new york city COMMUNITY schools

Cracking the Code on Chronic Absenteeism

Overview

July 24, 2019

NYC Department of Education

Your Presenters

Sarah Jonas
Executive Director,
Office of Community Schools at NYCDOE

Sarah D. Peterson
Director of Research and Development,
Office of Community Schools at NYCDOE

Objectives

- Understand chronic absenteeism and its impact on student achievement

- Present on New York City's strategy for attendance improvement called "Every Student, Every Day"

Presenting: **Sarah Peterson**

Interactive Activity

Turn to the person sitting next to you:

- Share one thing that made it difficult for you to get to school

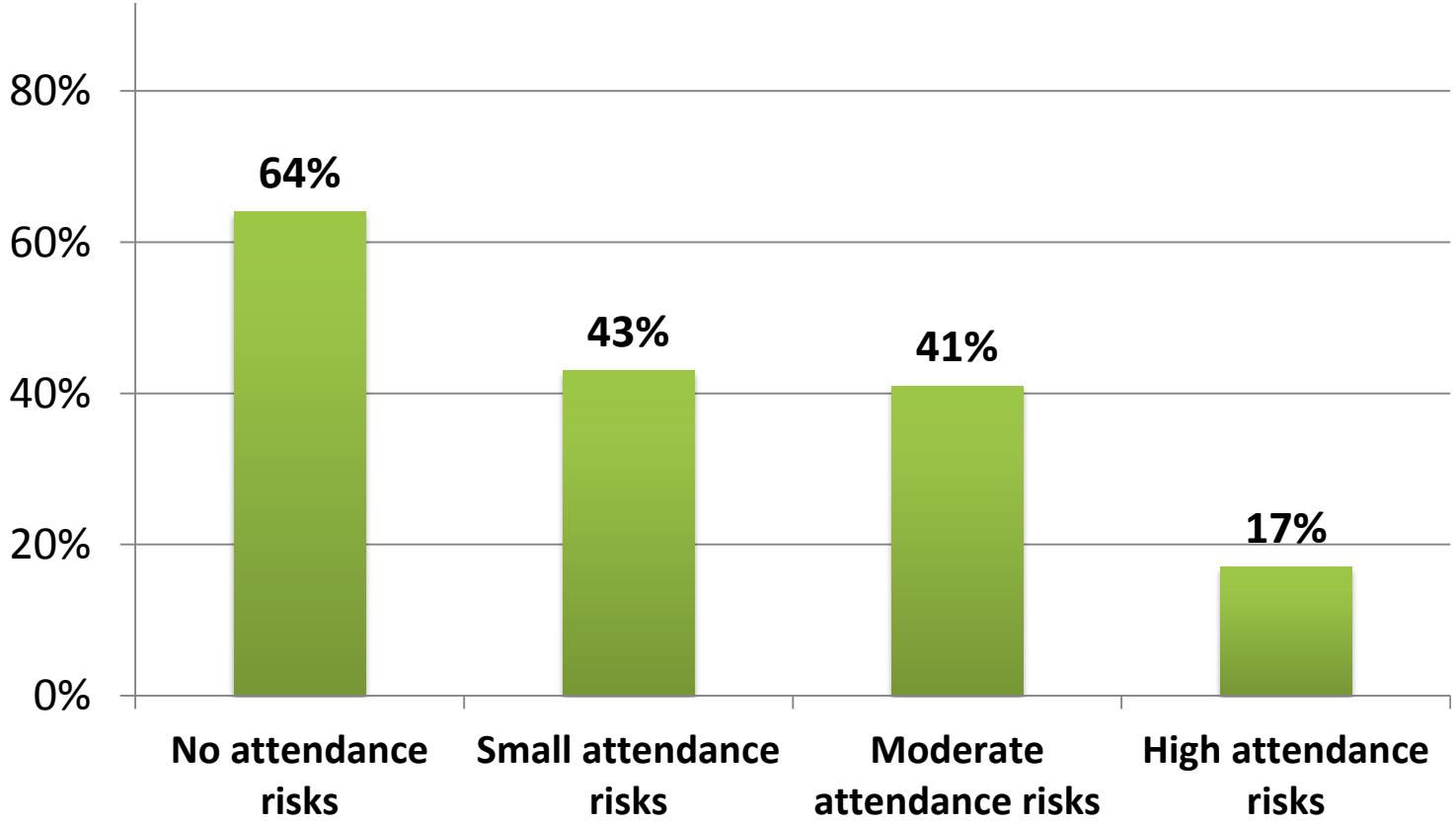
True or False?

Regular attendance in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten is less important than attendance in middle and high school.

Presenting: **Sarah Peterson**

FALSE. But most families believe true.

Students with poor attendance (or are chronically absent) in K & 1st grade are much less likely to read proficiently in 3rd grade.



What is Chronic Absenteeism?

Chronic absenteeism—**or missing at least 10 percent of school days in a school year for any reason, excused or unexcused**—*is a primary cause of low academic achievement and a powerful predictor of those students who may eventually drop out of school.*

