

I.D.v
Attendance Rates

Complete the table by filling in data from the 2007 Maryland Report Card--Attendance Rate.

Note: The state satisfactory standard for attendance is 94%.

Table 5.1: Attendance Rates						
Subgroups by Level		2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
All students	Elementary	94.5	94.9	94.5	95.2	95.5
	Middle	92.9	91.8	92.8	92.7	92.7
	High	94.5	91.0	90.8	90.9	92.2
American Indian/Alaskan Native	Elementary	-	-	-	-	-
	Middle	-	-	-	-	-
	High	-	-	-	-	-
Asian/Pacific Islander	Elementary	94.8	94.4	95.2	88.2	95.4
	Middle	98.6	94.2	-	-	-
	High	-	96.2	95.7	99.1	-
African American	Elementary	95.4	95.5	95.2	95.8	96.1
	Middle	93.8	94.1	93.9	93.4	92.8
	High	94.9	91.8	91.3	91.4	93.1
White (Not of Hispanic Origin)	Elementary	93.8	94.3	93.7	94.7	94.8
	Middle	92.2	89.8	91.9	92.3	92.7
	High	94.2	90.2	90.4	90.3	91.6
Hispanic	Elementary	92.9	95.2	95.6	95.0	96.0
	Middle	81.6	89.3	91.0	89.3	91.5
	High	-	85.9	85.0	90.3	90.1
Free/Reduced Meals (FARMS)	Elementary	94.3	94.7	94.3	95.0	95.3
	Middle	92.1	90.9	91.7	91.6	91.2
	High	94.0	90.1	90.0	90.1	91.2
Special Education	Elementary	93.7	94.8	94.1	94.6	94.9
	Middle	92.8	90.3	92.0	92.0	91.6
	High	93.3	88.1	87.8	86.4	88.9
Limited English Proficient (LEP)	Elementary	95.4	96.9	95.9	93.9	95.6
	Middle	85.7	92.5	90.2	85.9	91.7
	High	96.7	-	-	-	-

Attendance Rates (continued)

School Level Attendance Rates

School	2005	2006	2007
DIS	94.4	95.6	96.3
EES	95.5	95.7	95.0
GES	95.5	95.0	95.9
PAES	94.5	95.3	95.5
WES	93.7	95.2	95.1*

School	2005	2006	2007
SIS (Grades 6&7)	92.4	92.7	93.4
CHS (Grades 9-12)	91.9	90.8	90.1
8 th grade	94.7	93.0	90.7
WHS(Grades 9-12)	90.2	90.9	93.6
8 th grade	93.0	92.6	92.1

*Woodson Elementary School (WES) was a new school in 2007, percentages prior to 2007 are an average of Whittington Primary School and Marion Sarah Peyton Elementary School.

A. PROGRESS IN INCREASING ATTENDANCE RATES BY GRADE BAND AND SUBGROUPS:

1. All ELEMENTARY subgroups and the aggregate increased the percent attendance and exceeded the AMO target in 2007.

Aggregate attendance at the elementary level has exceeded the standard every year since 2002 with a rate of 95.5% in 2007. All elementary schools exceeded the state satisfactory standard of 94% in 2007. Four of the seven represented subgroups (African American, White, FARMS, and Special Education) have increased steadily since 2005. The largest gain in 2007 was made by the Asian subgroup (7.2%) followed by the LEP (1.7%), and the Hispanic (1.0%). African American students at the elementary level had the highest rate of attendance at 96.1%, a .3 % increase over 2006. All groups have already met the 2014 target of 94% and have shown they can continue to meet this goal by consistently exceeding it.

2. Three of the six MIDDLE level subgroups increased the percent of attendance in 2007.

While the aggregate for the middle level remained the same as 2006 (92.7%), the White (.5%), Hispanic (2.2%) and LEP (5.8%, the largest gain) subgroups experienced an increase in 2007. The White subgroup has increased steadily since 2004. Further investigation indicates the Intermediate School (grades 6 & 7) had an attendance rate of 93.4% which meets the middle level target. However, when combined with the 8th grade from our high schools, that is not the case.

3. All HIGH SCHOOL subgroups, except Hispanic, including the aggregate have increased the percent attendance in 2007.

The high school aggregate has increased steadily since 2005, with the largest increase (1.3%) in 2007. Special education had the largest subgroup increase (2.5%) over 2006. The African American (1.7%), White (1.3%), and FARMS (1.1%) subgroups also experienced increases. Both the African American and FARMS subgroups have increased every year since 2005. The African American subgroup had the highest percent attendance (93.1%) in 2007, and has consistently been the highest each year since 2004. Washington High School had a rate of 93.6%, an increase of 2.7% over 2006 and the highest rate for the secondary schools.

