



Evidence in Action

A K20 Center Research Brief

School and Family Partnership Can Reduce Chronic Absenteeism

Thomas J. Capretta, Jingyang (Max) Zhang, Barbara J. Boone
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Introduction

This intervention brief explores the research article "School and family partnership can reduce chronic absenteeism" by Capretta, Zhang, and Boone (2024). The authors address the persistent issue of chronic absenteeism in education, which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Chronic absenteeism, defined as missing 15 or more days in a school year, is linked to lower academic achievement and higher dropout rates. The study emphasizes the importance of involving families and community members in developing lasting solutions to reduce absenteeism. The significance of this research lies in its potential to improve student attendance and academic outcomes through collaborative efforts between schools and families.

Methodology

Research Design:

The study employed a research-based approach to identify strategies for reducing chronic absenteeism. The authors reviewed existing literature and data on absenteeism, family engagement, and school-community partnerships.

Sample:

The study focused on data from various schools and districts, particularly highlighting the situation in Ohio. The sample included students from diverse backgrounds, including those from economically disadvantaged families, students with disabilities, and English learners.

Data Analysis:

The authors analyzed attendance data, family engagement practices, and the effectiveness of school-community partnerships. They identified key principles and strategies that schools can implement to improve attendance.

Results

The study found that chronic absenteeism remains a significant issue, with rates peaking at 29.7% during the 2022-23 school year. The authors identified four key principles for addressing absenteeism: a collaborative approach, diversity and setting, intervention or prevention, and a multi-tiered approach.



They emphasized the importance of involving families and community partners in attendance teams to develop tailored solutions. Effective strategies include focusing on early years, practicing effective communication, engaging families in leadership opportunities, developing community partnerships, establishing data systems, and including chronic absenteeism in staff professional learning.

The findings suggest that schools need to build trust with families and engage them in collaborative efforts to reduce absenteeism. By leveraging family and community perspectives, schools can develop more effective and sustainable attendance solutions. The study highlights the need for a comprehensive approach that includes prevention, intervention, and continuous evaluation.

Application into Practice

To replicate this intervention in a school context, the following steps can be taken:

1. **Collaborative Approach:** Form attendance teams that include students, families, and community partners. Utilize their perspectives to develop tailored solutions.
2. **Diversity and Setting:** Consider the diverse backgrounds and specific contexts of the school community when developing attendance strategies.
3. **Intervention and Prevention:** Implement both preventive measures and strategic interventions to address absenteeism. Focus on building positive attendance habits early.
4. **Multi-tiered Approach:** Use a multitiered framework to provide universal, targeted, and individualized support to students and families.
5. **Effective Communication:** Establish predictable, understandable, and positive communication with families. Use tools like attendance postcards and surveys to gather feedback.
6. **Family Engagement:** Involve families in leadership roles and decision-making processes. Respect and build on their cultural practices and knowledge.
7. **Community Partnerships:** Develop reciprocal relationships with community partners to address broader concerns and reinforce attendance messages.
8. **Data Systems:** Establish comprehensive data systems to track attendance, family engagement, and the effectiveness of interventions. Share data with families and involve them in the evaluation process.
9. **Professional Learning:** Provide professional development for staff on addressing chronic absenteeism and building strong family-school partnerships.

Work Cited

Capretta, T. J., Zhang, J. (M.), & Boone, B. J. (2024). School and family partnership can reduce chronic absenteeism. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 106(3), 13-18.
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