Absent 2 days per month × **9 months of school** = **Chronic Absence**

Chronic Absence Is Easily Masked If We Only Monitor Missing Consecutive days

September				
M	T	W	TH	F
		X	X	

October				
M	T	W	TH	F
		X		
			X	

November				
M	T	W	TH	F
			X	
	X			

December				
M	T	W	TH	F
		X		
X				

January				
M	T	W	TH	F
X		X		

February				
M	T	W	TH	F
X	X			

March				
M	T	W	TH	F
			X	X

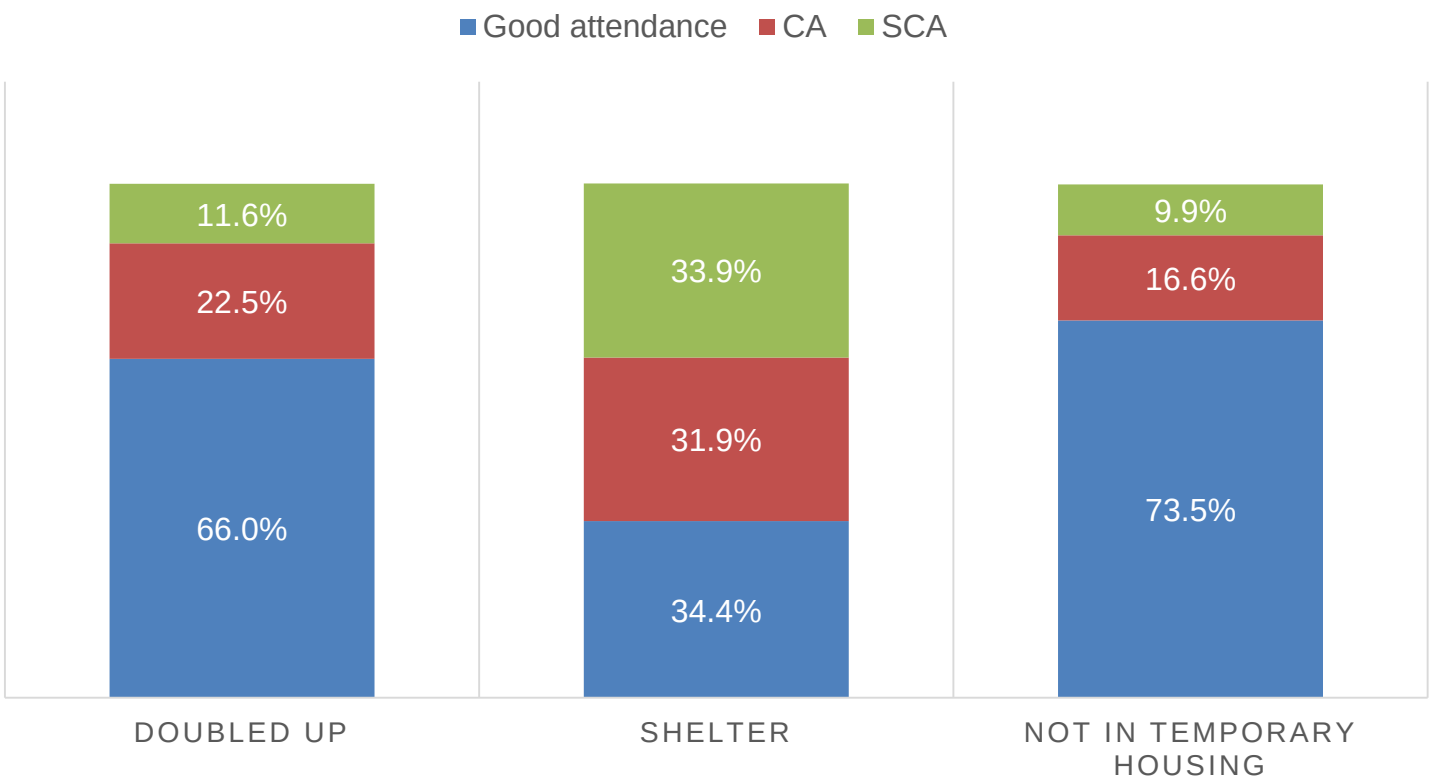
April				
M	T	W	TH	F
X				
			X	

May				
M	T	W	TH	F
	X			
			X	

June				
M	T	W	TH	F
	X	X		

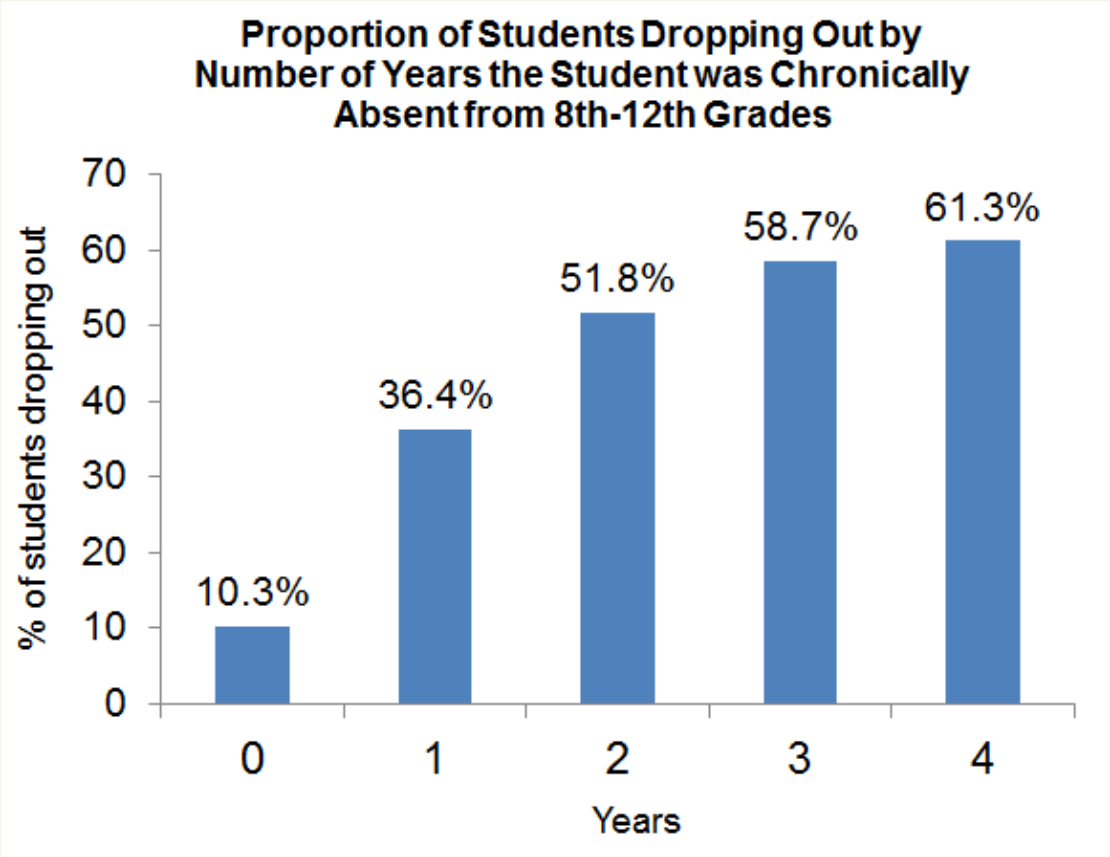
Chronic Absence = 18 days of absence = As Few As 2 days a month

Students in Shelters have Highest rates of Chronic Absenteeism



Source: IBO analysis of Department of Education data (2013-14). Students in grades K-12 only. New York City Independent Budget Office

The Effects of Chronic Absence on Dropout Rates Are Cumulative

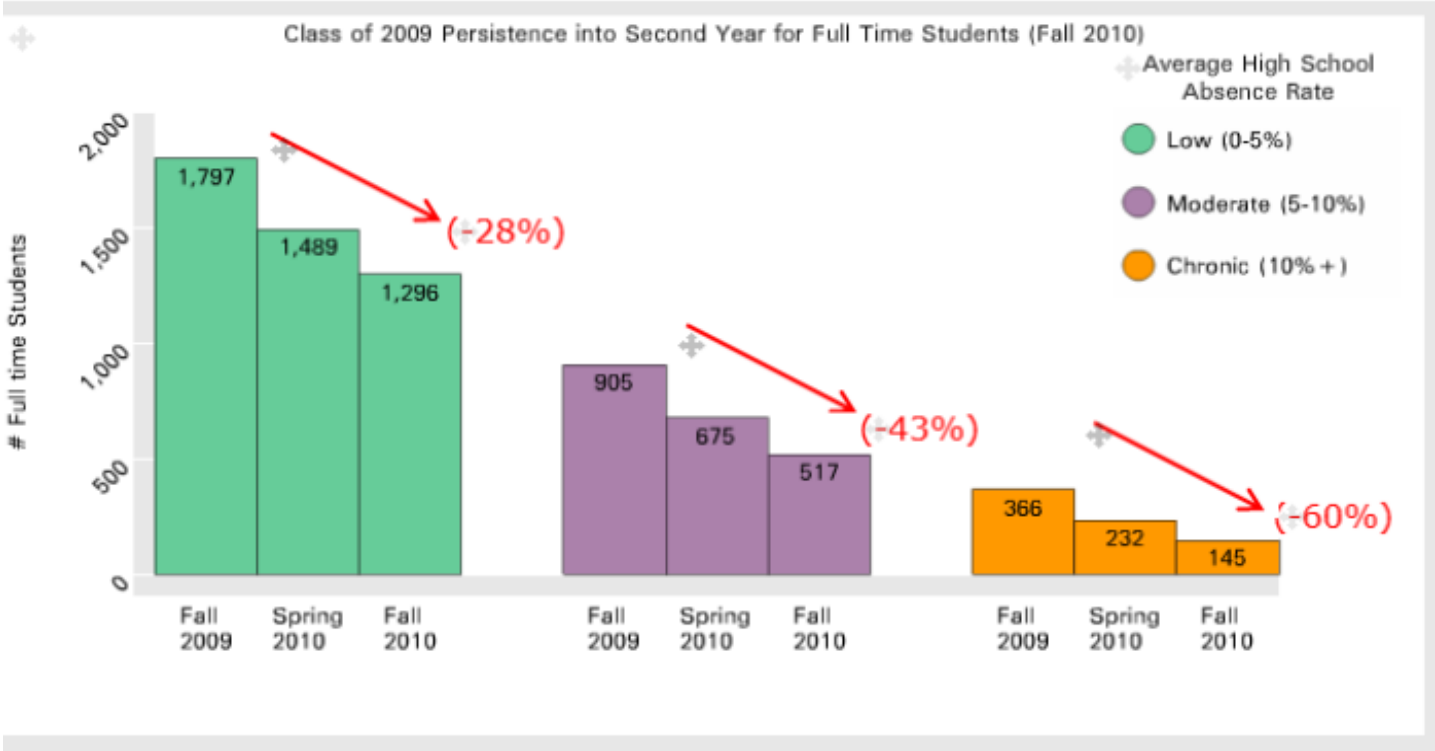


With every year of chronic absenteeism, a higher percentage of students dropped out of school.

http://www.utahdataalliance.org/downloads/ChronicAbsenteeismResearchBrief.pdf

Chronic Absence in High School Predicts Lower College Participation

In Rhode Island, only 11% of chronically absent high school students persisted into a 2nd year of college vs. 51% of those with low absences.



Rhode Island Data Hub: May 2014

True or False?

A school should aim for an overall average attendance rate of 90%.

