



Attendance and Truancy

House Secondary Education & Career Development Subcommittee

November 3, 2021

Senior Chancellor Eric Hall



Habitually Truant

A habitually truant student is defined as a student who:

- Has accumulated 15 unexcused absences within a 90 calendar day period;
- Students who have not attained the age of 16 years and have not graduated, which are subject to compulsory school attendance until a formal declaration of intent is filed;
- Is not exempt under s. 1003.2193 or s. 1003.24, F.S. or any other statutory exemptions; and
- The child study team has completed their determination of cause and have attempted remediation of the child's truant behavior, to no avail.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

District school boards are required to define excused and unexcused absences according to criteria established by the district school board. [1003.21, 1003.24 and 1003.26, F.S.]

Schools must excuse absences for certain reasons including:

Illness, injury or another “insurmountable” condition

Religious instruction and holidays

Receiving services related to autism spectrum disorder

Enforcing School Attendance

School districts are responsible to take an active role in promoting and enforcing attendance as a means of improving student performance.

Parent of a child within the compulsory attendance age is responsible for the child's school attendance, except under any of the following conditions:

- Absence was permitted by the head of the school
- Absence was without the parent's knowledge, consent or connivance
- Parent was unable to financially provide necessary clothes for the students
- Sickness, injury or other insurmountable condition.

Intervention Strategies

Recommended interventions to address truancy may include:

