RI Healthy Schools Coalition Breakfast for School Wellness Leaders

Wellness Committees

Partners in Strong School Attendance

October 21, 2026

Wellness and attendance

Utilize your Health and Wellness Committee to focus on attendance.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENT

“The subcommittee will make recommendations regarding the district’s health education curriculum and instruction, physical education curriculum and instruction, and nutrition and physical activity policies to decrease obesity and **enhance the health and well being of students and employees.”**

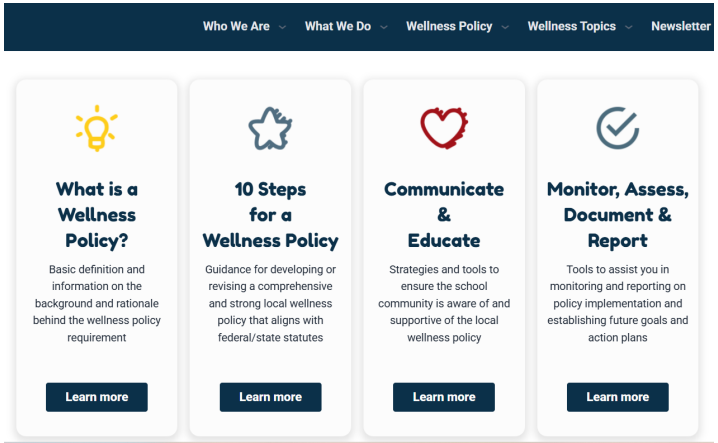
Expanded definition: attendance as part of student wellness

Local Wellness Policy

A required written policy that prioritizes student health, well-being, and ability to learn.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Nutrition education and promotion goals
Physical activity goals
Nutrition standards for food sales
Policy for food marketing
Public involvement in policy development
Triennial progress assessment schedule



Wellness policy guidance

Local policies can also integrate attendance goals.

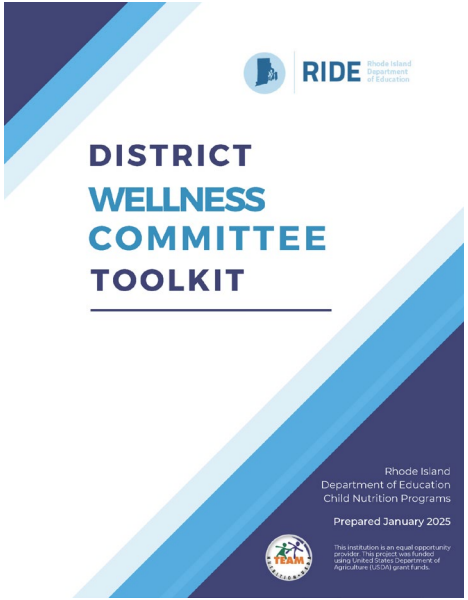
Health and Wellness Committee

ROBUST MEMBERSHIP

- Principals and administrators
- Physical education teachers and nurses
- Support staff
- Parents and students
- Community organizations

Four meetings per year maintain momentum.

Buy-in grows when the work is relevant and necessary.