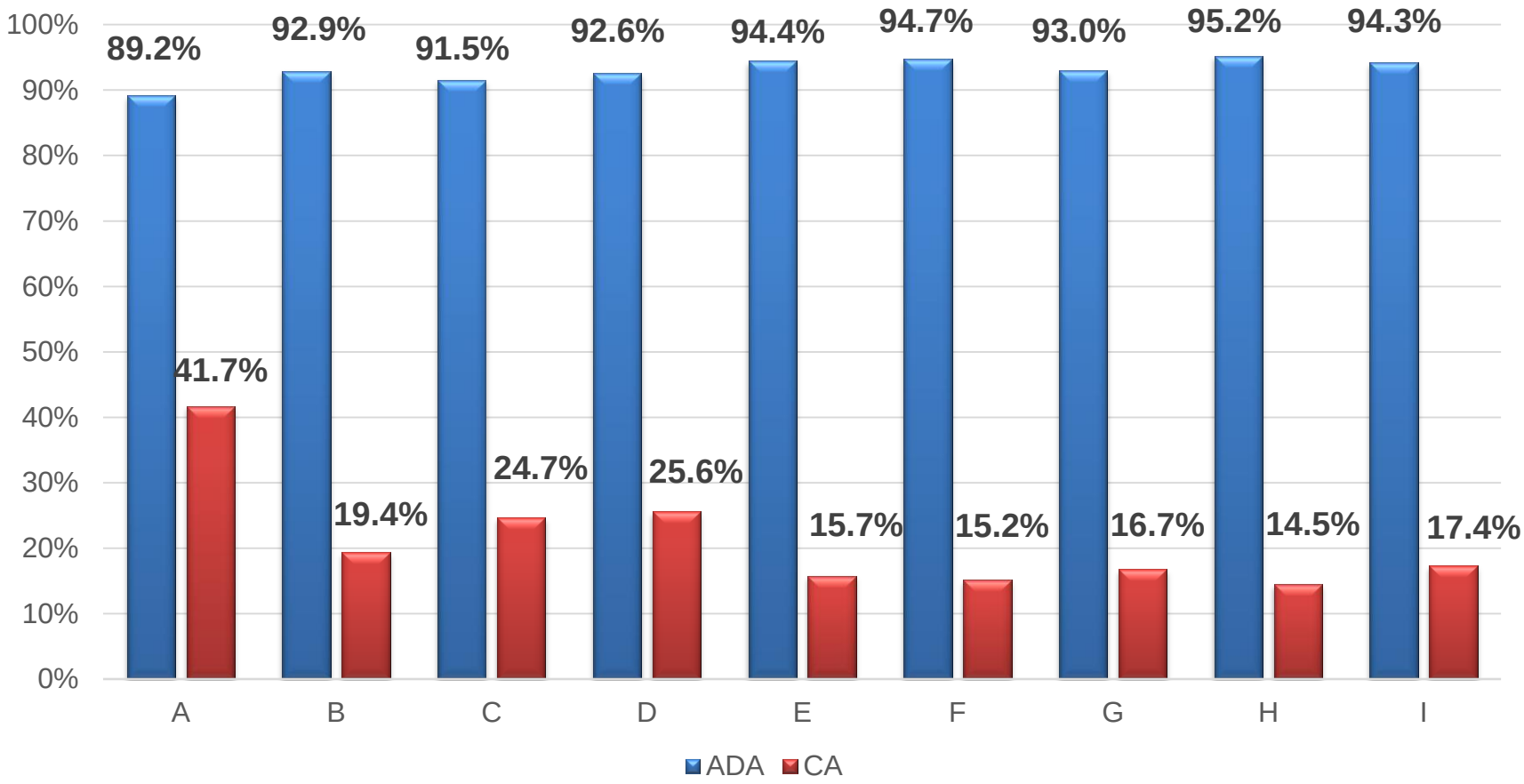
Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

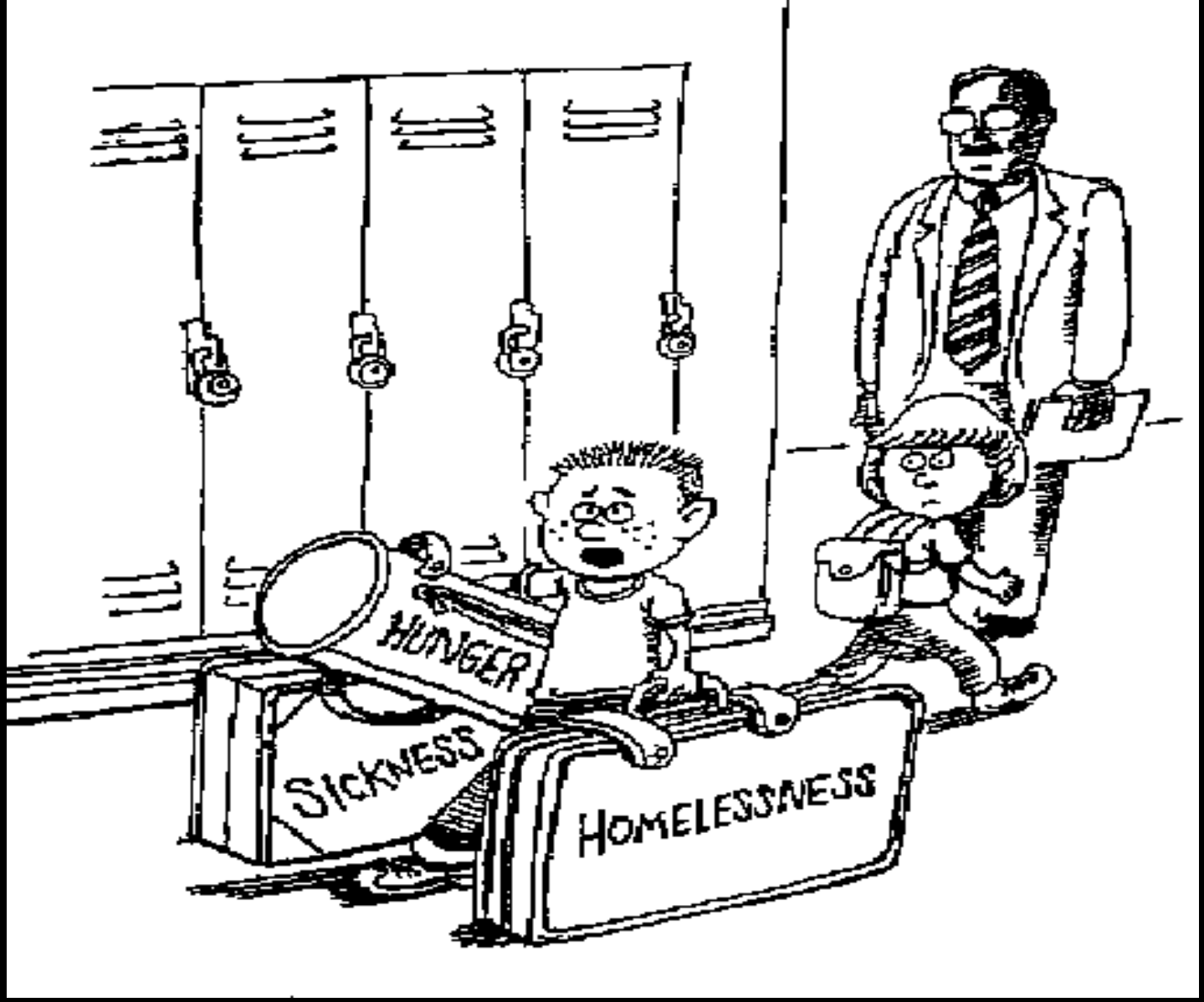
Most schools think 90% attendance OK

With 90% attendance for a school at the end of the year:

- The “average” student has missed one full month of school
- Has missed 110 hours of instructional time

Attendance Masks Chronic Absenteeism





"Could someone help me with these? I'm late for math class."

