

Attendance Initiatives

The Power of Presence: Understanding Louisiana's attendance initiative and the support school counselors provide to students and families.



Welcome & Activator

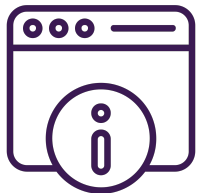


Write down one question on your mind or one takeaway you hope to gain from the session today!

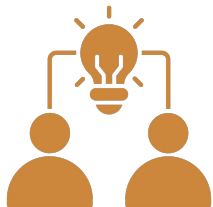


Counselor Institute Goals

LDOE's newly formatted Counselor Institute is designed to:



Share key information on supports, policies, and resources from the state-level to local practitioners



Provide an engaging space for counselors to **share problems of practice, build community, and expand their impact**



Counselor Institute Scope & Sequence

TODAY!

Strategies for Bolstering K-12 Attendance

How can I use my knowledge to help the attendance team build stronger daily attendance habits?

Vertical Alignment from K-12 to Career Opportunities

How can I help students see what they're learning today connects to who they want to become tomorrow?

Strengthening School | Post-Secondary Connections

How can I create more opportunities for students to confidently take their next step after high school?



Session Topics and Agenda

Learning Topics

Time

Sub-topics

01

LDOE's Statewide Attendance Strategy

10 min

- Why attendance matters
- Strategy & mission
- Key metrics

02

The Role of Counselors in Promoting Attendance

20 min

- Counselor rubric
- School attendance teams
- Communication requirements & best practices

03

Creating Resources: Student Attendance Plans

15 min

- Intro to ISAPs
- Identifying underlying causes
- Setting goals and strategies



Attendance Initiatives: Learning Objectives (LOs)

LO1: Attendance Initiatives

Learn about the recent attendance initiatives and how school-based teams are addressing attendance.

LO2: Counselor Contributions

Review contributions counselors might be asked to make to their school-based attendance team.

LO3: Resource Creation

Understand the key elements and considerations for creating an Individualized Student Attendance Plan (ISAP).



Louisiana's Strategy to Improve Attendance Across the State



How do counselors fit into attendance support?

Poll: In what ways does attendance impact your counseling work?

- A. Academic progress and intervention planning
- B. Attendance barrier identification and support
- C. Family outreach or communication
- D. Administrative tasks and data tracking
- E. Other



Why Does Attendance Matter?



There is a direct correlation between attendance and academic achievement.

Learning loss occurs when students are consistently absent.



Early intervention is key to preventing chronic absenteeism.



LDOE's Attendance Strategy and Mission



The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is committed to **reducing chronic absenteeism** and **improving attendance outcomes** through a strategic, tiered system of support.

To further this commitment, the LDOE has a dedicated team located strategically across the state to provide in-person, real-time technical assistance and support to school systems in implementing effective attendance strategies.



A Multi-Tiered System of Support

Proactive Strategies - Focus on all students, aimed at preventing absenteeism before it affects achievement.

Examples of proactive strategies include:

- Using clear and timely processes to communicate information about attendance with parents
- Incentivizing attendance through recognition programs, contests, and rewards
- Cultivating student belonging through engagement with activities and organizations