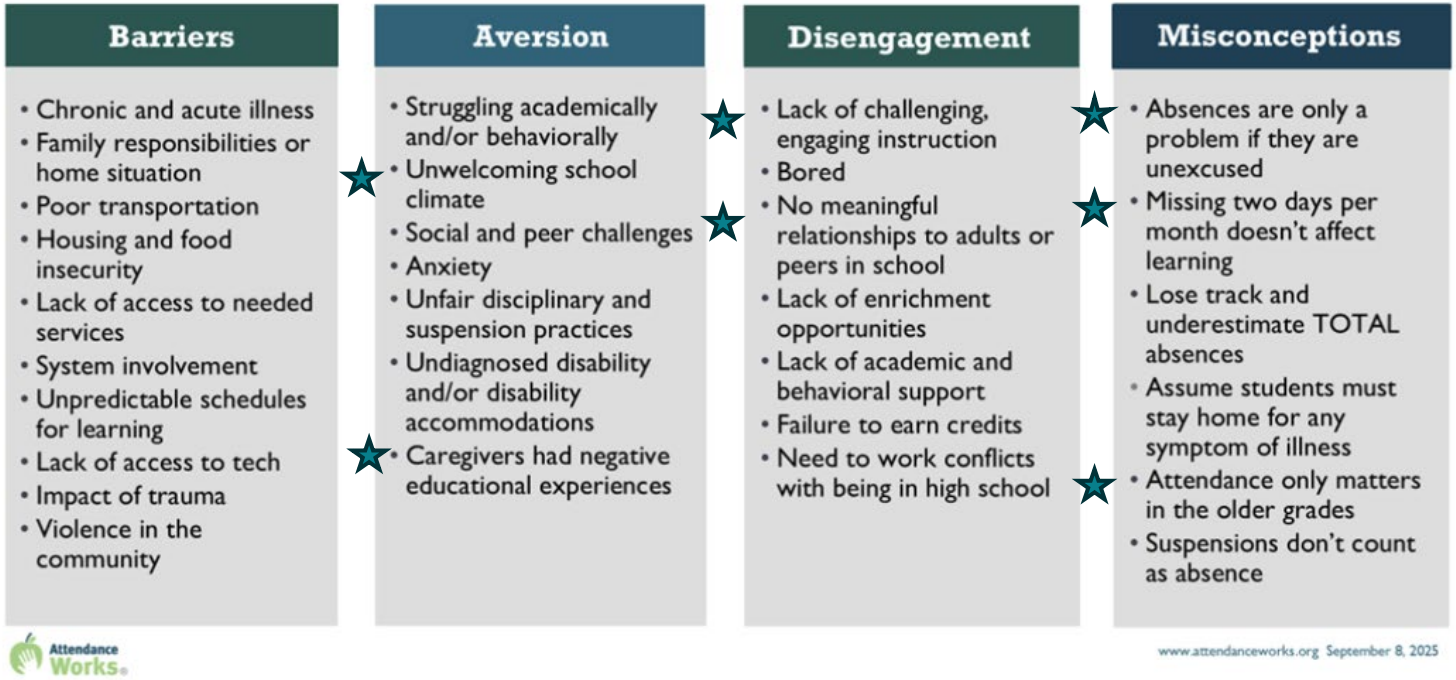
District Wellness Committee Toolkit

Where to start

The question isn’t “Why aren’t they here?”

It’s “How do we make school a place they want to be?”

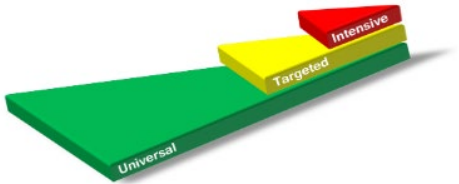
Focus areas: Family Engagement and School Climate



Root Cause Analysis

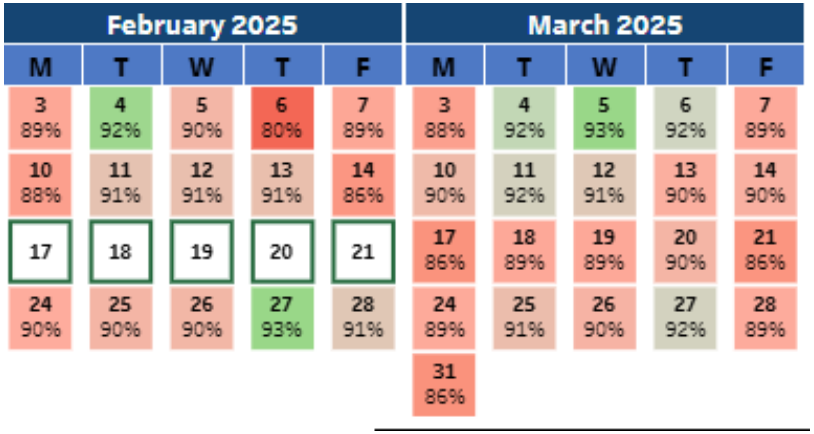
Use data to discover and address trends through district and school improvement processes.