Scott Spencer

Three Categories of Chronic Absence

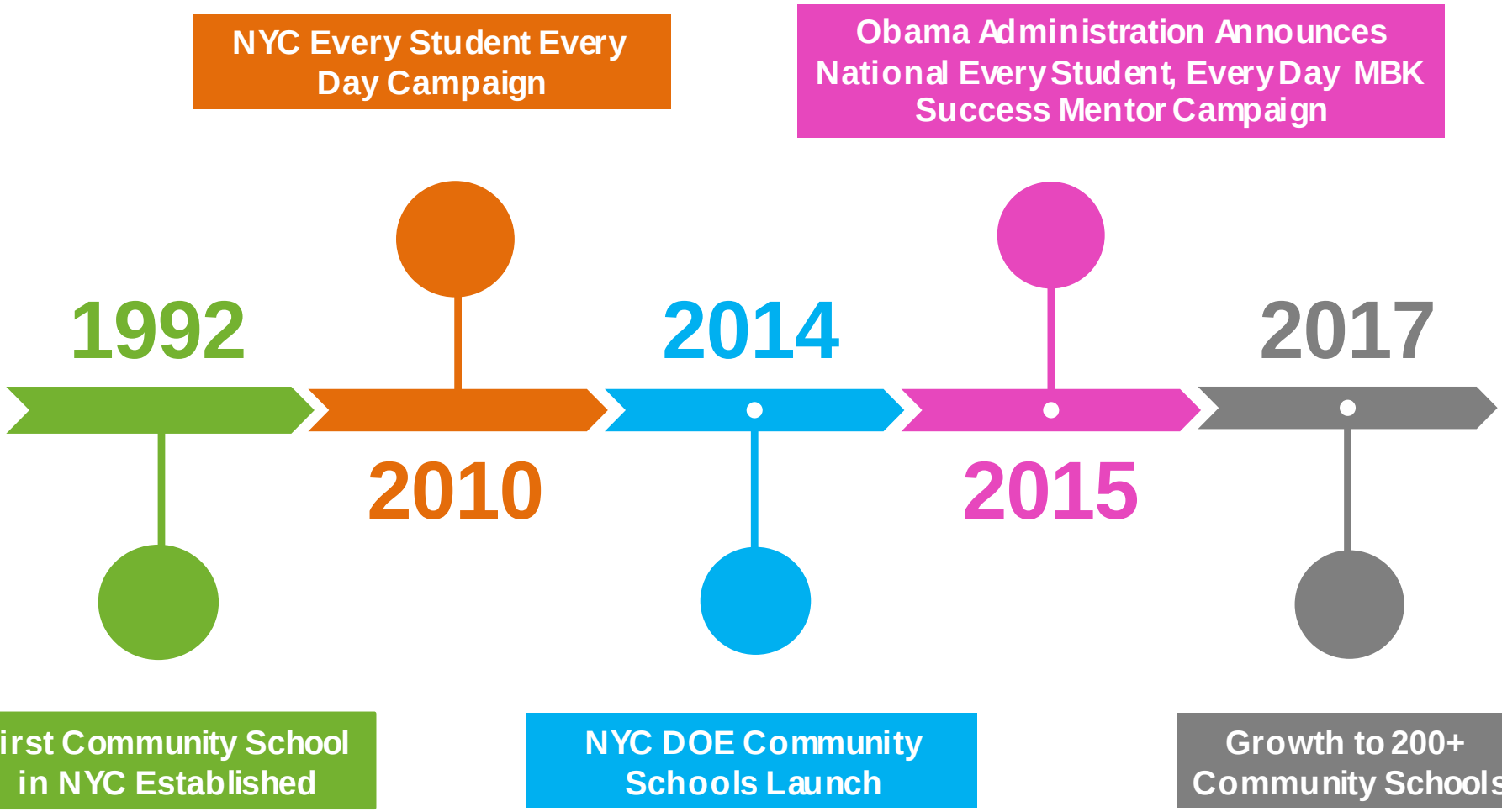
Can not	Will not	Do not
• Illness • Family responsibilities • Housing instability • Involvement with juvenile justice • Transportation	• Bullying • Unsafe • Harassment • Embarrassment	• Family doesn't see value in school • Student has something they'd rather be doing • Attendance only matters in older grades

Source: Balfanz and Byrnes, 2012

Every Student, Every Day

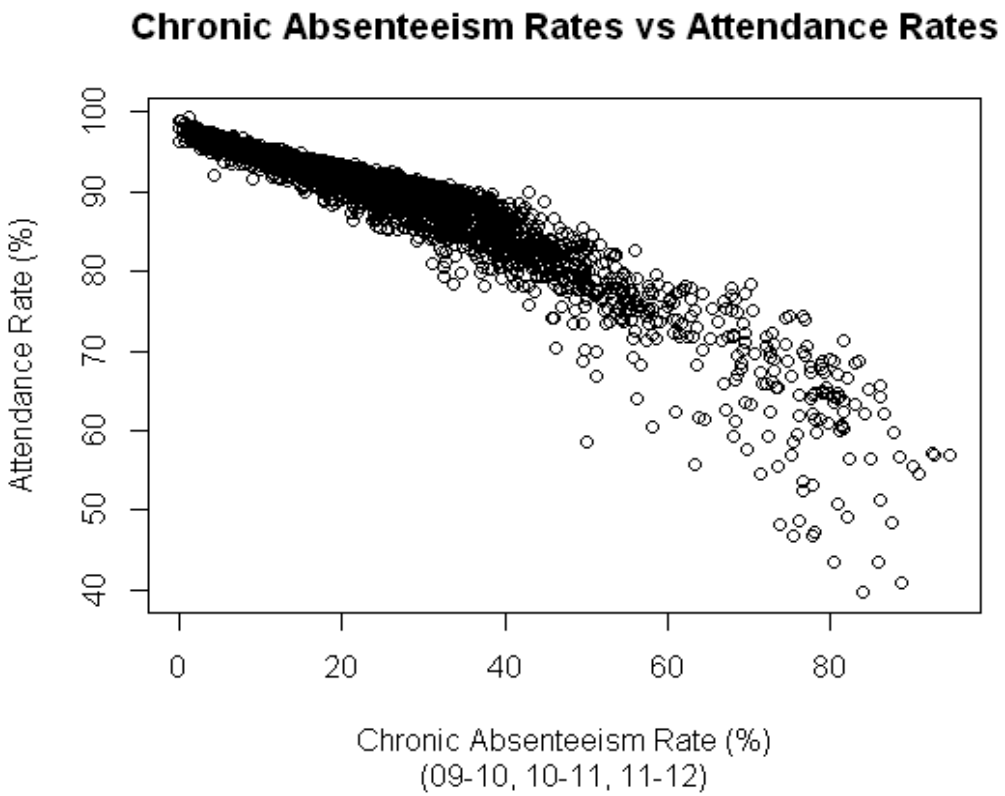
Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

The Response: Every Student, Every Day Campaign



Goal #1: Change Mindset

By focusing on chronic absenteeism, attendance was seen as increasing instructional time and no longer just an administrative task

