



# Read On Arizona

## A Look at Chronic Absence



# Agenda

- Arizona's Attendance Challenge
- Attendance Legislation
- AZ Chronic Absence Task Force

# Agenda

- Arizona's Attendance Challenge
- Attendance Legislation
- AZ Chronic Absence Task Force

# Chronic Absence



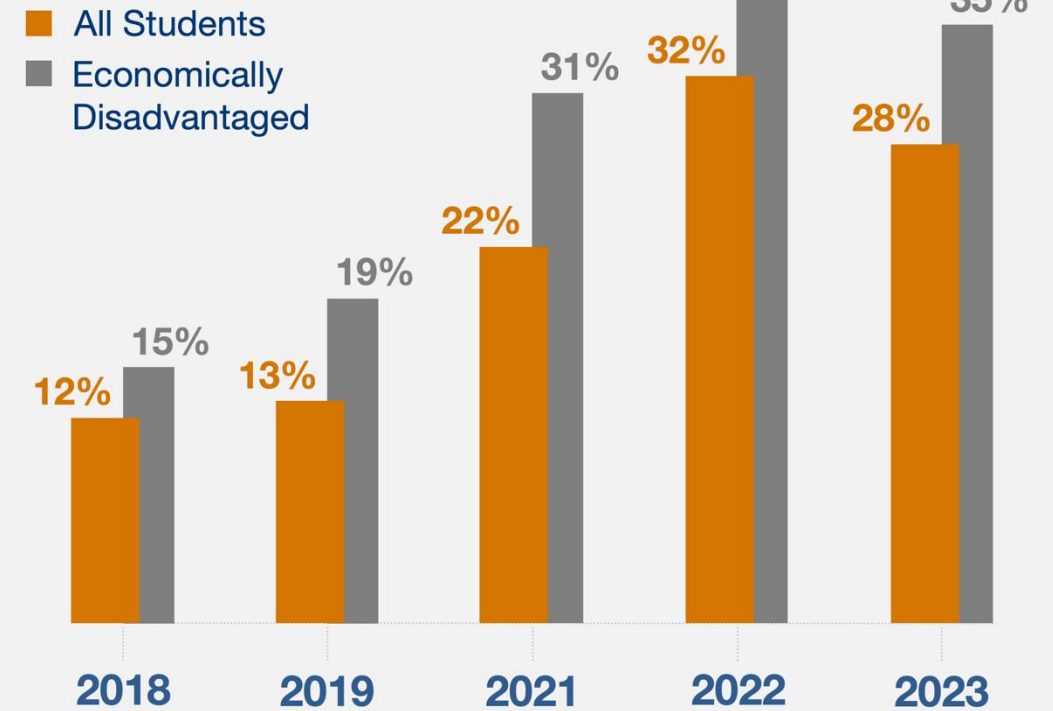
Student is **absent** from a given school for **any** reason.



