand washing was not required. Hand-washing was shown to significantly decrease absenteeism.
- **Nauer, Kim, White, Andrew & Yerneni, Rajeev.,** [\*Strengthening Schools by Strengthening Families: Community Strategies to Reverse Chronic Absenteeism in the Early Grades and Improve Supports for Children and Families\*](#), Center for New York City Affairs at the New School. October 2008. This study found that more than 90,000 children in grades K through 5 (more than 20 percent of enrollment) missed at least one month of school. In high poverty neighborhoods, the number was far higher, approaching one-third of primary grade students. In 2011, the report was updated with new data that showing significant decreases in chronic absence rates for New York City.

- [\*New York City Public School Indicators: Demographics, Resources, Outcomes: Annual Report 2011.\*](#) New York City Independent Budget Office, September 2011. This report is the first annual summary of data provided for the Independent Budget Office. It is designed as a descriptive overview of the school system rather than as an in-depth look at particular issues. It is organized into three main sections: demographic information on the students who attend New York City's public schools; resources—budgets, school staff, and buildings—that the school system utilizes; and the measurable outcomes of the school system's efforts for particular subgroups of students.
- **Railsback, Jennifer.**, [\*Increasing Student Attendance: Strategies from Research and Practice.\*](#) Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, June 2004. This report looks at practices and outcomes of attendance programs across the country. Although promising practices exist across the country, there are no “silver bullet” approaches proven to keep children in school. Other research has investigated how school disengagement relates to decreased attendance. In addition to asking “How can we help students deal with their problems in coming to school?” many researchers, schools, and community members are also asking, “How are the schools contributing to absenteeism and how can schools work with communities and parents to keep youngsters engaged, in school, and learning what they need to know to be successful?”
- **Ready, Douglas D.**, [\*Socioeconomic Disadvantage, School Attendance, and Early Cognitive Development, The Differential Effects of School Exposure.\*](#) Sociology of Education, October 2010. Over the past several decades, research has documented strong relationships between social class and children's cognitive abilities. These initial cognitive differences, which are substantial at school entry, increase as children progress through school. Despite the robust findings associated with this research, authors have generally neglected the extent to which school absenteeism exacerbates social class differences in academic development among young children. Results of this report suggest that the effects of schooling on cognitive development are stronger for lower socioeconomic status (SES) children and that the findings associated with theories of summer learning loss are applicable to literacy development during early elementary school.
- **Sanchez, Monica.**, [\*Truancy and Chronic Absence in Redwood City.\*](#) John W. Gardner Center for Youth and their Communities. Palo Alto, Calif. April 2012. A study of chronic absenteeism in the Redwood City School District found the highest rates in kindergarten and 12th grade. The study also found that the largest, statistically significant factor in whether a student was chronically absent was their chronic absence status in the prior year. Missing school also played a role in student academic outcomes. After controlling for background factors, the number of days a student was absent had a significant negative effect on California Standards Test percentiles in both math and English Language Arts for students in grades 3 through 8, as well as on Grade Point Average in high school students. Middle and higher achieving students were found to be at greatest risk of academic decline due to chronic absence. The study also found that 18 percent of students in the child welfare system were chronically absent, in contrast to 8 percent of students who were not in the system.
- [Click here to view a summary snapshot](#)
- [Click here to view a policy fact sheet](#)