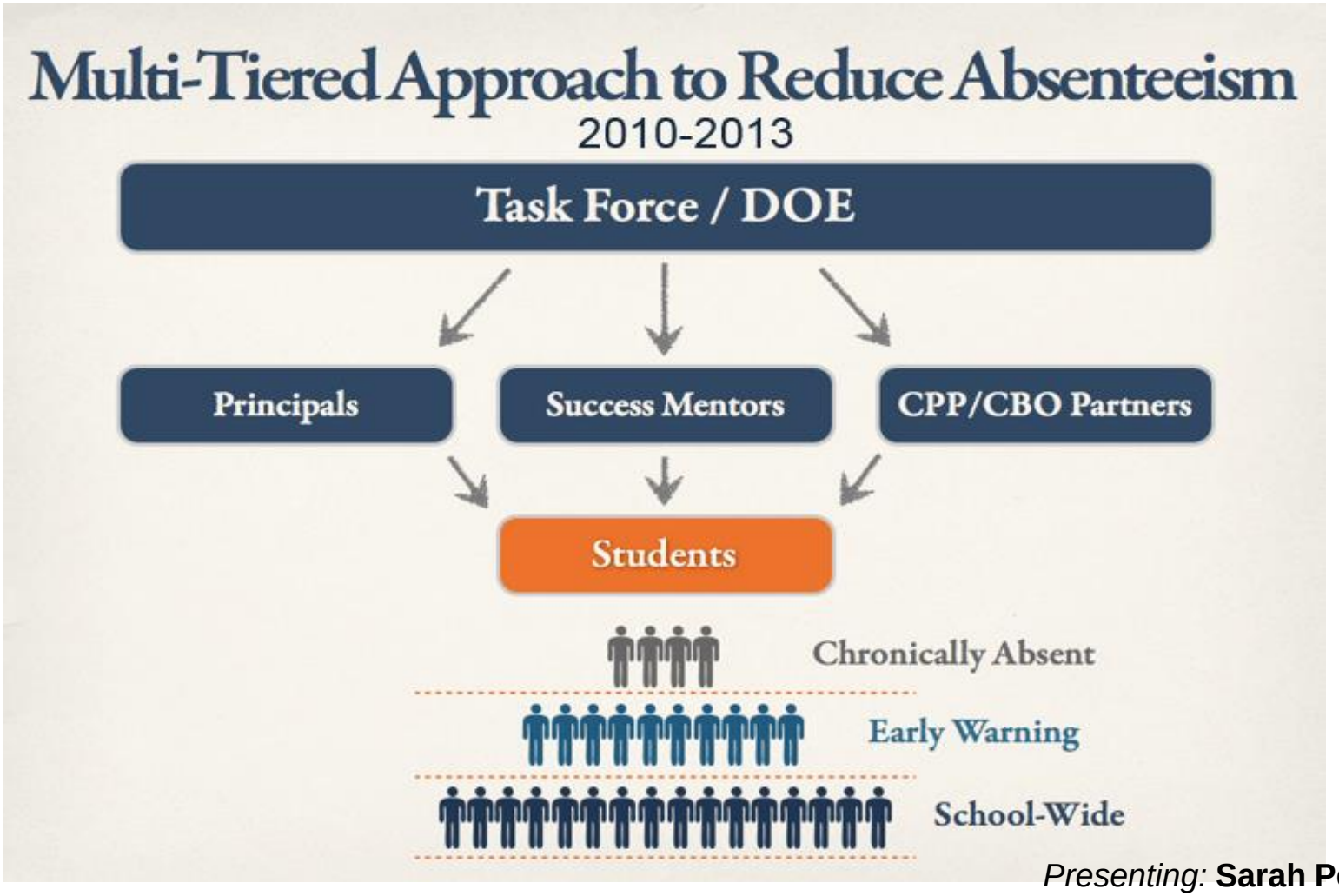


With chronic absenteeism at…

- 30% or more, school attendance rates have not exceeded 91.1%
- 20% or more, school attendance rates have not exceeded 93.5%
- 10% or more, school attendance rates have not exceeded 95.8%

GROCERY
IT'S 09 00 AM
DO YOU KNOW WHERE
YOUR KIDS ARE?
DETERGENT
If your kids miss 20 days or more in a school year, there's a good chance they won't graduate.
Get the help you need and find out how many days your child missed.
TEXT "SCHOOL" to 30364
or call 311.
NYC
Ad Council
Presenting: Sarah Jonas

Goal #2: Organize for Success



Presenting: **Sarah Peterson**

Goal #3: Use Data To Monitor Trends and Drive Impact of Interventions

Presenting: **Sarah Peterson**

Goal #4: Create Success Mentor Corps

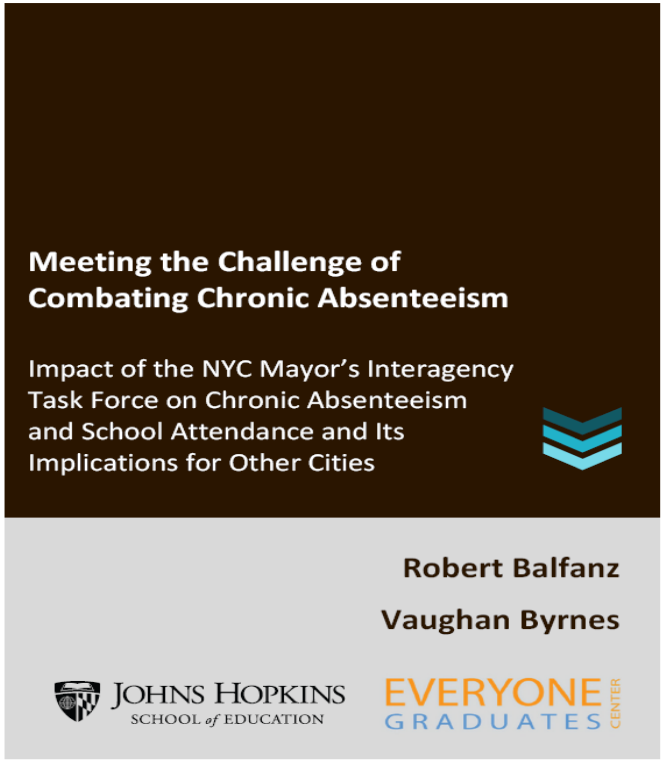
- Success Mentors are caring adults (or peers) who mentor chronically absent students to identify the barriers preventing them from attending school each day.

- Anyone can be a Success Mentor: teacher, principal, school safety agent.
- Low cost AND scalable.

Goal #5: Show Evidence of Impact

Robert Balfanz released third party study on effectiveness of the Task Force

Students with prior histories of chronic absenteeism with a Success Mentor gained nearly two additional weeks of school (9 days), which is educationally significant.



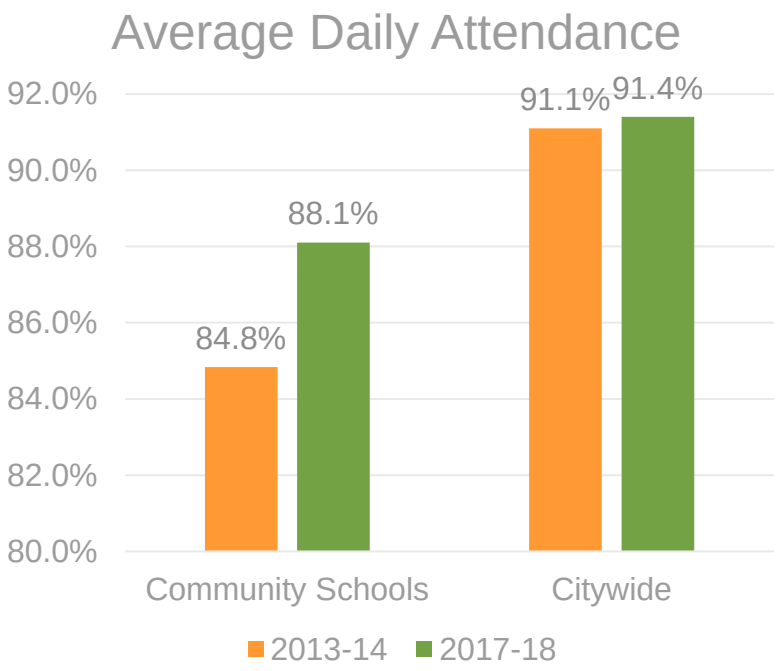
To read the report in full, please visit www.every1graduates.org

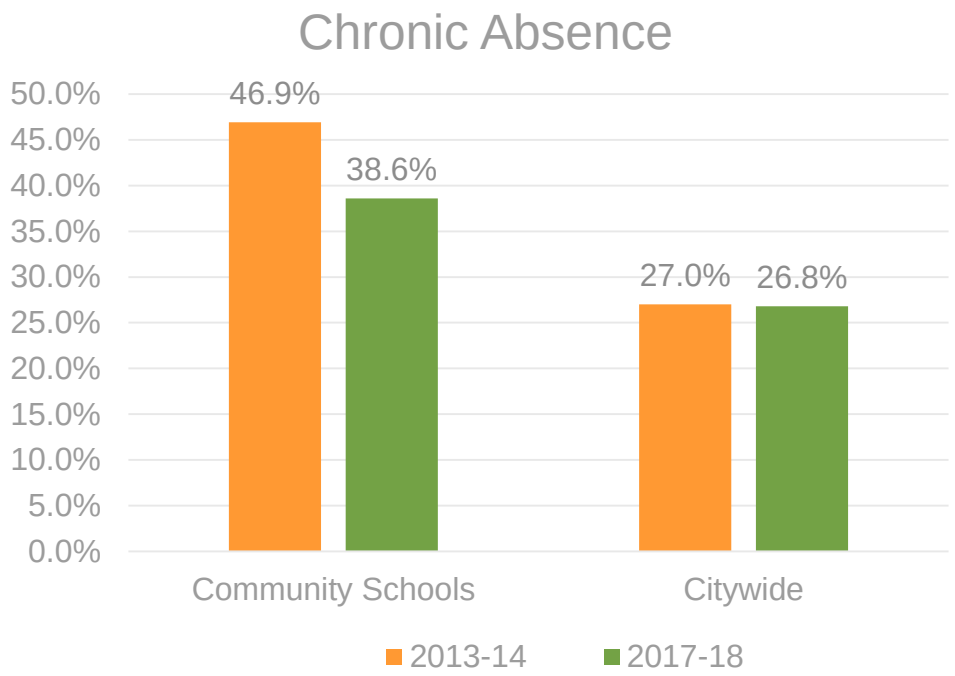
Presenting: **Sarah Peterson**

Results

In four years, Community Schools have increased average daily attendance rates by **3.3%** compared to citywide change of 0.3%.