**Learning
environment
changes**

**Mentoring &
School counseling
services**

**Tutoring, including
peer tutoring**

**Placement into a
different class**

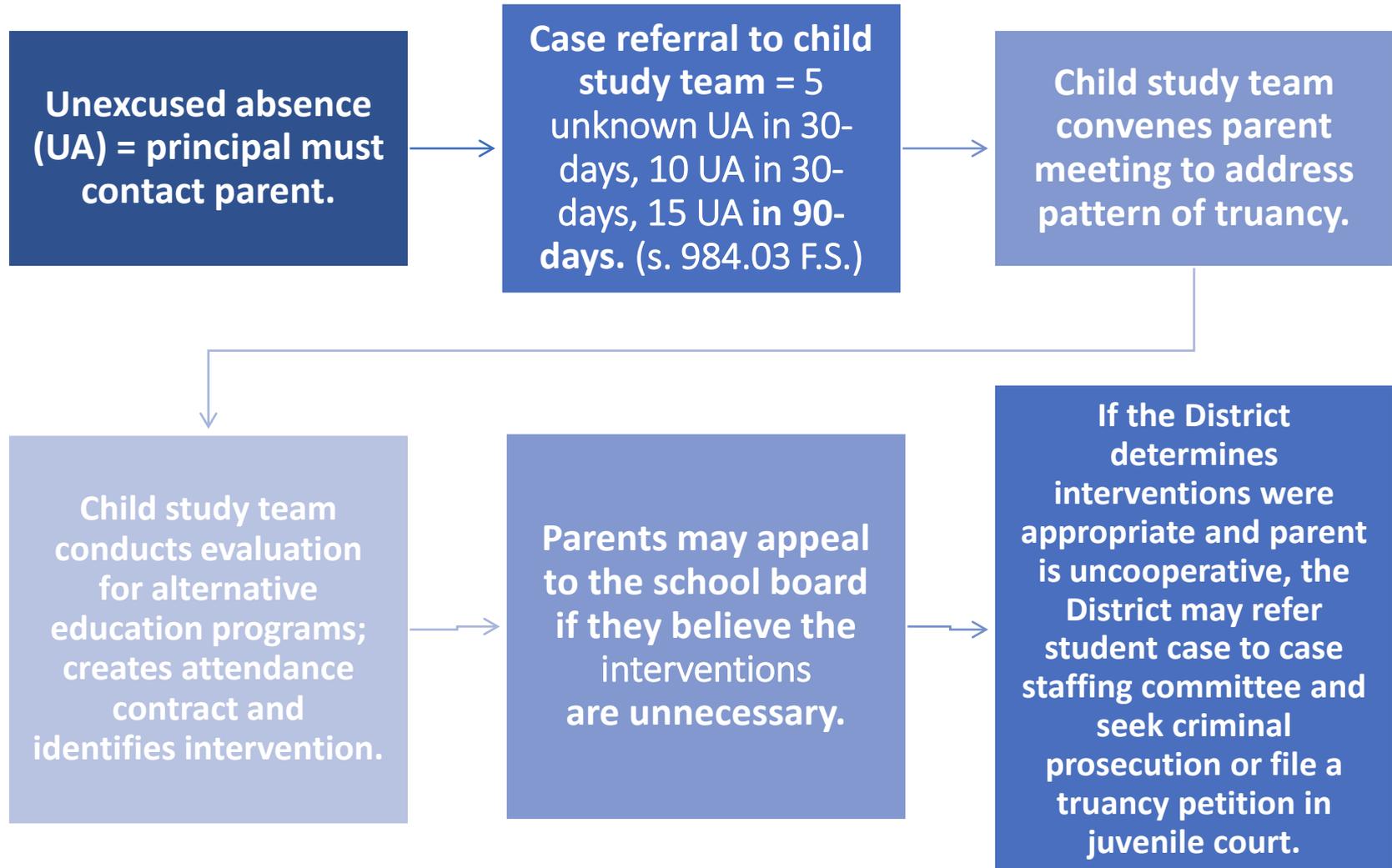
**Exploration of
educational
options**

**Referral to other
agencies for family
services**

**Follow-up parent
and teacher
conferences**

**Referral to school
nurse**

Procedures for Addressing Unexcused Absences



Habitually Truant Student Data

Age	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	21 or More Days	10% or More	21 or More Days	10% or More	21 or More Days	10% or More
Total	11.3%	20.4%	11.3%	20.0%	9.8%	16.6%
10 or Younger	8.7%	17.7%	8.9%	17.5%	8.5%	15.1%
11 to 13	9.0%	17.0%	8.8%	16.4%	7.1%	13.0%
14	11.0%	19.7%	10.9%	19.2%	8.9%	15.5%
15	13.6%	23.1%	13.4%	22.6%	11.0%	18.5%
16	16.5%	26.8%	16.4%	26.5%	13.1%	21.3%
17	21.2%	31.4%	21.3%	31.4%	17.1%	25.6%
18 or Older	34.0%	47.8%	34.4%	47.8%	32.0%	44.3%