- **SurveyWorks**
- **RIDE Attendance Matters (attendancemattersri.org)**
- **Conversations with families to determine root causes for absences**



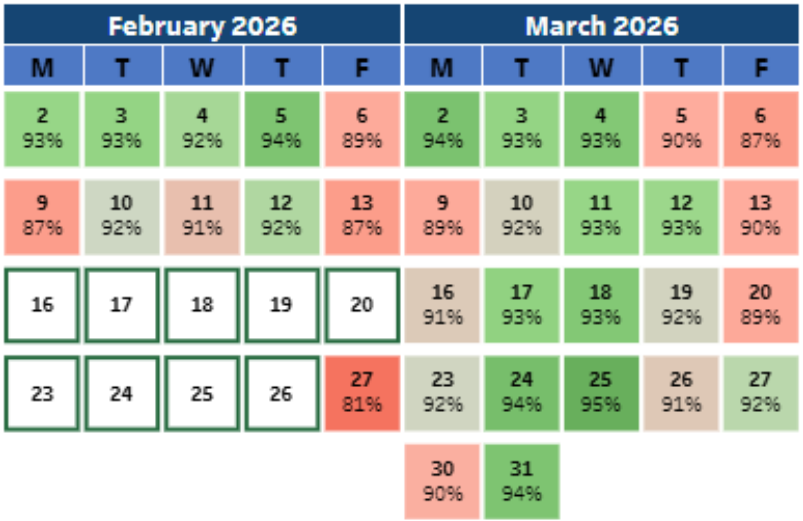
Calendar Heat Map

February and March 2025



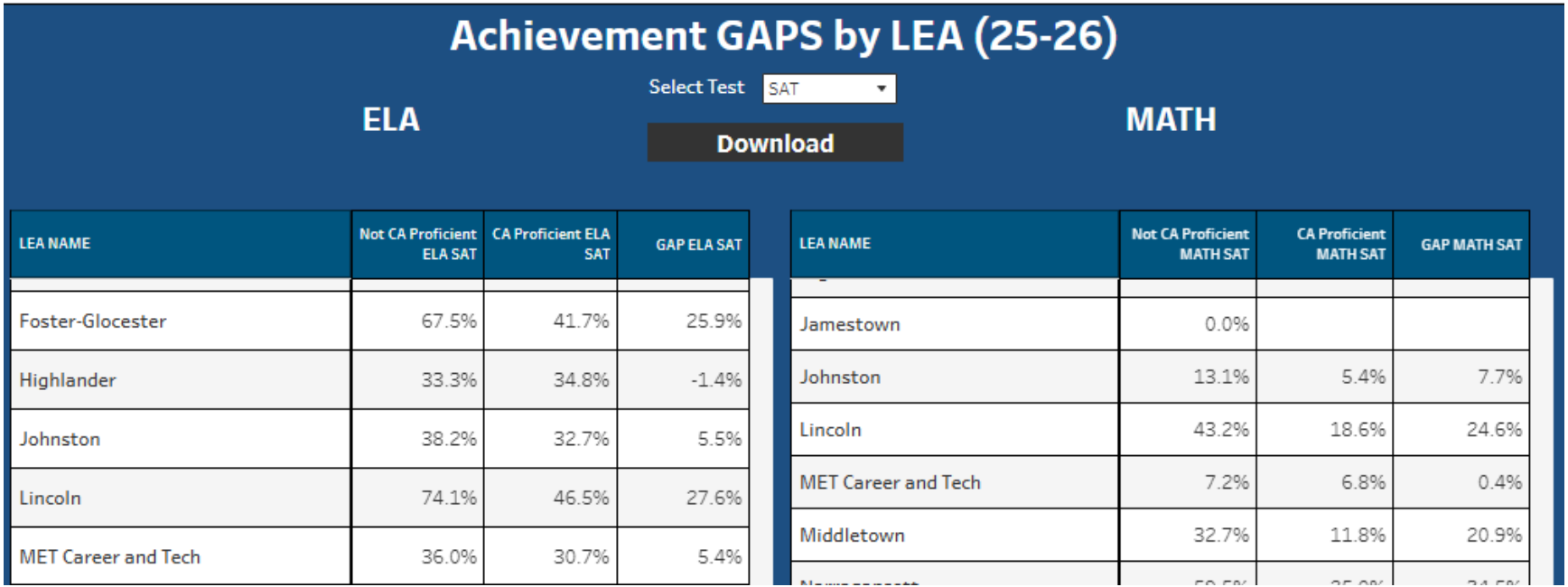
February 2025					March 2025				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
3 89%	4 92%	5 90%	6 80%	7 89%	3 88%	4 92%	5 93%	6 92%	7 89%
10 88%	11 91%	12 91%	13 91%	14 86%	10 90%	11 92%	12 91%	13 90%	14 90%
17	18	19	20	21	17 86%	18 89%	19 89%	20 90%	21 86%
24 90%	25 90%	26 90%	27 93%	28 91%	24 89%	25 91%	26 90%	27 92%	28 89%
					31 86%				