In four years, Community Schools have decreased chronic absence rates by **8.3%** more than 40X the trend citywide of 0.2%.





Presenting: **Sarah Peterson**

To Learn More! Come to Our Workshop and Acquire Take-home *Every Student, Every Day* Toolkit for Combating Chronic Absenteeism Immediately

The *Every Student, Every Day* Toolkit includes:

- **Attendance Nudges** which include letters on attendance trends sent to families, raising attendance rates by 8% overnight.
- **User-friendly guide** on how to launch a low cost, evidenced-based Success Mentor Program for chronically absent youth, developed through NYC Community School Initiative; and
- **Free online social emotional activities and curricula** offered through FaceBook and the Yale Center for Social Emotional Intelligence.

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

Q&A

Workshop Session Objective: Acquire the Every Student, Every Day Toolkit

The ESED Toolkit contains three components:

I. Attendance letters to nudge families to action in your school or district

II. An evidenced-based Success Mentorship program to support chronically absent students in your school or district

III. Free online social emotional activities and curricula offered through FaceBook and the Yale Center for Social Emotional Intelligence

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

ESED Toolkit: Component I

Attendance "Nudge" - Mailings

Across Households, Heightened Awareness of Attendance Challenge

Presenting: **Sarah Peterson**

NYC Department of Education

Welcome NYC Parent or Guardian!

Email

Password

☐ I have read and agree to the Terms of Use.

SIGN IN

Forgot your password? Create account

Sign in to see your child's recent test scores, attendance records, and grades.

To set up an account you will need your child's Student ID number, which you can find on his or her report card, as well as an Account Creation Code, which your school will supply. You can also open an account by visiting your school-you will need a photo ID such as a driver's license or passport.

Kristen Morris
Grade: Kindergarten

Terms of Use | Privacy Notice

©2017 The New York City Department of Education

Presenting: **Sarah Peterson**

For Families, A Little Nudge in form of a "Mailing" Goes a Long Way

ABSENCES MATTER AND YOU CAN HELP

Dear Parent/Guardian of Johannes Demarzi,

Johannes has missed 23 days at (school name) this school year.

Missing just a few days each month can add up to a lot of lost learning time.

Excused and unexcused absences affect Johannes' learning.

Our classrooms are a better place when Johannes is present.

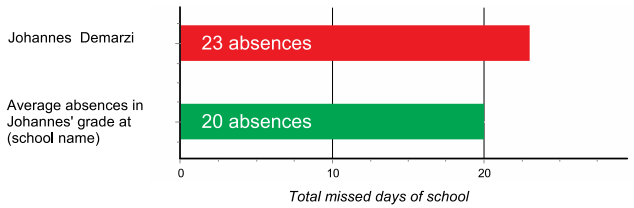
Thank you for continuing to help Johannes attend school as much as possible.

If you need assistance or have questions, please contact your principal or community school director.

Sincerely,

Carmen Fariña
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education

Johannes has missed 23 days this school year**



** This card is sent on behalf of New York City Department of Education by In Class Today. The number of absences listed above includes **excused and unexcused absences** between the first day of school and 3/29/2017. If you have questions, please email TBD or call (212) 555-5555. If you received this card in error, please disregard this one. We apologize for the inconvenience.

ABSENCES MATTER AND YOU CAN HELP

Dear Parent/Guardian of Todd Rogers,

Todd has missed 9 days at (school name) this school year.

Missing just a few days each month can add up to a lot of lost learning time.

Excused and unexcused absences affect Todd's learning.

Our classrooms are a better place when Todd is present.

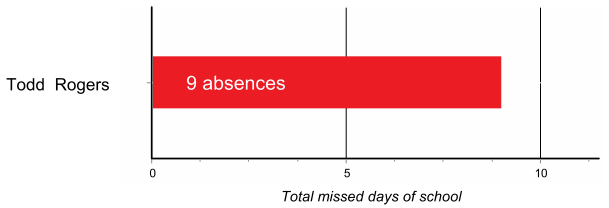
Thank you for continuing to help Todd attend school as much as possible.

If you need assistance or have questions, please contact your principal or community school director.

Sincerely,

Carmen Fariña
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education

Todd has missed 9 days this school year**



** This card is sent on behalf of New York City Department of Education by In Class Today. The number of absences listed above includes **excused and unexcused absences** between the first day of school and 3/29/2017. If you have questions, please email TBD or call (212) 555-5555. If you received this card in error, please disregard this one. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Presenting: **Sarah Peterson**

Impact of letters

- Philly: 30,000 Hhs, 10% reduction in chronic absenteeism
- Chicago: 20,000 Hhs, 11%
- San Mateo, CA (10 districts): 10,000 Hhs, 15%
- NYC: 8% increase in attendance following delivery of one round to 7000 families
- For more information: http://www.inclasstoday.com/

Presenting: **Sarah Peterson**

ESED Toolkit: Component II

Personalize the Student Experience of Attending School

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

Watch MBK Success Mentors #EveryStudentEveryDay Clip

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

What is a Success Mentor?

- Success Mentors are caring adults (or peers) who mentor chronically absent students to identify the barriers preventing them from attending school each day.

- Anyone can be a Success Mentor: teacher, principal, school safety agent.
- Low cost AND scalable.

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

Key Takeaways

- The power of success mentoring is trusting relationships between mentors and mentees.
- Success Mentors help uncover the reasons why their mentees are chronically absent, but they are not expected to have all the answers or solve the problem—this is the work of the school team!
- Success mentors are: cheerleaders, advocates, motivators – who encourage their mentees to attend school every day.

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

Success Mentors – The Day to Day

What do They Do?

- Morning meet and greet
- Phone call home every time student is absent and share a positive message
- Meet one-on-one and/or in small groups
- Recognize and celebrate even small successes

How do They Do it?

- Track students' attendance and improvement and identify supports and interventions

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

Does Success Mentoring Work?

- Students with prior histories of chronic absenteeism with a Success Mentor gained nearly two additional weeks of school (9 days), which is educationally significant.

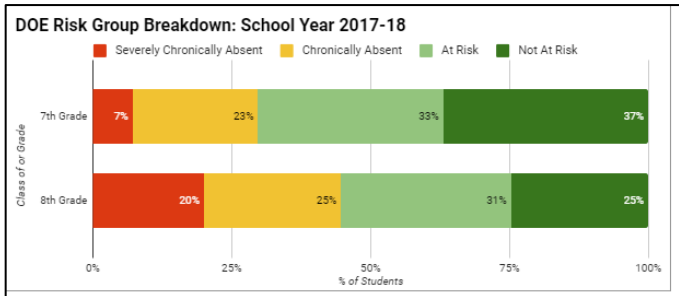
Refer to Johns Hopkins Study (by Robert Balfanz) on www.communityschools.nyc

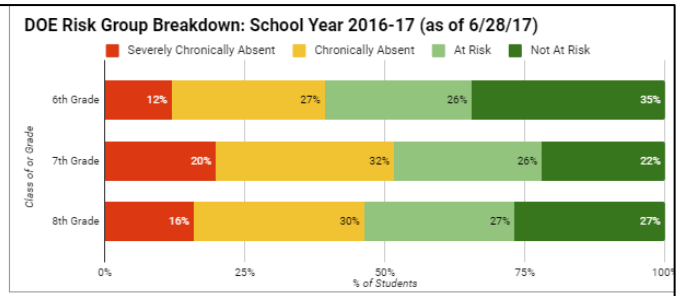
Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

Best Practice: Weekly Attendance Meeting

Best Practice: Use Data to Identify Students
Tools: New Visions Attendance Heat Map and Portal





Current School Year Summary

	Official Rate	Active Students													
	Attd YTD: Official School Rate		Attd YTD: Active Students Only		Less than 90% YTD		Severely Chronically Absent (Less than 80% YTD)		Chronically Absent (80-90% YTD)		At Risk (90-95% YTD)		Not At Risk (95+% YTD)		Lateness YTD	
	# Students	% Attd	# Students	% Attd	# students	% students	# students	% students	# students	% students	# students	% students	# students	% students	# days	% of year
Total	222	88.00%	169	89%	63	30%	23	14%	40	24%	54	32%	52	33%	12	13%
7th Grade	93	90.11%	84	91%	25	30%	6	7%	19	23%	28	33%	31	37%	17	10%
8th Grade	129	85.54%	85	87%	38	45%	17	20%	21	25%	26	31%	21	25%	25	15%