**Represents average percent of students with unexcused absences*

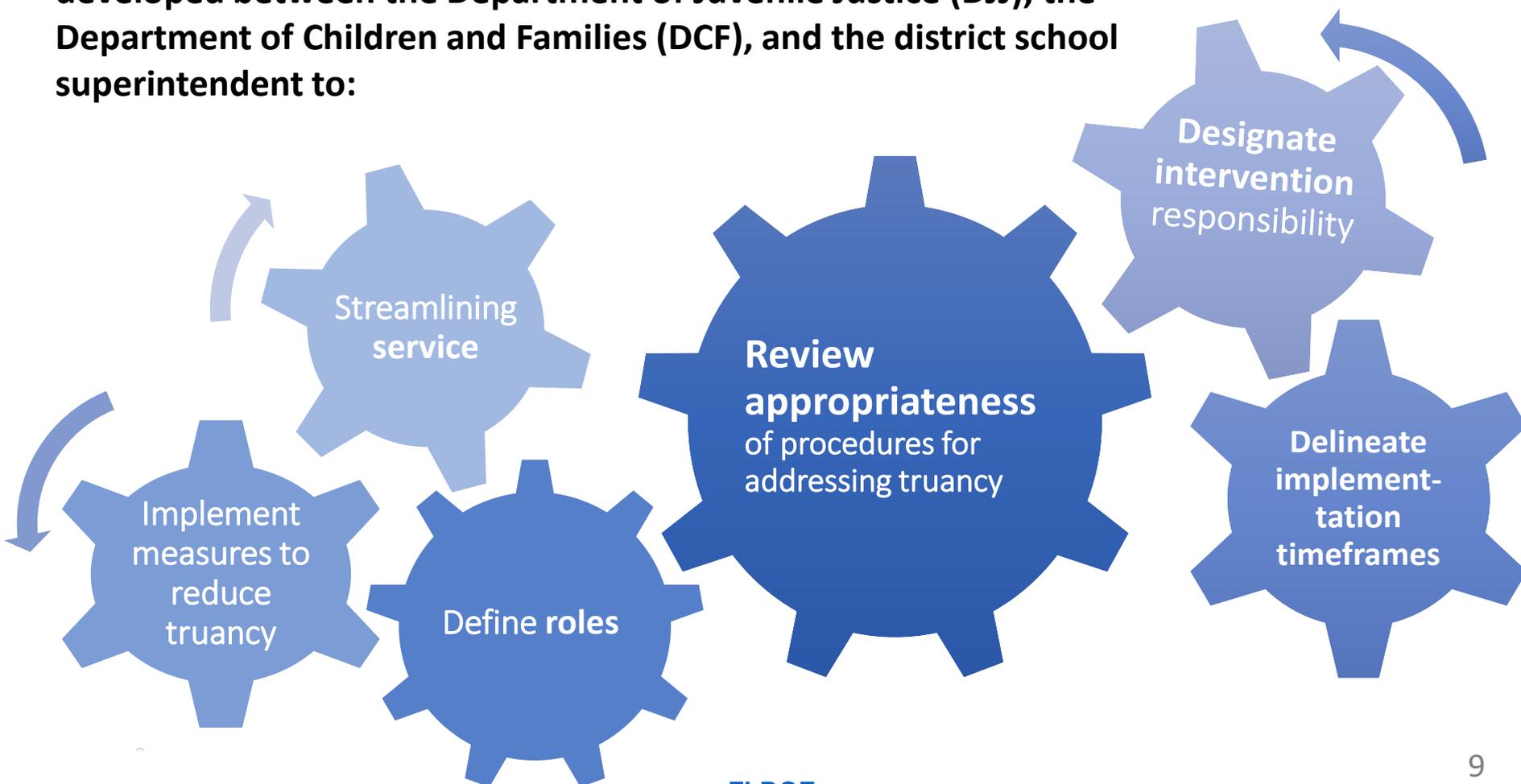
Habitually Truant Student Data

Race & Gender	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	21 or More Days	10% or More	21 or More Days	10% or More	21 or More Days	10% or More
Total	11.3%	20.4%	11.3%	20.0%	9.8%	16.6%
White	11.0%	19.3%	10.6%	18.6%	7.8%	13.8%
Black	12.5%	22.7%	12.7%	22.6%	12.9%	21.4%
Hispanic	11.3%	20.6%	11.6%	20.4%	10.3%	17.3%
Male	11.4%	20.7%	11.4%	20.4%	10.3%	17.4%
Female	11.2%	20.0%	11.1%	19.5%	9.3%	15.9%

**Represents average percent of students with unexcused absences*

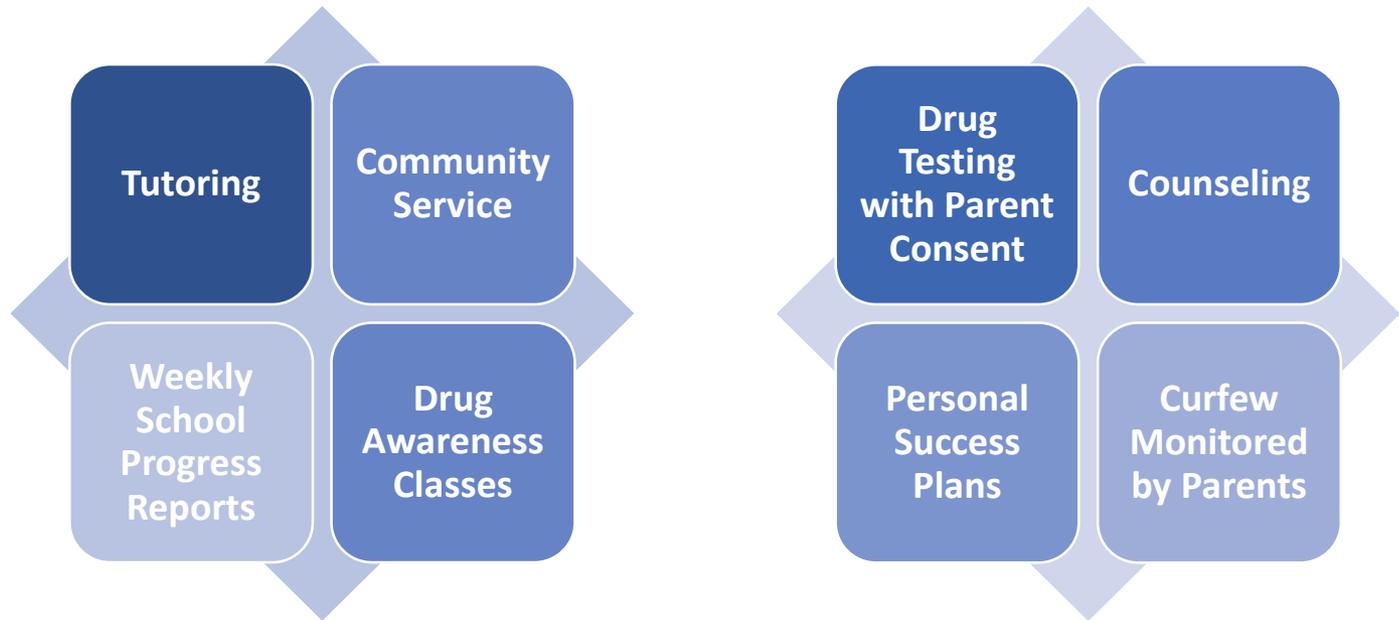
Cooperative Interagency Agreement

Per s. 1003.27 F.S. (4), a cooperative interagency agreement must be developed between the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and the district school superintendent to:



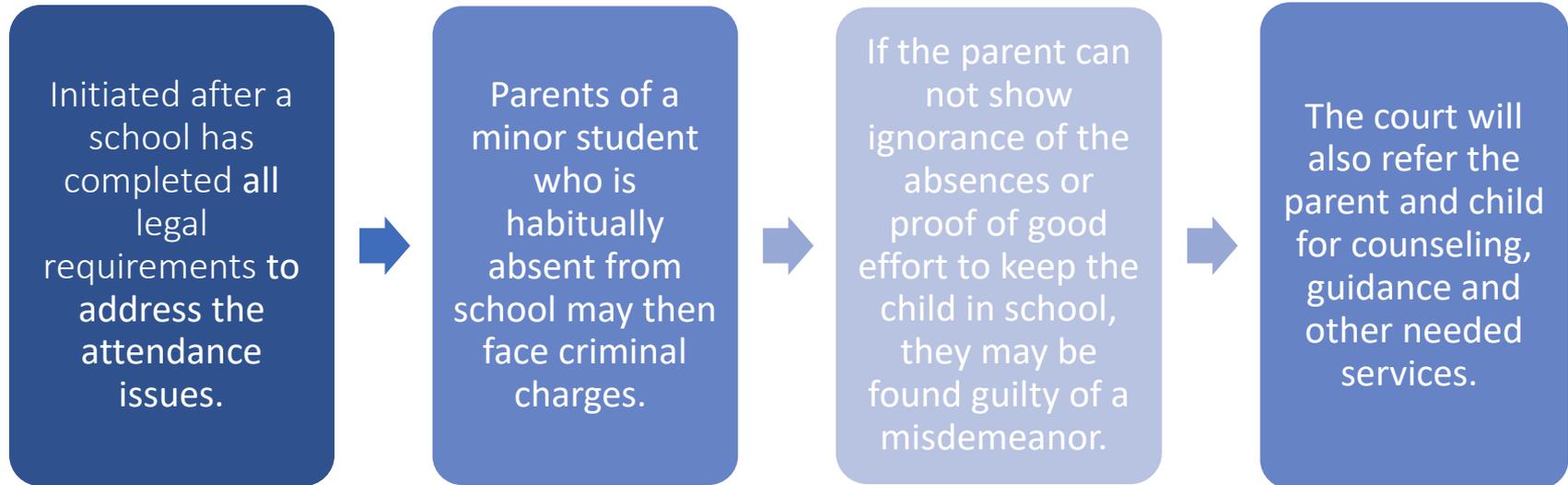
Teen Court

Educational diversion program through the Department of Juvenile Justice which holds juvenile offenders accountable for their actions by making them adhere to mandatory sanctions per s. 938.19 F.S.:



- **Referral Target Group:** middle and high school students determined by a district's child study team
- **Eligible Students:** habitually truant or students with a history of non-attendance.

Consequences for Parents & Students



Court Required Student Consequences:

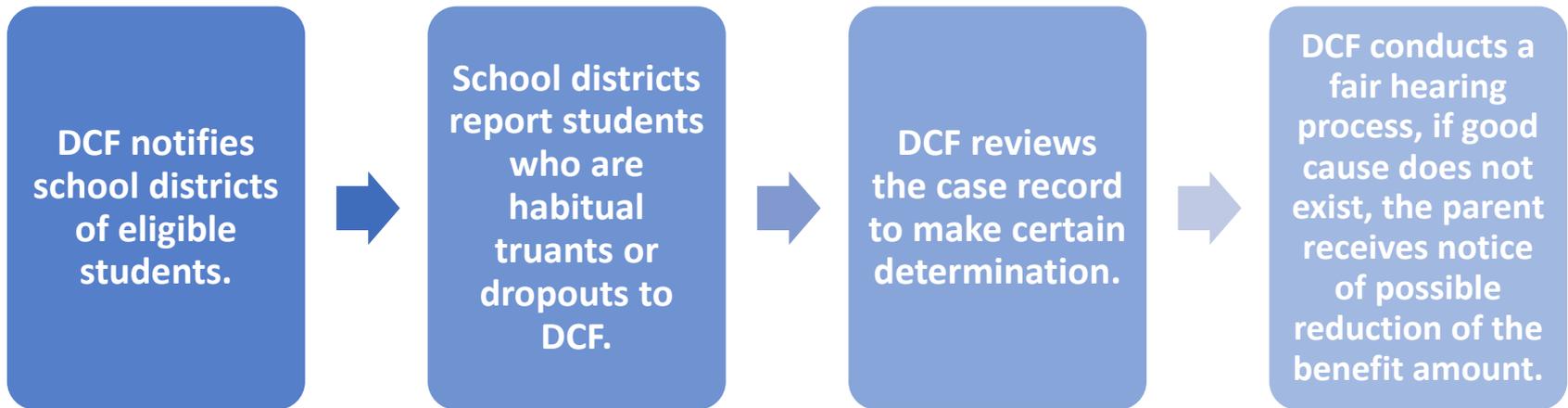
- Pay a penalty,
- Attend alternative classes,
- Perform community service, or
- Participate in intensive counseling.

Court Required Parental Consequences:

- Parent training class,
- Attend school with the student unless this would cause undue hardship,
- Perform community service hours at the school, or
- Participate in counseling.