February and March 2026



February 2026					March 2026				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
2 93%	3 93%	4 92%	5 94%	6 89%	2 94%	3 93%	4 93%	5 90%	6 87%
9 87%	10 92%	11 91%	12 92%	13 87%	9 89%	10 92%	11 93%	12 93%	13 90%
16	17	18	19	20	16 91%	17 93%	18 93%	19 92%	20 89%
23	24	25	26	27 81%	23 92%	24 94%	25 95%	26 91%	27 92%
					30 90%	31 94%			

Achievement Gaps by LEA



Achievement GAPS by LEA (25-26)

Select Test: SAT

Download

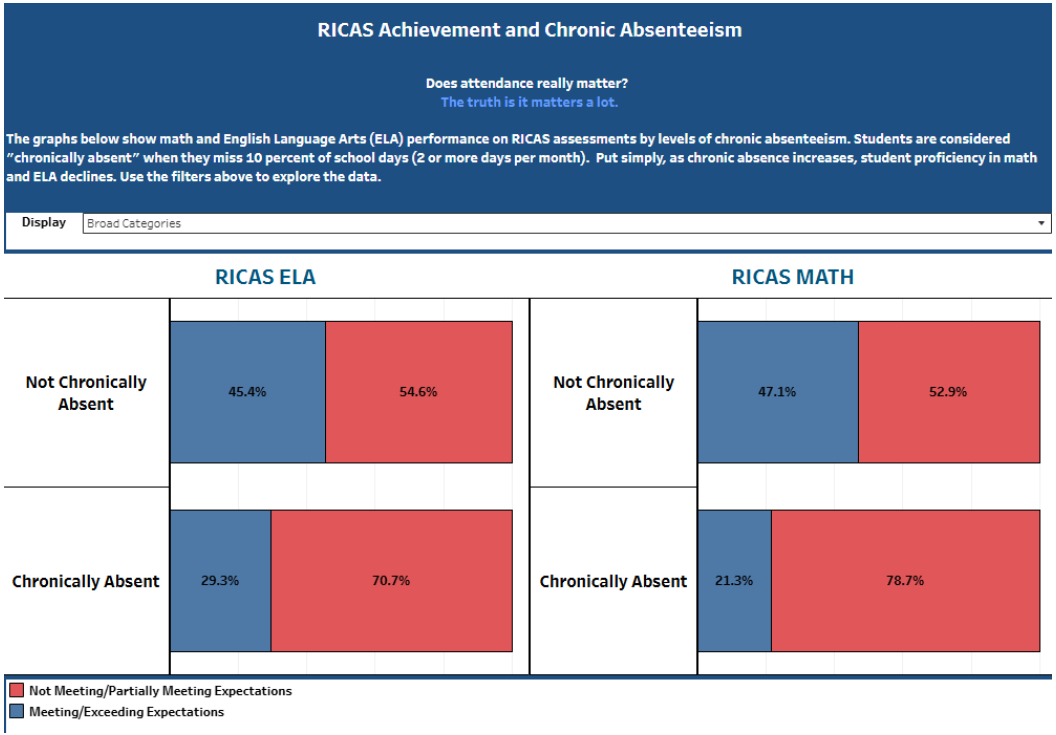
ELA

LEA NAME	Not CA Proficient ELA SAT	CA Proficient ELA SAT	GAP ELA SAT
Foster-Glocester	67.5%	41.7%	25.9%
Highlander	33.3%	34.8%	-1.4%
Johnston	38.2%	32.7%	5.5%
Lincoln	74.1%	46.5%	27.6%
MET Career and Tech	36.0%	30.7%	5.4%