Bear, Boo-Boo

Student Details

Student ID: 846779577 Class of: 2020 Grade Level: 09 Offi

Guidance Counselor: None Advisor: None

Planned Diploma Type: LOCAL Planned Graduation Date: JAN 2016

Regents

Passed of 5 Local: 0
Passed of 5 Regents: 0
Passed of 9 Advanced: 0
Needed to be On-Track: 4

Credits

Courses Failing:
GPA: 56.06
Credits Earned: 5.5
Credit Gaps: -19.5

Atter

SY2018
SY2017
SY2016
SY2015

Current Program

Subject	Course Code	Course Name	Teacher	Credits	MP1	MP2	MP3	Final	Priority

Credit Details

Subject	Earned	Sched	Earned & Sched	Credit Gaps
ELA Core	0		0	-4
Math	0		0	-4
Global	1		1	-3
US	0		0	0
Part Gov	0		0	0
Econ	0		0	0
Total Sci	0		0	-4
Physical Sci	0		0	-2
Life Sci	0		0	-2
LOTE	1		1	-1
CTE	0		0	0
Art	0		0	0
PE	1.5		1.5	-0.5
Health	0		0	-1
Total	**5.5**		**5.5**	**-19.5**

Regents Details

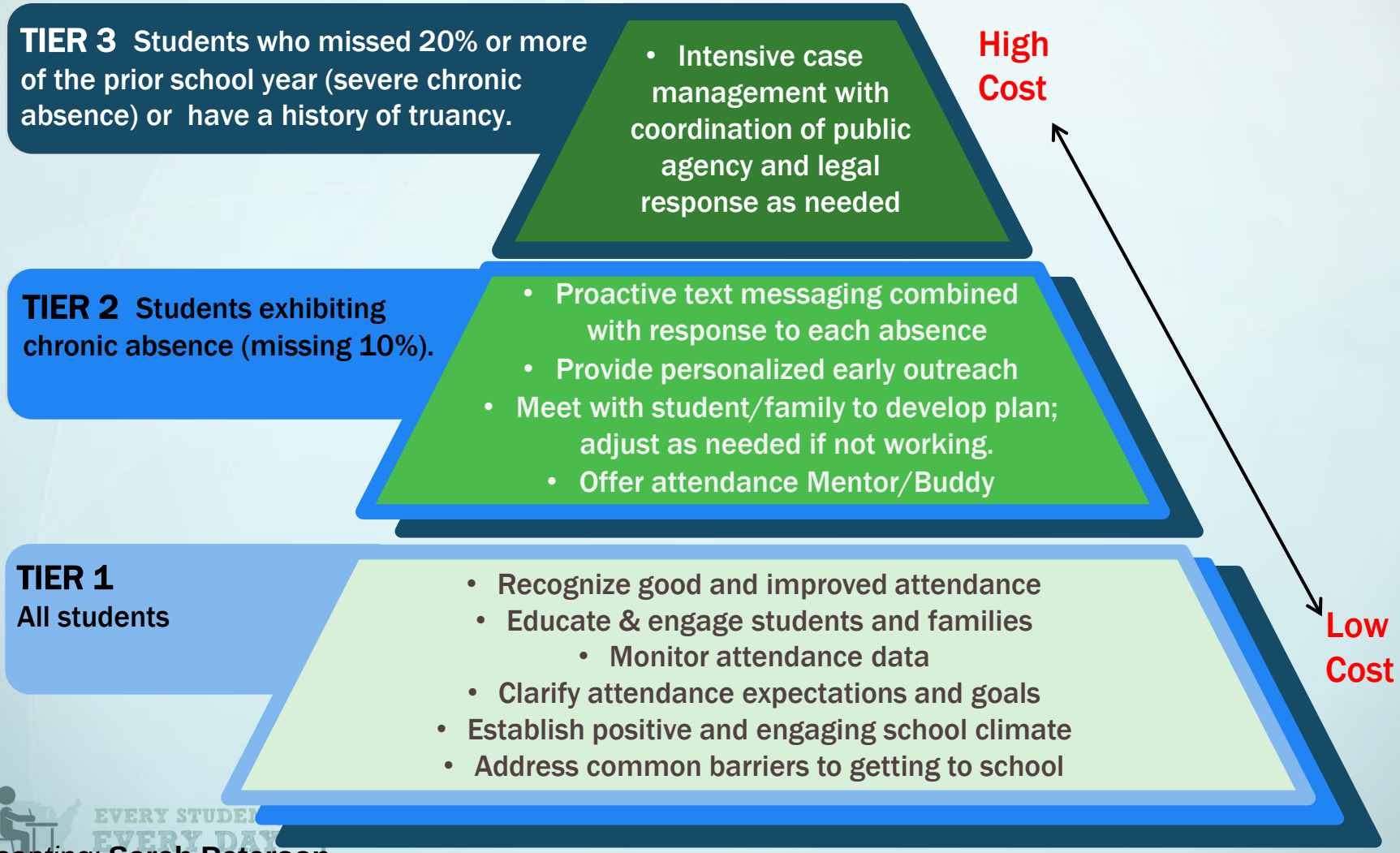
Subject	Max Exam	Max Score	Attpts	Plan
4 Required				
ELA	CC ELA		0	
Math	CC Alg		0	Jan 2018
Science	Liv Env		0	Jan 2018
SS	Global		0	
+1 Option (Must pass one)				
2nd Math	CC Geom		0	
2nd Science	Earth		0	
2nd SS	US		0	
Advanced Regents (Must pass all above as well)				
3rd Math	CC Trig		0	
LOTE	LOTE		0	

Student ID	Student Name	Grade	Official Class	IEP	ELL	Attd. YTD	Period Days Late: YTD	Attd. SY16-17	Days Late: SY16-17	SOMS: Principal Suspensions YTD	Superintendent Suspensions YTD	ELA PR: 2017	Math PR: 2017	Growth Score 2017	Math Growth Score 2017	Intervention L
242412360	Winnifred Mcgown	4	401	Yes*	No	87%	3%	94%				1.84				
242412363	Riley Mcnemar	5	502	No	No	100%	0%	99%				2.24	1.96			
242412366	India Metzler	5	501	No	No	97%	3%	88%				4.09	2.81	94	43	
242412373	Maxwell Strope	5	501	No	No	97%	81%	89%				1.93	1.65	57	1	
242412383	Manie Figueroa	5	501	No	No	100%	0%	95%				2.24	1.83	94	60	
242412384	Tennie Pulsifer	5	502	No	No	97%	0%	97%				1.96	1.96	45	89	
242412387	Jaleesa Mcphearson	5	502	No	No	100%	0%	99%				4.02	2.94	97	87	
242412390	Oren Roosa	4	401	Yes	No	100%	0%	99%				2.31	2.03			
242412392	Adelina Mosier	4	401	Yes*	No	100%	0%	97%				1.77	1.81			
242412399	Enedina Bera	4	401	No	No	100%	0%	98%				1.84	2.66			
242412400	Princess Leiter	4	401	No	No	100%	0%	98%				1.94	3.12			
242412402	Shandi Serpa	4	401	No	No	94%	39%	85%				2.62	3.69			
242412409	Sheryll Henkel	5	501	No	No	100%	3%	96%				2.82	1.87	69	10	
242412412	Liza Nims	5	501	No	No	97%	0%	100%				2	2.29	83	84	
242412415	Coletta Sin	4	401	No	No	90%	32%	80%				3.29	2.28			
242412426	Cindie Corr	5	501	No	No	97%	0%	95%				2.64	3.26	15	16	
242412428	Olene Baeza	4	401	No	No	87%	42%	88%				3	1.78			
242412438	Belinda Sheffield	5	501	No	No	94%	0%	92%				3.04	2.74	88	94	
242412439	Clarita Northam	5	502	No	No	100%	3%					1.96	2.08	53	69	
242412448	Trinh Willett	5	502	No	No	94%	0%	96%				1.89	1.87	36	25	
242412449	Amie Redfern	4	401	No	No	100%	0%	99%				2.31	4.05			
242412452	Jodi Feltmann	4	401	No	No	100%	3%	99%				1.84	1.57			
242412455	Margurite Steger	4	401	No	No	100%	0%	98%				2.72	3.81			

Presenting: **Sarah Peterson**

What Contributes to Chronic Absence?

Lack of Multi-Tiered and Multi-Sector Response



ESED Toolkit: Component III

Free Online SEL Curricula for Success Mentors, Educators and Practitioners

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

HOW DO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FEEL IN SCHOOL?