# Student-Level Chronic Absence Rate

## ARIZONA CHRONIC ABSENCE RATE

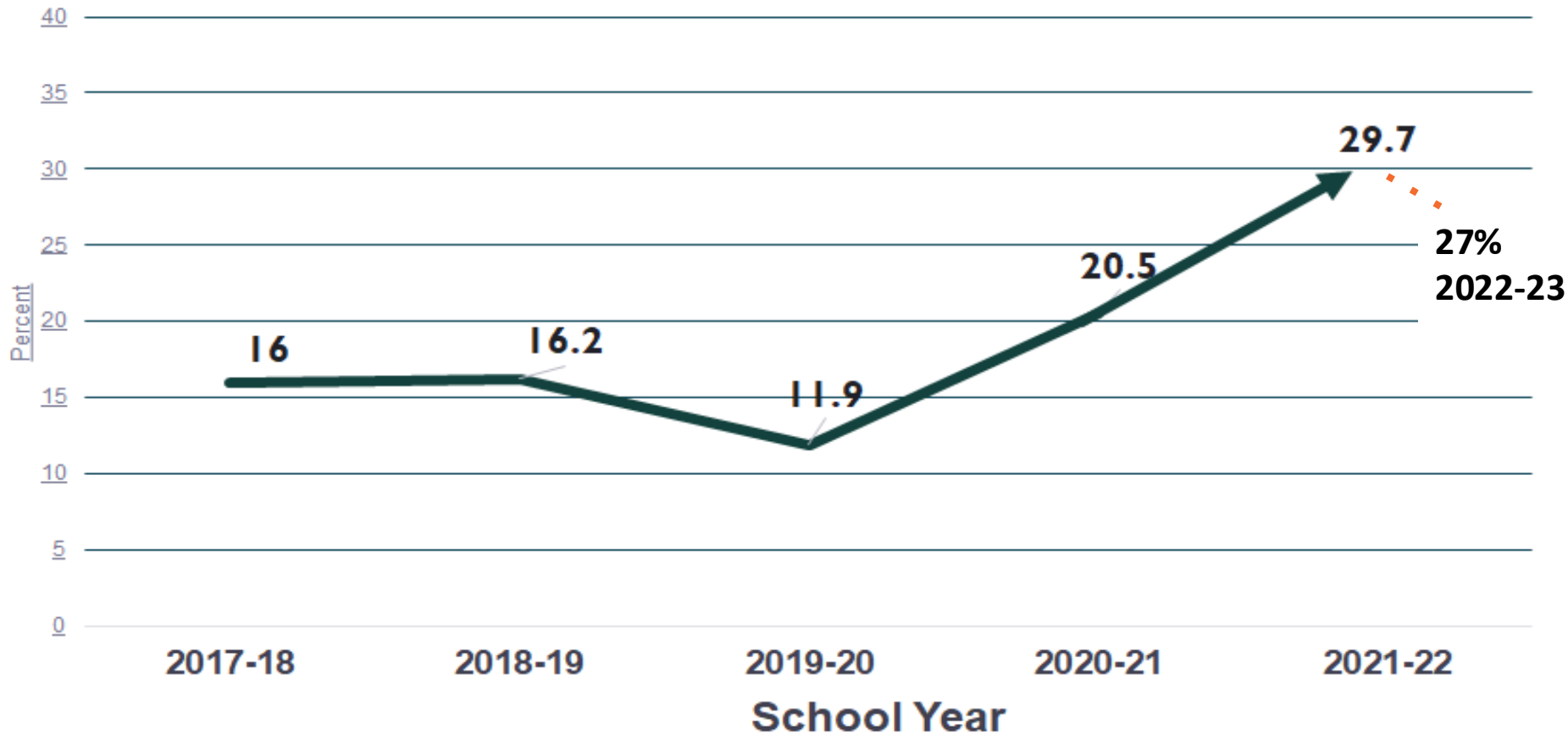
Statewide, Grades 1-8



Chronic absence rate is the percentage of students missing 10% or more of a school year for any reason.  
Source: AZ School Report Cards/Arizona Department of Education