- **Schultz, Jennifer Lee and Chanelle Gandy.,** [\*Increasing school attendance for K-8 students: A review of research examining the effectiveness of truancy prevention programs.\*](#) Wilder Foundation, March 2007. This analysis examines several multi-faceted truancy prevention programs, which combine school-based, family-based, and community-based interventions. The study focused on programs for elementary and middle school students. Detailed descriptions are given of the studies, along with specific examples of what worked well and what methods were ineffective.
- **Sheldon, Steven B.,** [\*Improving Student Attendance with School, Family and Community Partnerships.\*](#) Journal of Educational Research, January 2007. The author of this study used data from the state of Ohio to compare student attendance in elementary schools that developed school-wide programs of school, family, and community partnerships with the attendance of students in schools that did not develop the programs. Analyses showed that in schools working to implement school, family, and community partnerships, student attendance improved an average of .5%, whereas in comparison schools, rates of student attendance declined slightly from 1 year to the next.
- **Silver, David et al.,** [\*What Factors Predict High School Graduation in Los Angeles United School District.\*](#) California Dropout Research Project Report #14, June 2008. In collaboration with LAUSD, the authors of this study analyzed district data to track the educational progress of all first-time 2001-02 9th graders from the 6th grade through to their expected graduation in the spring of 2005. The analysis of transcript records, standardized test scores, and a broad database of student and school characteristics exposes troubling rates of academic failure, but it also offers reasons for hope, demonstrating that academic experiences and school factors play a much larger role than student demographics in determining graduation rates.
- **Spencer, Andrea M.,** [\*School Attendance Patterns, Unmet Educational Needs, and Truancy: A Chronological Perspective.\*](#) Remedial and Special Education, September/October 2009; vol. 30, 5: pp. 309-319. This study examines chronological patterns of attendance and academic performance of urban students who are identified as truants in Grade 8. A chronological review of 42 student records, from school entry through Grade 8, identified high frequencies of absenteeism and academic performance issues beginning at school entry and, in many cases, persisting throughout elementary and middle school years. Results suggest that ongoing analysis of attendance data within a school system could help to identify early patterns of absenteeism that lead to truancy in upper elementary and middle school grades.
- [\*State of Chronic Absenteeism and School Health.\*](#) The Baltimore Student Attendance Campaign and Elev8 Baltimore, April 2012. To address the problem of health-related absenteeism, Elev8 Baltimore and the Baltimore Student Attendance Campaign collaborated to prepare a preliminary review of absenteeism and school-based health services (referred to in this report as school health) in Baltimore City. This review aims to analyze existing data, policies, and programs to create a snapshot of what is currently being done to address health-related absenteeism in the city. While not an exhaustive analysis of school health, it is a first look into the links between absenteeism and school health from a local, state and national perspective.
- [\*Lost Days: Patterns and Levels of Chronic Absence Among Baltimore City Public School Students 1999-00 to 2005-06.\*](#) Produced by the Baltimore Education Research Consortium, this brief reveals that chronic absenteeism presents a significant challenge to

classroom instruction and learning rates in the primary grades (1st – 5th) in Baltimore City Schools. Roughly a third of students in the first grade cohort were chronically absent at least once during their first five years. By the early secondary grades (6th and 10th), chronic absenteeism reached epidemic levels with missing significant amounts of school becoming a norm. Not surprisingly, there was a strong connection between chronic absenteeism and dropping out.

- **Van Cura, Maureen.**, *[The Relationship Between School-Based Health Centers, Rates of Early Dismissal From School, and Loss of Seat Time](#)*, Journal of School Health, Vol. 80, No.8, August 2010. This researcher studied two high schools in New York – one with a school-based health center and one without. Controlling for race, gender, age, poverty, and presence of a pre-existing illness, this study shows that school-based health centers have a direct impact on educational outcomes such as attendance.
- **Webber, Mayris P., et al.**, *[Burden of Asthma in Inner-City Schoolchildren: Do School-Based Health Centers Make a Difference?](#)*, Arch Pediatrics Adolescent Medicine Volume 157, February 2003. This study compared information about students at six inner-city elementary schools in the Bronx. Four of the schools had school-based health centers while two did not. Researchers looked at data regarding hospitalization, emergency department visit, and absenteeism among students with asthma. They found that access to school-based health centers reduced the rate of hospitalization and decreased absenteeism for students with asthma.
- **Weismuller, Penny C., Merry A. Grasska, Marilyn Alexander, Catherine G. White, and Pat Kramer.**, *[Elementary School Nurse Interventions: Attendance and Health Outcomes](#)*, The Journal of School Nursing, April 2007; vol. 23, 2: pp. 111-118. This study describes the impact of school nurse interventions on student absenteeism and student health. A retrospective review of 240 randomly selected elementary student health folders and attendance records was conducted. School nurses were involved with 75% of high-absence students as compared to 66% of low-absence students; they were also more involved with students who had previously identified health conditions. There were no referrals to the school nurse for absenteeism and school nurse interventions were not targeted to attendance, despite 17% of students missing 11 or more school days.

**The North Carolina Department of Public instruction – Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. Retrieved on August 13, 2012 from**

**<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/research/dropout/reports/200607dropout.pdf>**

- The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction tracks the reasons that students drop out of school. For years poor school attendance has been the number one reason students drop out of school. The most disturbing thing about the data is that none of the other reasons for dropping out of school come close to attendance.