

**Guiding Questions for Exploring the Data**School-Level Worksheet

**ATTENDANCE DATA (from Absent Student Research query or attendance supervisor)**

1. Are there differences in chronic absence (CA) rates across grade levels? What are the differences?
2. Are there differences in CA rates across disability type? What are the differences?
3. Are there differences in CA rates across race/ethnicity? What are the differences?
4. What percentage of absences are excused vs. unexcused? What are the differences across schools, grade levels, disability type, and race/ethnicity?
5. How specific can we get with the reasons for excused absences? Within the set of excused absences, does your district require tracking the reason for the excused absence? Some examples include illness, medical appointment, family leave, etc.
6. Which of our CA students have a history of high absences and which are relatively recent? What might that suggest in terms of strategies?
7. Are students missing school on the same day (e.g. every Thursday)?
8. How significant are absences around holidays and breaks?
9. To what extent do students who are chronically absent live in the same neighborhood or use the same transportation method?

**DISCIPLINE DATA (from Student Discipline Action query or attendance supervisor)**

1. What are the primary behaviors that result in out-of-school suspensions? Are these behaviors safety related? Are the out-of-school suspensions mandated by local policy?
2. Are there differences in suspension rates across grade levels? What are the differences?
3. Are there differences in suspension rates across disability type? What are the differences?
4. Are there differences in suspension rates across race/ethnicity? What are the differences?
5. What is the total number of instructional days lost as a result of out-of-school suspensions? Do we have alternative discipline options available?
6. Do we see correlations between attendance, office discipline referrals, and out-of-school suspensions?
7. Are attendance, discipline referrals, or behaviors that result in suspension more prevalent among certain classes or teachers?

**ANNUAL SCHOOL HEALTH SURVEY AND DISTRICT COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH APPLICATION (from Coordinated School Health or School Nursing)**

1. What are the chronic health conditions (e.g., asthma, diabetes, anxiety, etc.) most evident in our student population?
2. Is any type of outreach conducted with families of students with chronic health conditions?
3. Do we have a school nurse? Is she/he involved in our attendance planning?
4. Are school-based health clinics or screenings available and is there any evidence they positively impact absence rates?
5. Are students who report feeling sick required to visit a school nurse before being sent home? What is the return-to-class rate at each school? Is there anything we can learn from differences in rates across schools?
6. For schools with a school nurse, is it possible to determine the number of students who visit the nurse each day due to potential illness?

**OTHER AVAILABLE AND RELEVANT DATA**  **(Other relevant and available data that should be available include school climate surveys, reports from various student and family support providers, discipline office referrals, and any available tardy data.)**

1. Is qualitative data available from surveys, focus groups, or individual/family conferences that can help us identify root cause(s) for the absences? Examples include school climate surveys completed by parents, students, and/or staff.
2. What can we learn from nontraditional sources like bus drivers, SROs, etc. that might be helpful in understanding attendance barriers?
3. To what extent are CA students congregated in the same classrooms with the same teachers?
4. What is the extent of overlap of CA students with students who have been identified for RTI2 interventions?

**POLICY, PRACTICE AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION QUESTIONS (Additional questions that may assist in understanding the challenge.)**

1. How does the school communicate the importance of attendance to students and caregivers?
2. Do we clearly define excused and unexcused absences and are those definitions universally followed in reporting?
3. What is our policy for responding to absences, excused and unexcused? What is the role of the teacher? Is communication with parents/caregivers personalized?
4. What supports are available to parents or caregivers who may be struggling to get their child to school?
5. Have community health care providers been engaged in supporting student attendance?
6. What community partnerships are in place to help students and families with basic needs?
7. Are resources available from state and federal sources, such as ESSA and IDEA, coordinated school health, family resource centers, etc. directed to schools with the greatest challenges?