# National Chronic Absence Crisis

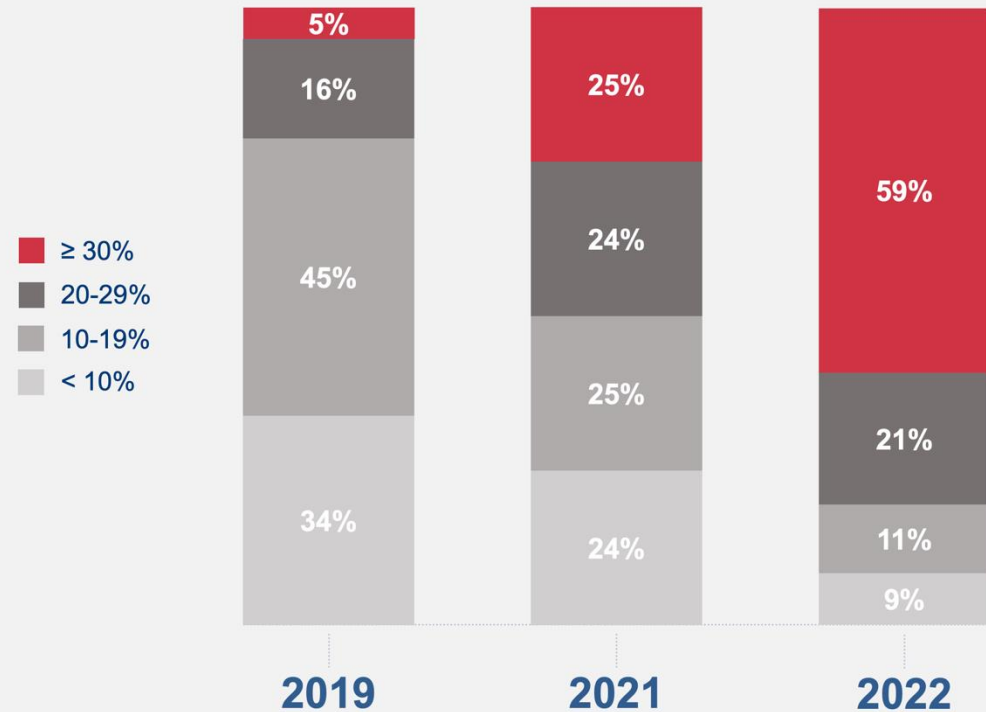
## Percentage of Students Chronically Absent Nearly Doubled Nationwide Between SY 2017-18 to SY 2021-22



- ✓ The number of chronically-absent students grew from 8,095,132 to 14,660,261
- ✓ State data from 2022-23 indicate rates remain high