Learnfare Program

Requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to reduce the amount of temporary cash assistance for families with students who are identified as habitual truants or dropouts per s. 414.1251, F.S.



If a sanction is imposed to the benefit amount, the benefits may be reinstated when the truant student's substantially improved attendance is confirmed, or after a student who has dropped out of school has re-enrolled in school, attains a high school diploma or its equivalent, enrolls in preparation for the GED, or enrolls in another educational activity approved by the district school board.

Attendance Requirements to Maintain Driving Privileges

Students are required to attend school to maintain their driving privileges

- Schools must report any habitually truant minor over 14 years old with the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) per Section 1003.27, F.S.

Actions initiated by DHSMV:

- **Licensed minors** will lose their driving privilege unless they comply with attendance requirements; and
- **Unlicensed minors** may not apply for a license until:
 - attendance requirements are satisfied, or
 - the student reaches the age of 18.

Reinstatement of Driver's License

A student's license may be reinstated if the student has, either:

- Attended school for 30 consecutive school days without any unexcused absences, or
- Earned a high school diploma or State of Florida diploma.

Hardship Waivers

The student's public school principal or the designee of a student's private school can waive the suspension of driver's license with verification of the following hardships:

- Employment (based on verification of substantial financial contribution to their family's needs.)
- Medical care (need for transportation, for the student or their household, to access required treatment)

Florida DHSMV – Motorist Compliance Data

1st Time Notice of Non-Compliance (Non-Compliance School Attendance)
3,145 suspensions were created
182 suspensions were resolved prior to effective date
2,963 resulted in suspension
2,107 suspensions were cleared after the effective date
856 are still suspended

2nd Notice of Non-Compliance/ Subsequent Suspensions (Non-Compliance School Attendance)
166 2 nd subsequent suspensions were created
17 suspensions were resolved prior to effective date
149 resulted in a 2 nd or subsequent suspension
130 suspensions were cleared after the effective date
19 are still suspended

Florida DHSMV-Motorist Compliance Data (9/13/2021)



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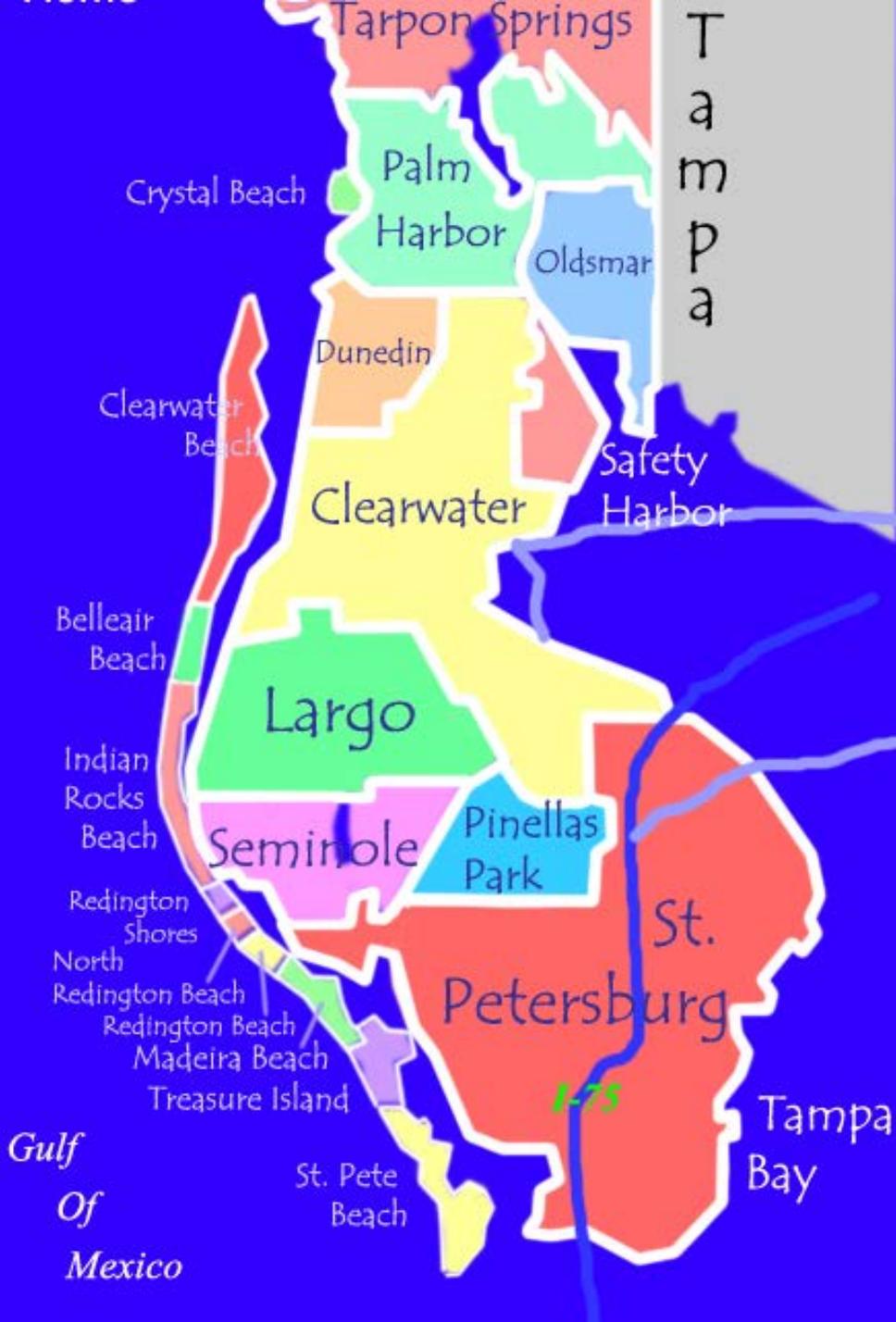