MATH

LEA NAME	Not CA Proficient MATH SAT	CA Proficient MATH SAT	GAP MATH SAT
Jamestown	0.0%		
Johnston	13.1%	5.4%	7.7%
Lincoln	43.2%	18.6%	24.6%
MET Career and Tech	7.2%	6.8%	0.4%
Middletown	32.7%	11.8%	20.9%

RICAS Achievement and Chronic Absenteeism



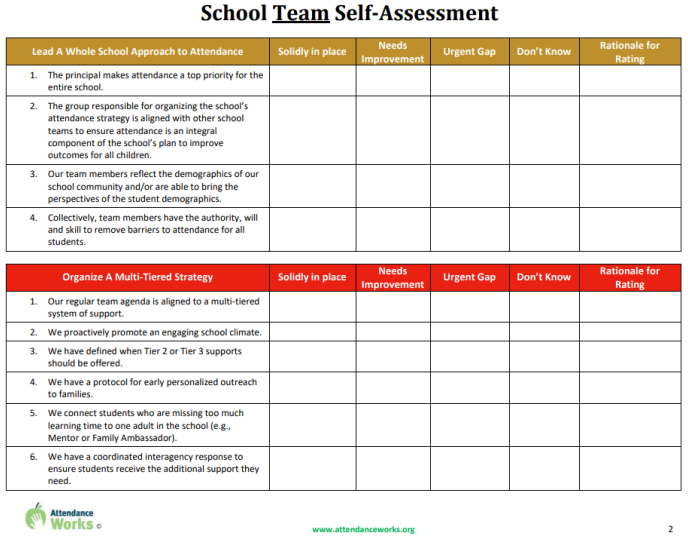
Family Engagement

Members completed tasks between meetings:

[Family Engagement Rating Scale]

[Attendance Works School Team Self-Assessment Tool]

[School-Based Health Program Self Assessment]



School Team Self-Assessment

Lead A Whole School Approach to Attendance	Solidly in place	Needs Improvement	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	Rationale for Rating
1. The principal makes attendance a top priority for the entire school.					
2. The group responsible for organizing the school's attendance strategy is aligned with other school teams to ensure attendance is an integral component of the school's plan to improve outcomes for all children.					
3. Our team members reflect the demographics of our school community and/or are able to bring the perspectives of the student demographics.					
4. Collectively, team members have the authority, will and skill to remove barriers to attendance for all students.					

Organize A Multi-Tiered Strategy	Solidly in place	Needs Improvement	Urgent Gap	Don't Know	Rationale for Rating
1. Our regular team agenda is aligned to a multi-tiered system of support.					
2. We proactively promote an engaging school climate.					
3. We have defined when Tier 2 or Tier 3 supports should be offered.					
4. We have a protocol for early personalized outreach to families.					
5. We connect students who are missing too much learning time to one adult in the school (e.g., Mentor or Family Ambassador).					
6. We have a coordinated interagency response to ensure students receive the additional support they need.					

Attendance Works ©

www.attendanceworks.org

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School Climate & Belonging

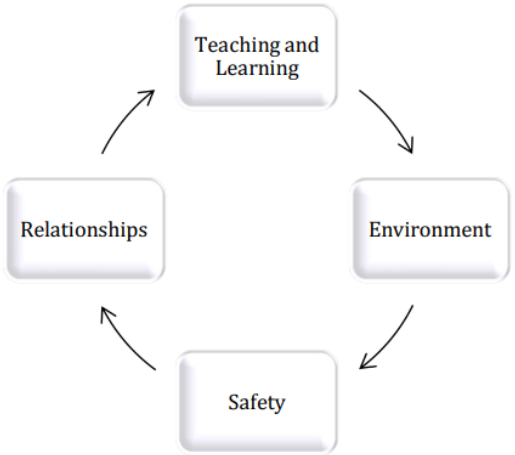
Connections Surveys

- **BRIDGE-RI Course Catalog**

Relationships with students involve all adults.

Build a culture that values attendance and every instructional minute.

- Scan of Environment and Attendance (SEAT)



Additional steps

MAINTAIN PROGRESS AND MOMENTUM

- Standing agenda item at admin meetings
- School improvement process and goals
- District Family Engagement structure and plan

STAFF WELLNESS AND ATTENDANCE

- Surveys
- The Trust
- Wellness Champions

Thank you!

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