# School-Level Chronic Absence Rate

## ARIZONA CHRONIC ABSENCE RATE School-Level, % of AZ Schools



# Attendance & Early Literacy

**1% increase in  
attendance rate  
is associated with a  
1.5% increase in  
third grade ELA  
passing rate**



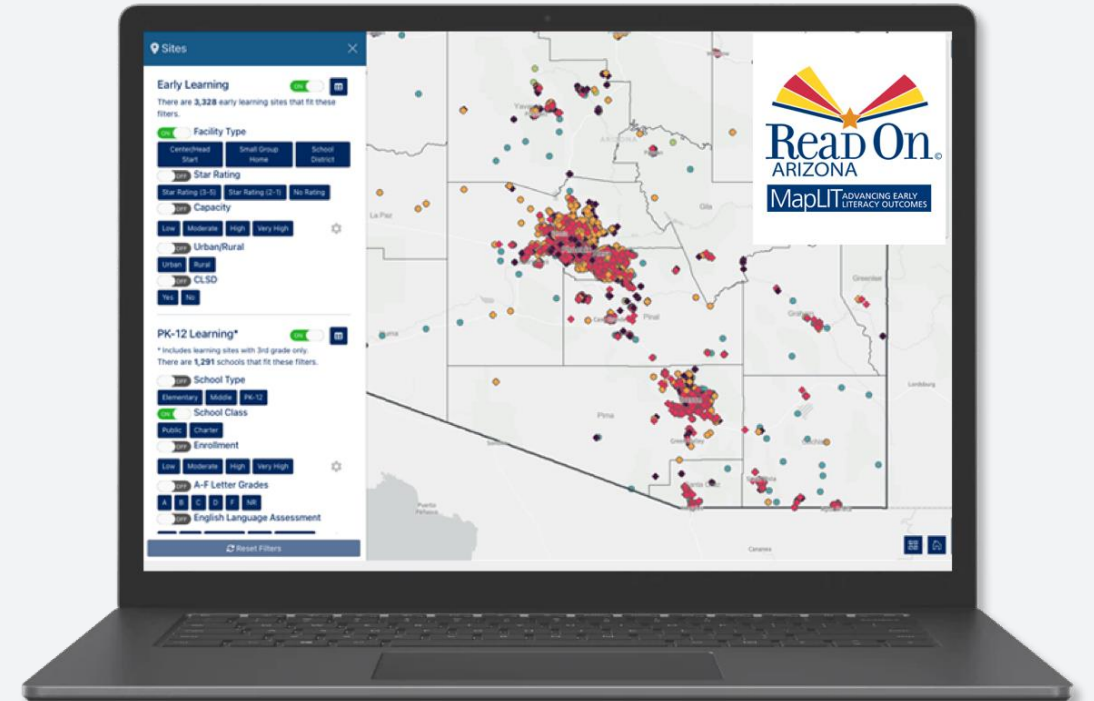
# Attendance & Preschool

**Students who are  
chronically absent  
in preschool are  
5x more likely  
to be chronically  
absent in second  
grade.**

Source: Ehrlich, Stacy et al, Preschool Attendance in Chicago Public Schools: Relationships with Learning Outcomes and Reasons for Absences

# MapLIT

One source for key data sets that impact early literacy outcomes in Arizona



[readonarizona.org/maplit](https://readonarizona.org/maplit)

# Agenda

- Arizona's Attendance Challenge
- Attendance Legislation
- AZ Chronic Absence Task Force

# Arizona Attendance Legislation

## Guardian Responsibility:

### ARS § 15-802

- Children Ages 6-16
- Exemptions

## Truancy:

### ARS § 15-803

- Excessive Absences
- Unexcused Absences

# Arizona Attendance Legislation

## Definitions:

### ARS § 15-901

- Average Daily Membership
- Daily Attendance

## Instructional Time Model:

### ARS § 15-901.08

- Setting
- Instruction Type

## Student Mobility:

- *Not currently addressed*

# Agenda

- Arizona's Attendance Challenge
- Attendance Legislation
- AZ Chronic Absence Task Force

# Arizona Chronic Absence Task Force

May 2023 – September 2024

## Purpose:

- Supporting leaders on whole-school engagement strategies for reducing student absenteeism