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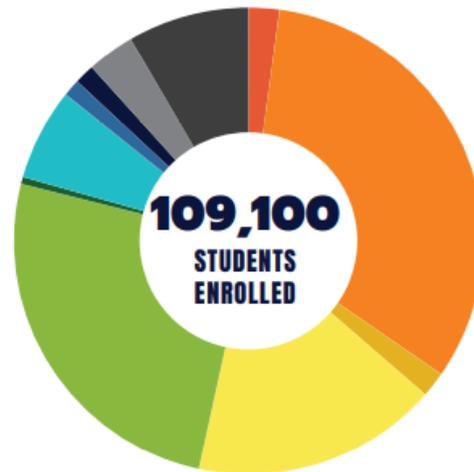
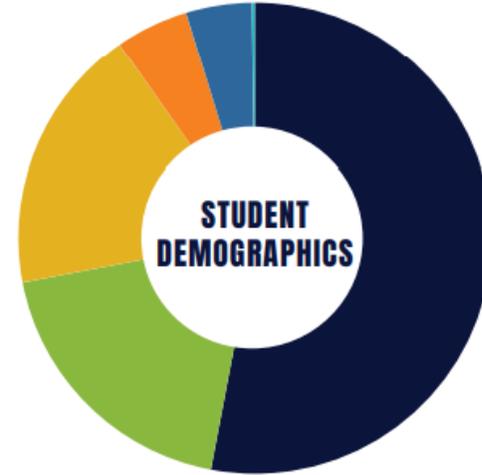
Ma na g ing O ffic e r Sc ho o l So c ia l Wo r k Se rvi c e s

11/03/21

Pine llas County Schools



- WHITE - 53.0%
- BLACK - 19.0%
- HISPANIC - 18.3%
- MULTICULTURAL - 5.0%
- ASIAN - 4.3%
- NATIVE AMERICAN - 0.2%



- PREK - 2,315
- ELEMENTARY - 35,502
- ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE - 1,905
- MIDDLE - 18,546
- HIGH - 27,843
- EXCEPTIONAL CENTERS - 536
- CHARTER - 6,941
- OTHER - 1,278
- VIRTUAL - 1,541
- TECHNICAL COLLEGES - 3,548
- ADULT GENERAL EDUCATION - 9,145

EMPLOYEE FACTS

410
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

+ 7,394
INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

+ 5,580
SUPPORT STAFF

= 13,384
TOTAL EMPLOYEES COUNTYWIDE

MISSION:
EDUCATE AND PREPARE EACH STUDENT FOR COLLEGE, CAREER AND LIFE

VISION:
100% STUDENT SUCCESS

Truancy Prevention Information

- ▶ Student Code of Conduct
- ▶ School Handbooks
- ▶ Teacher first day of school materials
- ▶ School announcements
- ▶ School Marquees
- ▶ Community Partners
- ▶ Signs and Posters



ATTEND TODAY, ACHIEVE TOMORROW

GOOD SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MEANS...



PRESCHOOLERS
Build skills and develop good habits for showing up on time



ELEMENTARY STUDENTS
Read well by the end of third grade



MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLERS
Stay on track for graduation



COLLEGE STUDENTS
Earn their degrees



WORKERS
Succeed in their jobs

Too many absences—excused or unexcused—can keep students from succeeding in school and in life. How many are too many? 10% of the school year—that's 18 missed days or 2 days a month—can knock students off track.