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

TOP 3 FEELINGS

TIRED

BORED

70% of the time

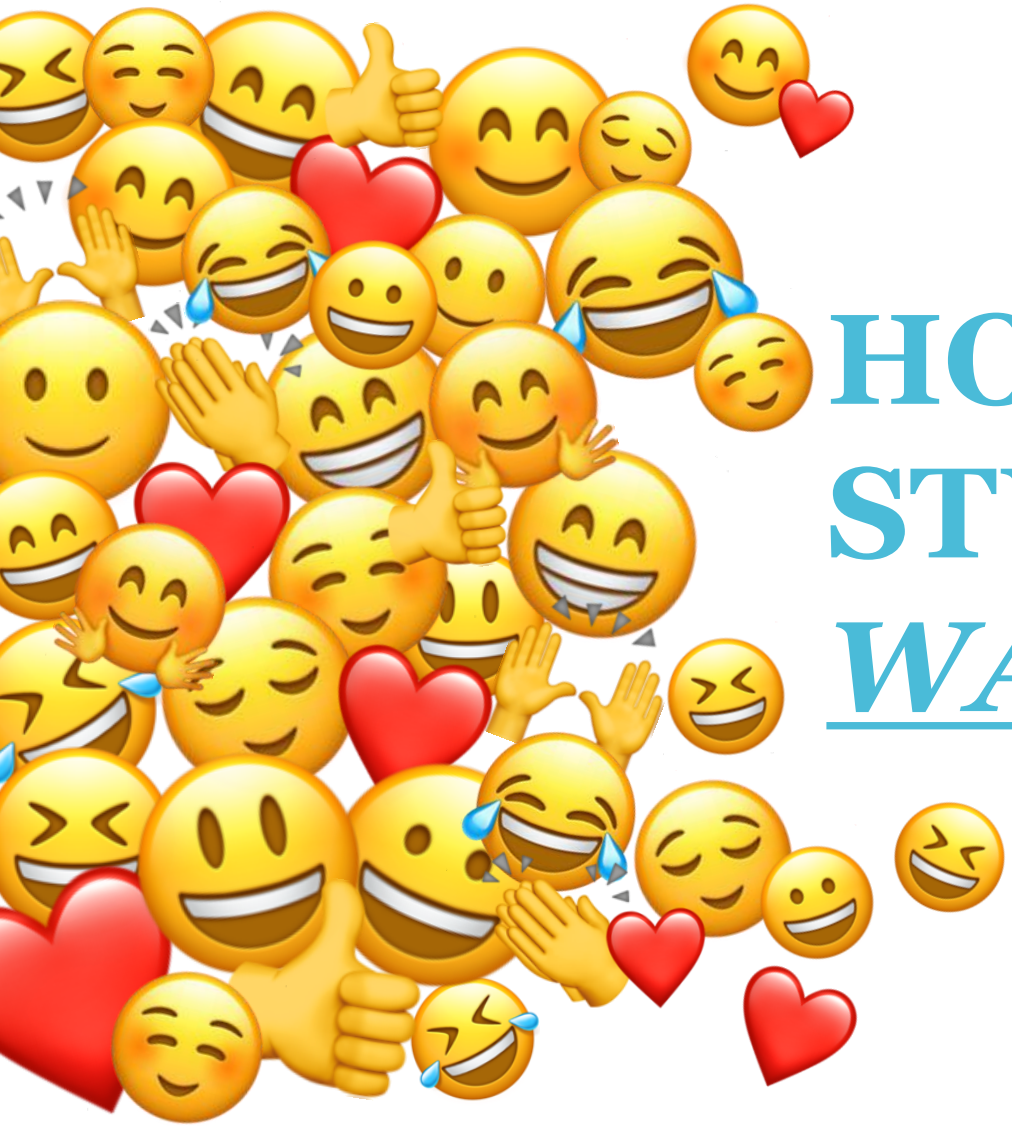
STRESSED

80% of the time

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

Among the
Top 10 emotions
8 WERE NEGATIVE
and
2 WERE POSITIVE

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**



HOW H.S. STUDENTS *WANT TO FEEL*

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

Meeting Activities

- A critical part of serving as a Success Mentor is meeting one on one or in small groups with your mentee.
- Last year, AmeriCorps Success Mentors reported they met individually with mentees 90% of the time.
- To guide these meetings, use activities on inspired.fb.com

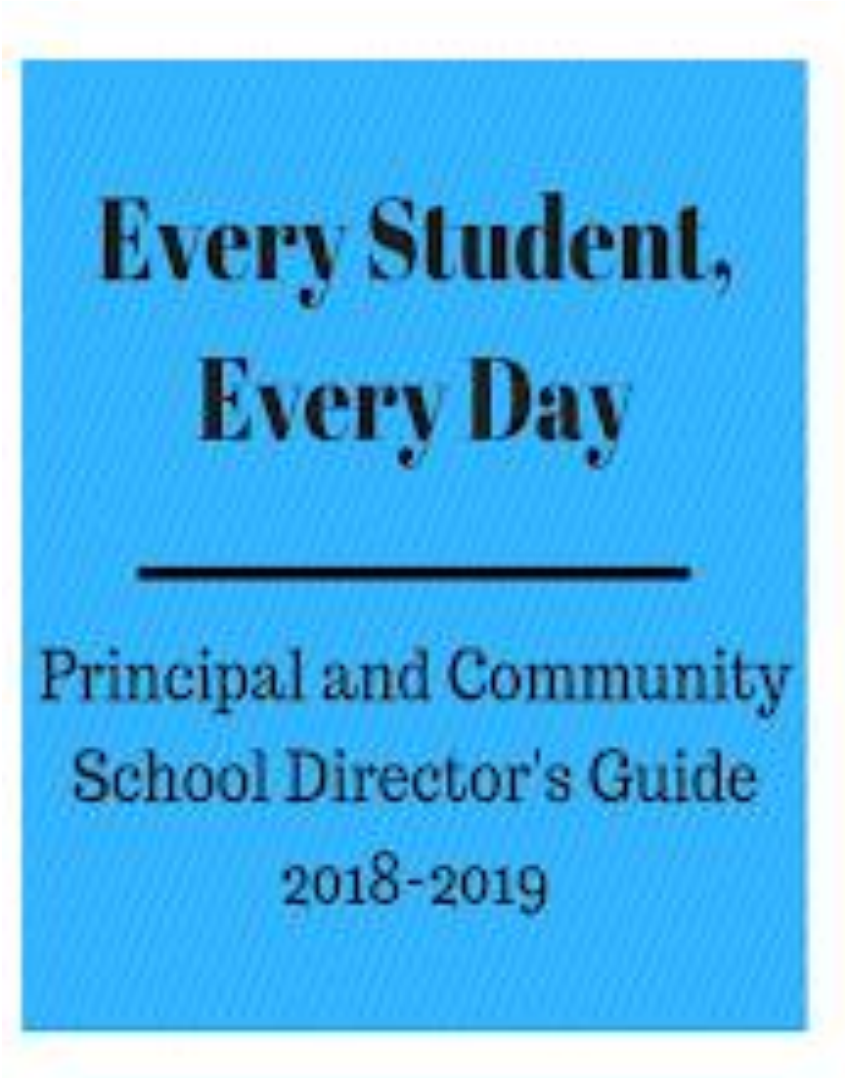
Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**

One Kind Word

What's an example of a kindness that was shown to you? How did it feel? What was the impact?

How can you pay that kindness forward?

Every Student Every Day Guide
Available at www.communityschools.nyc



Presenting: **Sarah Peterson**

Visioning Activity

- It is December 2019
- You have successfully implemented Every Student, Every Day Toolkit in your school or district.
- The press is keen to hear your story.
- How will you share in “one minute” how the *Every Student, Every Day* campaign is different from how your school or district approached attendance previously?
- Turn to your teams. Pick one reporter.
- Reporters will come to the podium, answer the question while simulating speaking to the press.

What's your personal call to action?

- Write down one concrete action that you will take back at your school or district to raise awareness of chronic absenteeism and improve supports for students.

Additional Resources

- **Council on Children and Families: Every Student Present**
  www.ccf.ny.gov
- **NYC Community Schools Website**
  http://www.communityschools.nyc
- **Attendance Works**
  http://www.attendanceworks.org
- **Strengthening Schools by Strengthening Families**
  http://www.newschool.edu/milano/nycaffairs/publications_schools_strengthening_schools.aspx
- **MENTOR NY http://www.mentornewyork.org**
- **inspired activities and teams**
  http://www.inspired.fb.com

Presenting: **Sarah Jonas**