## Considerations:

- Resources
- Evidence-based strategies
- Innovative solutions

# Arizona Chronic Absence Resource Guide

Coming September 2024

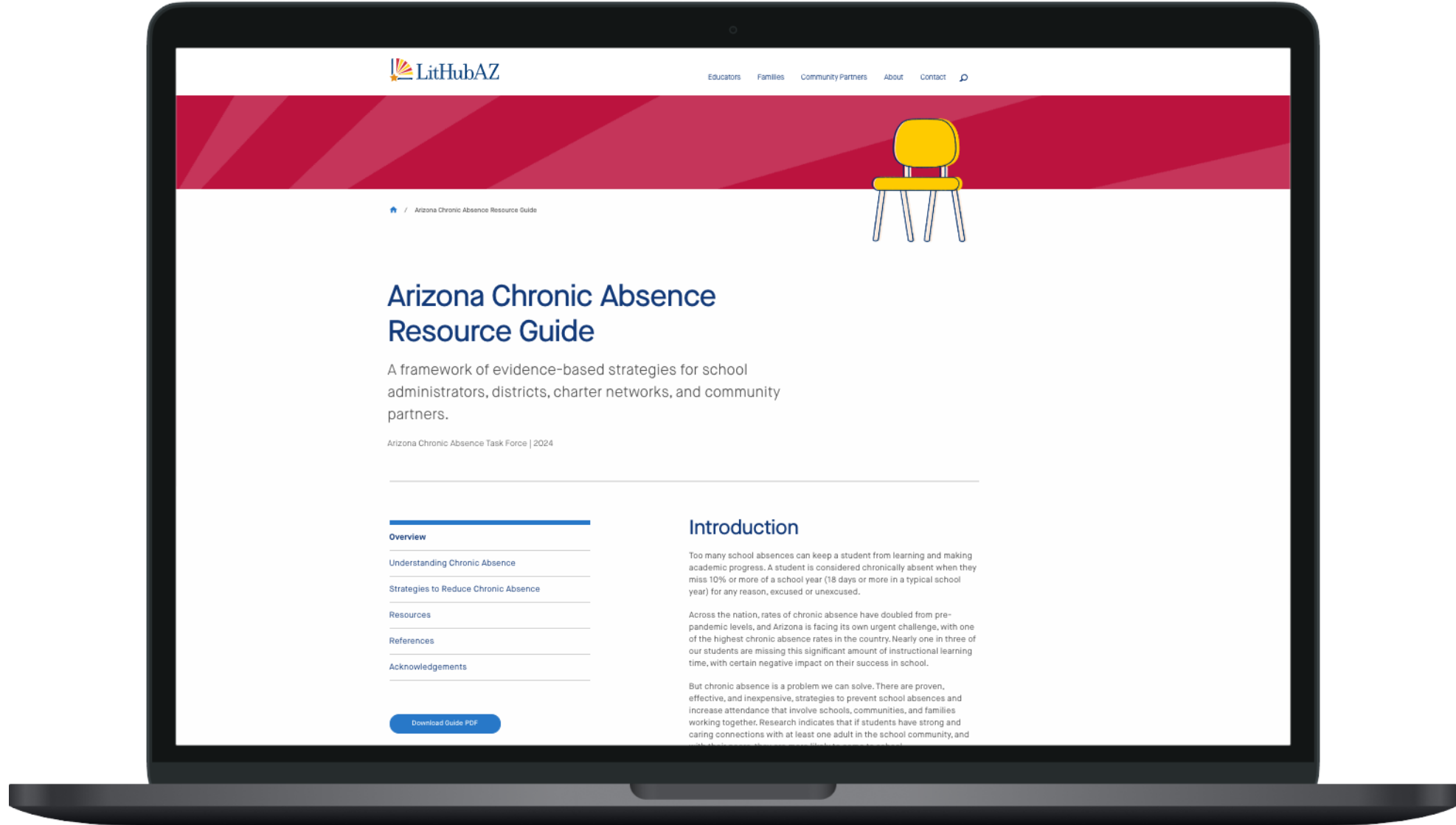
## ARIZONA CHRONIC ABSENCE RESOURCE GUIDE

A framework of evidence-based strategies for school administrators, districts, charter networks, and community partners



Arizona Chronic Absence Task Force





# Arizona Chronic Absence Resource Guide Strategies

TIER 1 Strategy	Relevant and engaging instruction and curriculum
<b>Example Practices:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Instruction is challenging but not overwhelming</li> <li>▪ Student work is displayed</li> <li>▪ Student-centered and project-based learning</li> <li>▪ Youth voice initiatives</li> <li>▪ Teachers show students how learning is connected to their lives</li> <li>▪ Provide STEM and career-focused opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence Level: Promising</b> <b>Capacity Level Required to Implement: Medium</b>	
<b>Spotlight:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Window Rock School District provided teacher training and support to make their instruction more engaging and relevant for students. Attendance has improved in elementary, middle, and high schools.</li> <li>▪ School districts throughout Pima County have partnered with <a href="https://www.communityshare.org">CommunityShare.org</a> to provide student-centered instruction and project-based learning. As a result, 96% of educators reported significantly increased student engagement.</li> </ul>

# Arizona Chronic Absence Resource Guide Strategies

## TIER 2 Strategy

## Individual student support

### Example Practices:

- Individualized success plan that addresses barriers to attendance with specific goals, incentivize improved attendance
- Individual behavioral and daily check-in support strategies, such as Check In/Check Out or having an attendance buddy
- Mental health services as needed
- Tutoring or mentoring as needed

Evidence Level: Strong

Capacity Level Required to Implement: Medium

### Spotlight:

- City of Phoenix Head Start uses [Attendance Works success plans](#) to target students at risk for chronic absence and meets with families to discuss and create plans. Attendance improved for students.
- [Check & Connect](#) is a proven mentoring strategy to reduce chronic absence for at-risk students.
- [Check In/Check Out \(CICO\)](#) is a popular Tier 2 intervention that promotes positive behavior.