Child Study Teams (CST)

F.S. 1003.26 Enforcement Of School Attendance

- ▶ Prioritize attendance
- ▶ Establish team member roles
- ▶ Meet regularly
- ▶ Use current student and schoolwide data to problem-solve
- ▶ Identify school and student trends
- ▶ Identify barriers
- ▶ Align interventions to barriers
- ▶ Review processes and adjust as needed



CST Members

Minimum - Required

- Administrator (P/AP)
- School Counselor
- Data Management Tech
- School Social Worker

Additional

- School Psychologist
- School Nurse
- Instructional Staff
- VE Specialist
- ESE Case Manager
- MTSS Coach
- SRO
- Grade level/Attendance clerks
- Behavior Specialist

Social Work Attendance Team

- ▶ Lead Social workers assigned to each area
- ▶ Coach and train the social work department and child study teams
- ▶ Assist Child Study Team with problem-solving difficult cases
- ▶ Serve as Liaison for Truancy Court, Teen Court and TIP



Truancy vs. Chronic Absence

TRUANCY

- Counts only unexcused absences
- Emphasizes compliance with school rules
- Relies on legal & administrative solutions

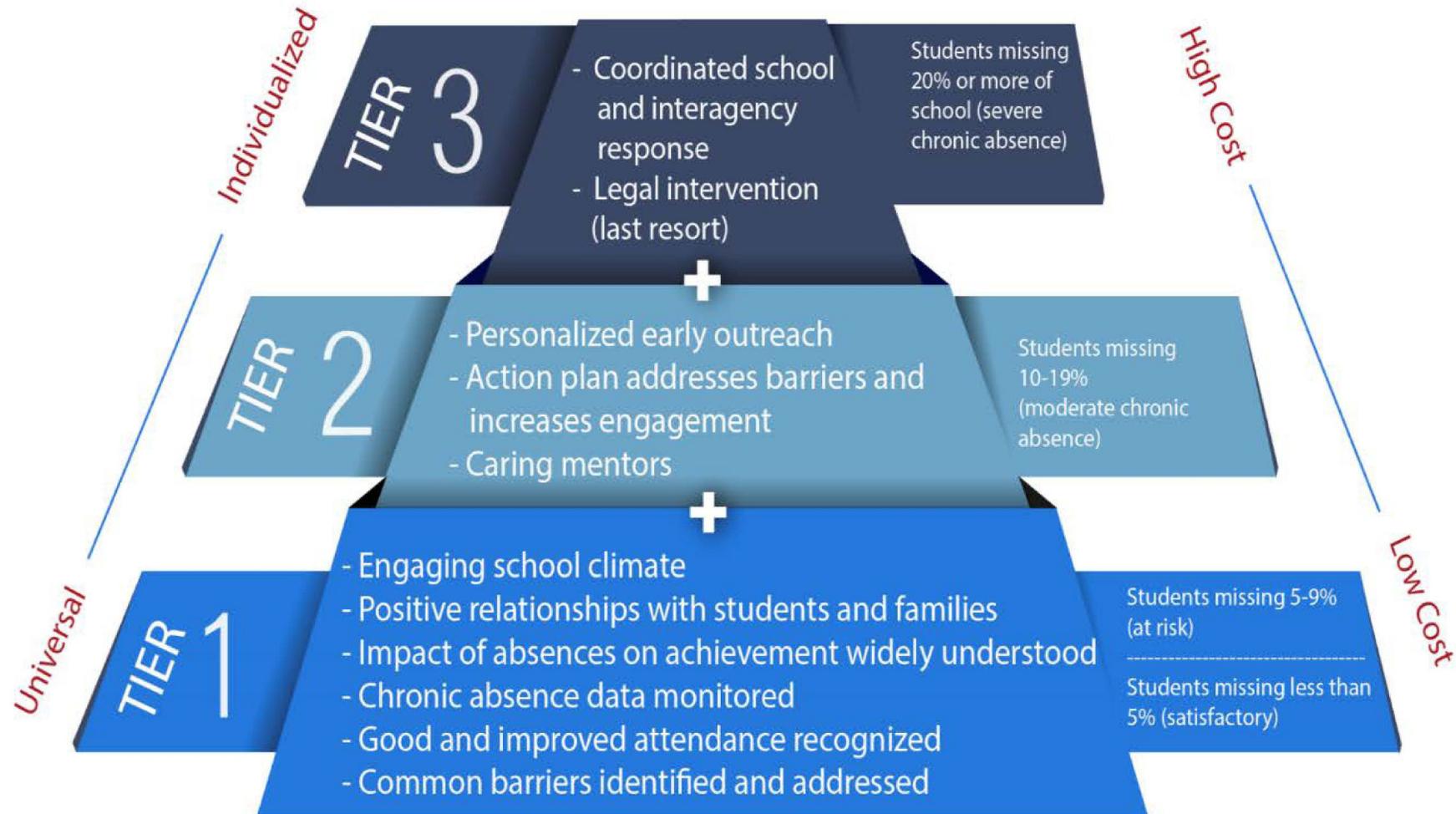
Vs.