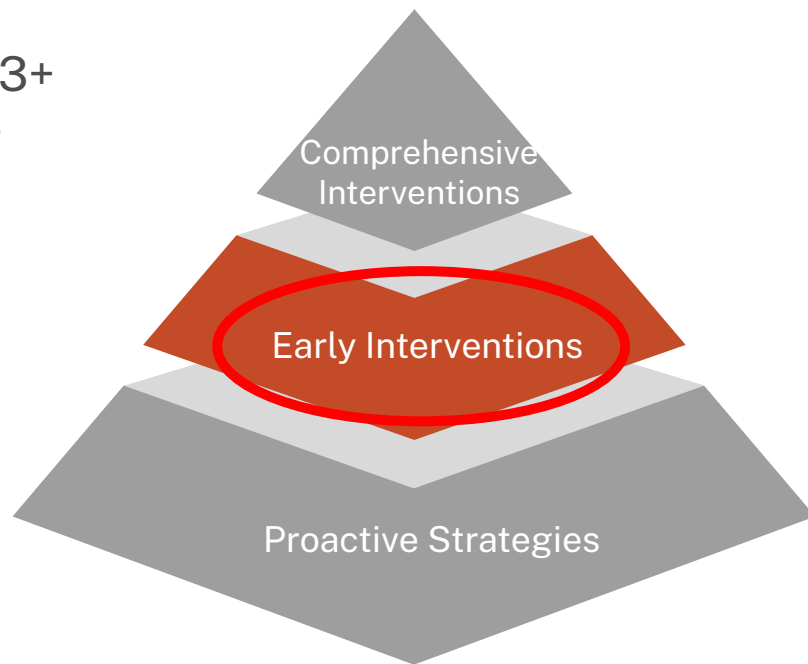


A Multi-Tiered System of Support

Early Interventions - Focus on students with 3+ unexcused absences per semester or a 10%+ absence rate.

Examples of early interventions include:

- Partnering a student with a school-level mentor
- Developing student attendance support plans to meet academic needs
- Providing opportunities for attendance recovery and missed learning recovery

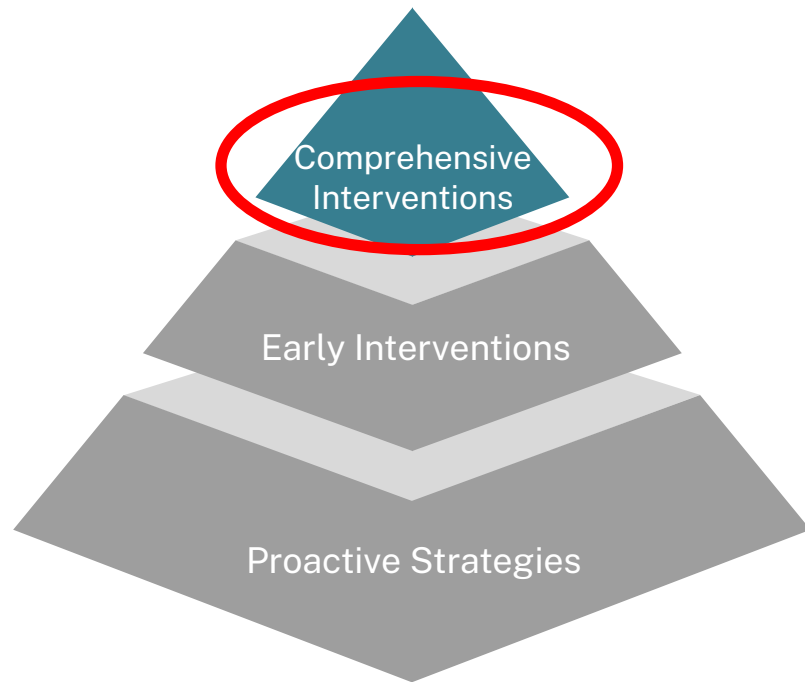


A Multi-Tiered System of Support

Comprehensive Interventions - Focus on students with 5+ unexcused absences

Examples of comprehensive interventions include:

- Increasing academic support, including weekly academic check-ins
- Communicating with parents regarding attendance concerns and available supports
- Making legal referrals outlined in statutes and policies.



Key Attendance Metrics

LDOE has identified two key attendance metrics for targeted improvement:

Truancy percentage

(5+ unexcused tardies/absences in a semester)



Chronic absenteeism rate

(Absent 10%+ of days)



Additionally, we used two other metrics to identify systems for intermediate & intensive support:

Average number of days missed



Attendance rate percentage

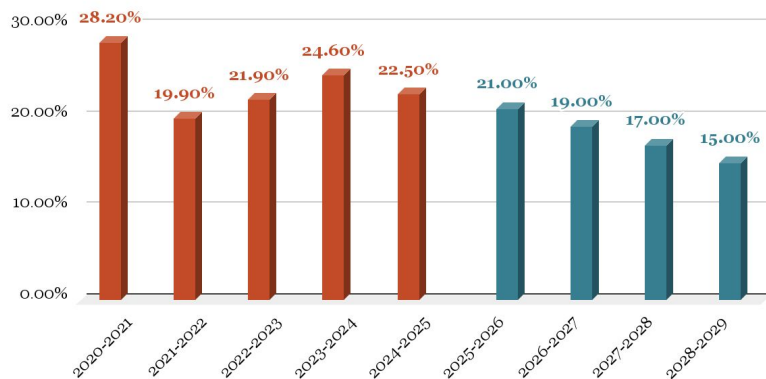


Attendance Metrics: Data & Targets

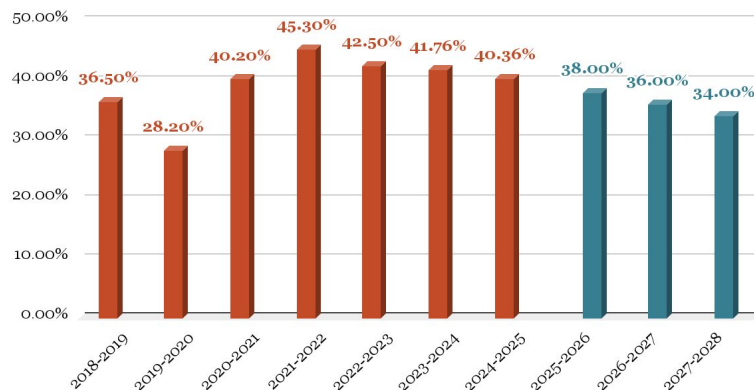
Personal reflection:

- *What do you notice about the charts below for chronic absenteeism and truancy?*
- *How do these relate to trends you've seen at your own school?*

Chronic Absenteeism in Louisiana



Truancy in Louisiana



Historical data

Upcoming targets

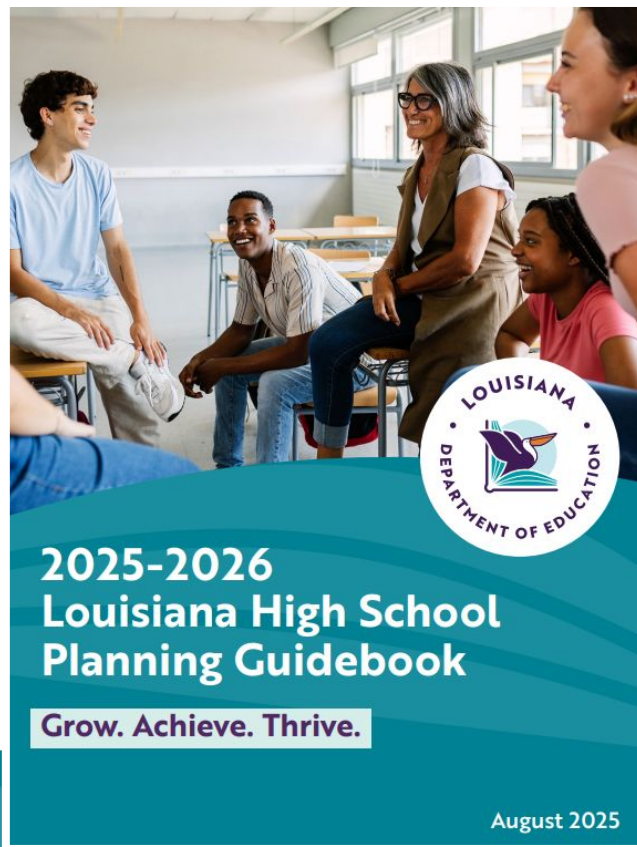


The Role of Counselors in Promoting Attendance



Louisiana's High School Planning Guidebook:

A guide to prepare students for career and college success



Louisiana School Counseling Vision

A clear vision for a school counseling program achieves the following:



Attendance and the Counselor Rubric

How does work on attendance fit into the new counselor rubric?