# Arizona Chronic Absence Resource Guide Strategies

TIER 3 Strategy	Individualized supports
<p><b>Example Practices:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do one or more home visits to further investigate and understand the problem.</li> <li>▪ Individualized learning and success plan that is developed with student and family</li> <li>▪ Educational support champions/advocates</li> <li>▪ Tailored physical and mental health supports</li> <li>▪ 1:1 tutoring or mentoring</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evidence Level:</b> Emerging to Promising      <b>Capacity Level Required to Implement:</b> Medium to Heavy</p>	
<p><b>Spotlight:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FosterEd identifies an “education champion” for students in Pima, Maricopa, and Yavapai counties who are in the child welfare and justice systems to coordinate work with students and families. Attendance improved significantly.</li> </ul>

# Arizona Chronic Absence Resource Guide Spotlights



Baboquivari School District students can do laundry and shower at school if needed.



City of Phoenix Head Start uses attendance success plans to target students at risk for chronic absence.



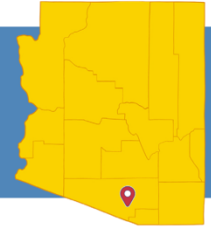
Tanque Verde USD focuses on building more academically-engaging classrooms and strengthening connections to students and families

# Arizona Chronic Absence Resource Guide Spotlights



## ARIZONA SPOTLIGHT

### Tanque Verde Unified School District



Tanque Verde Unified School District (TVUSD) took a three-fold approach to create solutions to address the root causes of chronic absence. The first element they chose to focus on was building more academically engaging classrooms. Collaboration is key to their approach. Teachers meet regularly to share expertise, learning and working together to improve their own teaching skills and to improve outcomes for students.

“ **You have to create a system and a culture where the entire school community focuses on building relationships. This takes ongoing work.**

- Superintendent Scott Hagerman

The second element TVUSD zeroed in on was recognizing the importance of positive relationships and strengthening the connection of students and their families to their school. The district trained staff, sports participants, and clubs on how to ensure everyone is respected, affirmed, and included. Finally, the district prioritized extracurricular programs knowing that participation in clubs and afterschool activities can often draw students to come to school. The district tracks student involvement in extracurriculars, identifying which students are not involved.

The district has reduced chronic absence significantly, with one TVUSD elementary school's rate going from 13.5% down to 4.8% from 2018-2021, and attributes this as a key factor in the 20% average increase in their third grade ELA scores.



[Read the full story in our online guide](#)

# Recommendations of the Arizona Chronic Absence Task Force

A high-level framework for the collaborative efforts required to get our students back to school and back on track.



1

**Build awareness and urgency with clear, compelling calls to action.**



2

**Collect actionable data to identify challenges and drive solutions.**

3

**Promote systematic, evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies.**

# Professional Development

## E-Learning Modules



**Statewide professional learning network offering three 90-minute sessions.**









**Increase use of resources and evidence-based strategies to reduce chronic absence.**



**350+ participants from 100+ public and charter schools trained.**

# Chronic Absence References

-  [Preschool Attendance in Chicago Public Schools](#)
-  [Factors Related to Early Childhood Literacy](#)
-  [Chronic Absence in Early Childhood Education](#)
-  [Using Data and Evidence to Tackle Chronic Absence](#)
-  [Family Engagement Can Help Ease Absenteeism in Schools](#)
-  [Missing Too Much School](#)



# Thank You

Lori Masseur  
Director of Early Learning

[ReadOnArizona.org](http://ReadOnArizona.org)