CHRONIC ABSENCE

- Counts all absences: excused, unexcused & suspensions
- Emphasizes academic impact of missed days
- Uses community-based, positive strategies

Attendance MTSS

Tiered System of Supports For Improving Attendance



Tier 3 Interventions

- ▶ Truancy Intervention Program (TIP)
- ▶ Truancy Teen Court I & II
- ▶ Truancy Court





Facilitate Collaboration

- Foster Care Liaison
- Department of Juvenile Justice Liaison

HB5101

Multi-Agency Committee

- Pine llas Co unty Sc ho o ls Stud ent Se rvic es Exe c utive Dire c to r
- Pine llas Co unty Sc ho o ls Ma na ging Offic er of Sc ho o l So c ia l Wo rk Se rvic es,
- De sig ne e fro m De pa rtm ent of Juve nile Justic e
- De pa rtm ent of Child ren and Fa milie s
- De pa rtm ent of He alth
- The Sta te Atto me y's Offic e
- La w Enfo rc ement



Barriers that may result in Truancy (include but are not limited to)

- ❖ Pattern of disengagement
- ❖ Financial Need
- ❖ Family Child Care Needs
- ❖ Aversion to academics due to learning deficit
- ❖ Foster Care / Runaway
- ❖ Housing instability
- ❖ Substance use
- ❖ Physical / Mental Health



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Prevention

Early Intervention

Clothing Closet

Food Pantry

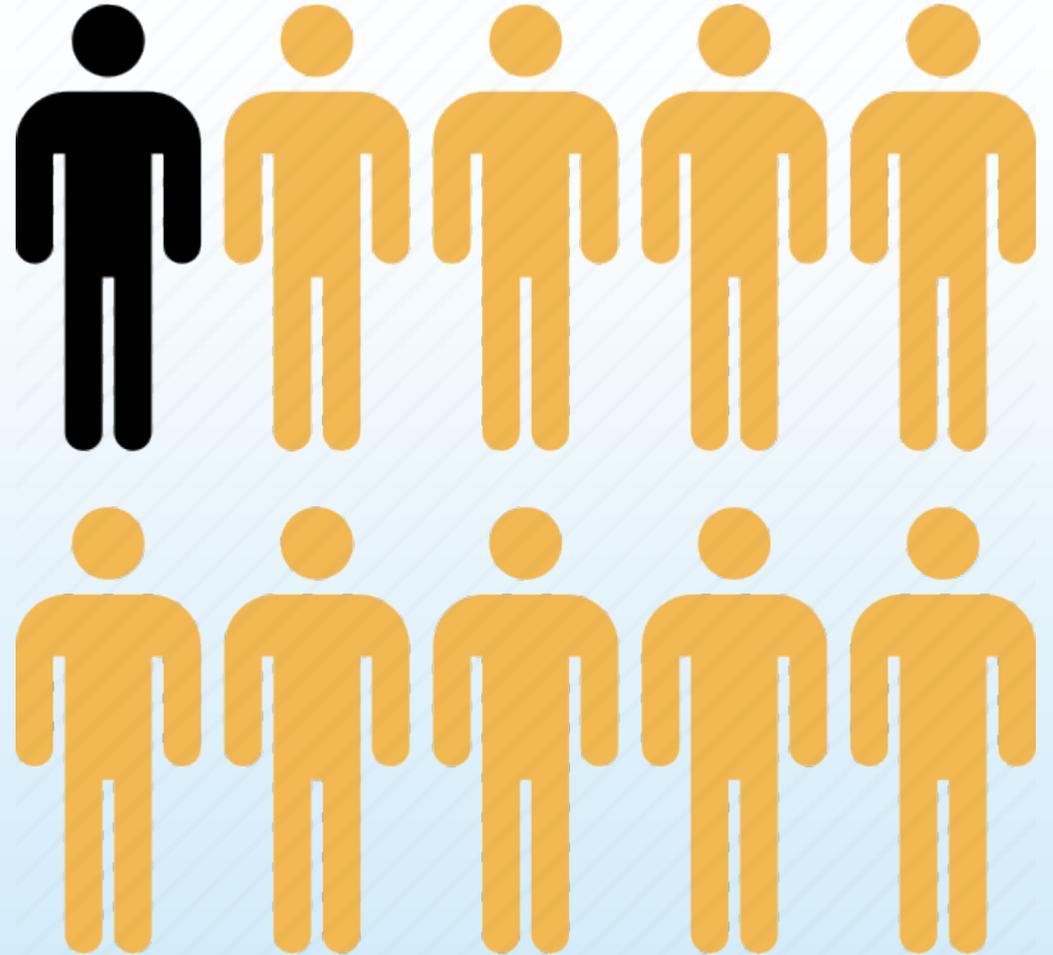
Mentors

Parent

Engagement

Access to Child
Care

Transportation





Thank You For Your Time
And Attention