Domain 1: Vision & Goal Setting

Counselors support their school's vision to lower the amount of absences. They help to **develop plans** and **set goals on how to lower the absentee rate**.



Domain 2: Student Services

Counselors **gather data** on student absenteeism, and **provide counseling and support** to students with high absenteeism to **decrease their number of absences**.

For questions on the counselor rubric, please email leads@la.gov or candace.joseph@la.gov



The Approach Behind Attendance Teams



Solving chronic absenteeism requires a **cross-departmental team** with the insights, skills and resources to understand what motivates students to show up or causes them to miss school, and to **align resources to implement solutions.**



What is a School-Level Attendance Team?

Each school will select a group of staff and stakeholders to work towards meeting the attendance goals for the school, district, and state.



Key Responsibilities

- Establishing school attendance **goals and expectations**.
- Developing an **attendance strategy**.
- **Analyzing data** to identify students in need of support.
- Identifying factors influencing attendance and **developing plans to minimize barriers**.
- **Engaging families** and communities.



Example Team Composition

- **School Counselor**
- School Administrator
- Attendance Coordinator
- Data Manager
- PTO Member
- Classroom Teachers



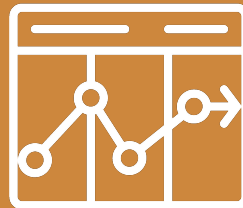
The Counselor Role on Attendance Teams

While not all counselors will be part of their school's team directly, all counselors may be asked to help support the team's work. A few ways you can support include:



- Creating individualized attendance plans
- Engaging families and removing barriers

- Contributing to school wide incentives and recognition programs
- Reviewing and interpreting attendance data



Communication Requirements for Attendance

After the Third Unexcused Absence/Tardy Occurrence:

- The principal of a school, or their designee, **notifies** the parent or legal guardian **in writing**.
- The principal or designee **holds a conference** with the student's parent or legal guardian.
- This notification includes information on:
 - The parent or legal guardian's *legal responsibility* to enforce the student's attendance at school
 - The *civil penalties* that may be incurred if the student is determined to be habitually absent or habitually tardy.
- The student's parent or legal guardian **signs a receipt** for the notification. The school documents attempts (*even if unsuccessful with capturing a signature*).

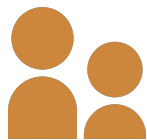


Written Parent Notifications: Best Practices



Simplify Language

- Use **clear, concise, straightforward language**
- Avoid legalistic jargon and punitive tones



Emphasize Parental Efficacy

- Actively reinforce the **significant role parents play** in their child's educational journey
- Highlight their ability to **positively impact** their student's success



Stress Incremental Effects of Absences

- ***Clearly list the days missed/tardies***
- Convey that even **minimal absences accumulate**, leading to academic challenges

Effective Parent Conferences: Best Practices

Focus on Collaboration and Building Positive Relationships

- **Learn** about the family
- **Share** any positive social or academic aspects about the student



Communicate Clearly with Data and Specific Examples

- **Inform** parents by sharing student attendance data
- **Communicate** policies and the importance of attendance

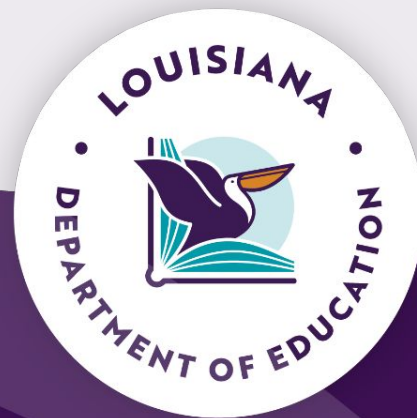


Create a Clear, Actionable Plan

- **Discuss** attendance barriers and possible solutions
- **Develop** an Individualized Student Attendance Plan, if needed



Creating Resources: Individualized Student Attendance Plans



Counselor-led Initiative: ISAPs

One resource counselors may help create is an **Individualized Student Attendance Plan (ISAP)**, which is **recommended after a student's fifth unexcused absence or tardy** and includes three main elements.



