
How is the current support system at schools addressing the student absentee problem?

In a June 24, 2025 article, Liz Cohen states:

“The day education leaders, researchers and advocates have feared is here: It is now clear that student attendance will not return to pre-pandemic rates on its own. The number of students missing more than 10% of the school year skyrocketed in the COVID years from 15% in 2019 to 28% in 2022. Five years after the pandemic, attendance still hasn’t returned to normal, with 23% of K-12 students chronically absent. America must reject the new normal of lower student attendance rates and act now to get attendance back on track.”

She suggests two solutions: increasing transparency in attendance data and resetting messaging to emphasize the importance of daily attendance
<https://www.the74million.org/article/its-time-to-reject-chronic-absenteeism-as-the-new-normal-in-student-attendance/>

But oh so much more is needed.

Stated directly, school improvement policy and practices must start immediately to transform the archaic system of student/learning supports at schools.

Such a transformation is essential not only for reducing absentees, but relatedly, it is essential for addressing the increasing volume of learning, behavior, and emotional problems.

And despite all the challenges school are facing, this summer is the time to start making the fundamental systemic changes required.

Here are two guides to help in moving forward:

>***Student/Learning Supports: A Brief Guide for Moving in New Directions***

<https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefguide.pdf>

>***Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Starting the Process***

<https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/systemchangesteps.pdf>

Let us know if you think our Center can be of help.

Best wishes and be well,

Howard & Linda

Howard Adelman, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology & Center Co director

Linda Taylor, Ph.D., Center Co director

Dept. of Psychology, UCLA

Emails: adelman@psych.ucla.edu Ltaylor@ucla.edu

Center Website: <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/>

