# Reducing Chronic Absenteeism: Every Day Counts!

# Video Viewing and Note-taking Guide

***Definition:* Chronic absenteeism** is missing 10% or more of school for any reason – excused or unexcused.

**Statistics** on chronic absenteeism:

**Causes** of chronic absenteeism:

**Consequences** of chronic absenteeism:

Takeaways about **schoolwide supports** to promote attendance (South Hills Middle School):

Takeaways about **data use to identify students who are chronically absent** and the reasons for or implications of that absence (Highland High School):

Takeaways about **individualized supports for students and their families** to reduce chronic absenteeism (Guadalupe School)

In the video, Hedy Chang, director of *Attendance Works,* says, “Don’t we want to know if kids are coming to school and just not learning, or kids are not coming to school and can’t benefit because they’re not there?” This discussion guide will help educators understand chronic absenteeism at their school or district and consider how they might respond to it.

* What is your school or district’s average daily attendance rate?  
  What is your school or district’s chronic absenteeism rate?
* What are some of the attendance challenges your students may face?
* What systems and supports do you have at your school or district to improve attendance and reduce chronic absenteeism?
* How might one or more of the practices from the video work – or work better – at your school or district?
* What other information or support is needed to reduce chronic absenteeism at your school or district?

# Resources: Reducing K–12 Chronic Absenteeism

*Note:* These are resources recommended for school and district staff and other adults to learn about and take action on reducing student chronic absence. This document accompanies the REL West video “Reducing Chronic Absenteeism: Every Day Counts!”

## National organizations/websites

### Attendance Works

<http://www.attendanceworks.org/>

Attendance Works is a national and state initiative that promotes awareness of the important role that school attendance plays in achieving academic success. Our goal is to ensure that every district in the country not only tracks chronic absence data beginning in kindergarten or ideally earlier, but also partners with families and community agencies to intervene when attendance is a problem for children or particular schools.

**Research**: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/research/all-research/>

Key local, state, and national research, with brief summaries and links to free online versions of reports.

*Making the Case for Tracking Chronic Absence* (<http://www.attendanceworks.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/Chronic-Absence-Research-Summary-1-pager-2.19.14withlinks.pdf>) (2012)

Attendance Works’ two-page summary of research on chronic absenteeism.

**Tools and Resources**: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/tools/>

Free resources for monitoring, understanding, communicating about, and addressing chronic absence at all grade levels. These strategies can be implemented at the school, district, and state levels.

### Chronic Absenteeism in the Nation’s Schools: An unprecedented look at a hidden educational crisis

**[U.S. Department of Education]**

<http://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html>

This interactive website was developed in 2016 and provides nationwide data related to student chronic absence. The release of the Department's 2013-14 Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-2013-14.html>) marks a turning point in the effort to reduce and ultimately eliminate chronic absenteeism so that all students have a better chance of reaching their full potential. The data from the CRCD is drawn from nearly every public school in the country and helps us understand who is chronically absent, at what grade levels chronic absenteeism tends to occur, and how chronic absenteeism compares community-by-community and state-by-state.

## Utah-specific reports

*Attendance and the Early Grades: A Two-Generation Issue* (<http://www.utahchildren.org/images/pdfs/2014/ChronicAbsenceIssueBrief.pdf>) (2014, Voices for Utah Children)

*Research Brief: Chronic Absenteeism* (<http://www.utahdataalliance.org/downloads/ChronicAbsenteeismResearchBrief.pdf>) (2012, Utah Education Policy Center)