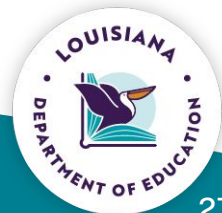
**Comprehensive
Assessment of Underlying
Causes**



Goal Setting



**Evidence-Based
Intervention Strategies**



ISAPs: Assessment of Underlying Causes

To begin, school attendance teams should conduct a thorough assessment of the student's situation to understand the **underlying causes of their absences**.

Barriers	Aversion	Disengagement
Students <i>cannot</i> attend school due to these barriers.	Students <i>will not</i> attend school to avoid these challenges/ concerns.	Students <i>do not</i> attend school because of disinterest or lack of connection.



ISAPs: Setting Attendance Goals

The second element of ISAP entails collaboratively establishing clear, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (**SMART**) **attendance and/or academic goals** with the student and their family.

Sample Goals

Timeline: February - May 2026

Increase attendance to **85%**
by the **end of the semester**



Reduce unexcused absences by 50% within the
next 6 weeks



Maintain at least a **91% attendance rate** for the
period of the goal

*Progress Monitoring Method:
Weekly attendance review by
mentor and student*



ISAPs: Evidence-Based Intervention Strategies

The third critical element involves implementing **evidence-based intervention strategies** tailored to address the specific barriers, aversions, or disengagement identified during the comprehensive assessment.

Example Reasons for Absences	Possible Interventions
<i>Barrier: Food Insecurity</i>	• Provide breakfast after the bell • Engage with local food bank
<i>Aversion: Academically Behind</i>	• Utilize individualized student support plans • Provide academic enrichment opportunities
<i>Disengagement: Lack of Belonging</i>	• Encourage engagement in after-school activities • Connect students with a mentor



Monitoring Progress on Attendance

Effective progress monitoring is essential for the success of interventions. It involves the **ongoing collection and analysis of attendance data** to track progress toward goals and make data-informed adjustments.



- Establishing clear communication protocols
- Conducting regular reviews with stakeholders to determine the effectiveness of the interventions
- Making data-driven adjustments to the plan

Key Takeaways

Louisiana's Strategy to Improve Attendance Across the State

- LDOE aims to reduce chronic absenteeism and truancy through a three-tiered support system.
- The key metrics for focus and improvement are **average number of days missed, chronic absenteeism rate, truancy percentage, and attendance rate percentage.**

The Role of Counselors in Promoting Attendance

- Schools will use cross-departmental **attendance teams** to align resources and **implement attendance solutions.**
- Counselors support attendance by **developing plans and setting goals to lower absentee rates.**
- They also **gather data, provide counseling, and offer support** to students with high absenteeism.

Creating Resources: ISAPs

- Individualized Student Attendance Plans (ISAPs) are a tool to support students with several unexcused absences.
- ISAPs involve **assessing underlying causes, setting SMART goals, and implementing evidence-based interventions.**



Thank you for your engagement today!

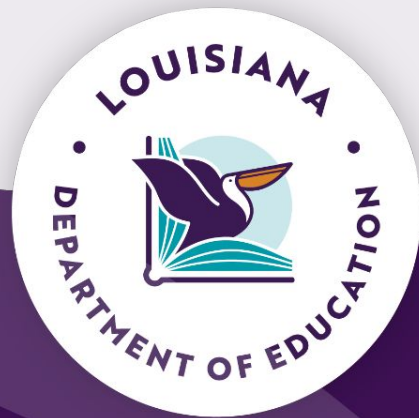
Please take a moment to **complete this short feedback survey** — your input helps us improve future sessions and better meet your needs.



<https://bit.ly/47CQGLr>



Appendix: Resource List



Key Tools & Resources

- [The Power of Presence LDOE Attendance Guide](#)
- [LDOE Attendance Landing Page](#)
- [Attendance Team Best Practices](#)
- [LDOE Monthly Call Decks](#)
 - [October 2025 Attendance Meeting Deck](#)
- [Blank Student Attendance Plan Template](#) (QR code)