B. IDENTIFY PROGRAMS, PRACTICES, OR STRATEGIES AND THE RELATED RESOURCES THAT APPEAR RELATED TO THE PROGRESS

1. Increased Services to Students

In an effort to improve communications and effectiveness, a flowchart of services was designed to indicate what interventions would be used by specific staff at identified attendance points. Students with attendance difficulties were identified earlier and interventions were used by both the Learning Support Staff and School Counselors. In addition, referrals were made to community agencies to assist students and their families with overcoming the barriers to satisfactory school attendance. The importance and benefits of being in school were also stressed with both students and parents. A mentoring program, "Project Achieve" allowed for a college student to be assigned to identified at risk students. The mentor encouraged positive school performance and provided tutoring on a weekly basis.

Specific Master Plan Action Steps are:

- 1.1.27 Maintain learning support process for identifying the appropriate services and strategies for struggling students.
- 2.6.2.3 Implement the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative grant that links county agencies and institutions to assure safe, drug free, and conducive to learning environments in the schools.
- 5.2.11 Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the Learning Support Specialist role.

2. Revised County Attendance Policy & Procedures

The Somerset County Public Schools attendance policy is reviewed every year. In 2006, the policy which was revised during the previous year was in effect. The policy required students to make up time after exceeding the unexcused absent limit. Although it does not change the number of days absent on record for a student, it appears to have helped some elementary students and parents be more committed to attending school. Unfortunately it was counter productive at the secondary level.

Chronically absent, students and their parents are referred to the Truancy Reduction Program when they have excessive unexcused absences and are in danger of failing. In 2006-2007, the procedures were revised to intervene with truant students at an earlier point. This allowed for

the family to receive a family assessment and receive identified services which were monitored by the court for a period of 3-9 months.

Specific Master Plan Action Steps are:

5.1.6.2 Continue to use data to evaluate the effectiveness of the attendance policy and the extended learning plan.

5.1.6.3 Monitor and evaluate effectiveness of Truancy Reduction Pilot Program

RELATED RESOURCES FOR ATTENDANCE	
Staffing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintained 3 Behavior Intervention Specialists and 7 Learning Support Specialists 	Cost: \$388,364 Source: SS/HS Grant (\$265,926) Local (\$ 86,079) Thornton (\$36,359) <i>*Duplicated Reference</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hired Staff to monitor students during the after school attendance make-up sessions. 	Cost: \$6,840 Source: Local
Core Program	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used Attendance Incentives to encourage satisfactory attendance by all students through PBIS. 	Cost: \$12,910 Source: SS/HS Grant
Intervention	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in the Truancy Reduction Pilot Program. 	Cost: \$0 Source: Supervisor and School Counselor Time.
Professional Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained all Learning Support Specialists, School Counselors and Principals were trained in using the program flowchart. 	Cost: \$0 Source: Staff Time
Community Involvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided <i>Project Achieve</i> mentors for students in grades 6-12. 	Cost: \$0 Source: Volunteer time

C. CHALLENGES IN INCREASING THE ATTENDANCE RATE BY GRADE BAND AND SUBGROUP:

1. The Middle Level attendance rate increased for some subgroups but did not meet the AMO target of 93.4% for the aggregate or any subgroup.

The attendance percentage decreased for 3 of the 6 represented subgroups in 2007. The African American, FARMS, and Special Education subgroups all decreased by less than 1%. In addition, all 6 of the represented subgroups, as well as the aggregate, were below the AMO target of 93.4% for middle level attendance. The African American (.6%), White (.7%), Hispanic (1.9%), FARMS (2.2%), Special Ed (1.8%), and ELL (1.7%) subgroups all fell below the AMO target and the state satisfactory standard of 93.4%.

Trend data indicates that 8th grade attendance has decreased each year since 2005 at WHS (.9%) and at CHS (4.0%) which has offset the steady increase at the intermediate school (6th & 7th grade) when calculating middle level attendance. Other groups showing declining trends were the African American subgroup which has decreased each year since 2004 and the FARMS subgroup which has decreased each year since 2005.

1. We are challenged to motivate middle level students to attend school.
2. We are challenged to motivate parents to have their middle level students to attend school regularly.

2. High School attendance rates increased for some subgroups but did not meet the 92.5% AMO target for the aggregate or for 4 of the 5 represented subgroups.

The aggregate was .3% below the 2007 AMO target and 1.5% below the state satisfactory standard. While the African American subgroup did meet the AMO target, the White (91.6%), Hispanic (90.1%), FARMS (91.2%), and Special Ed (88.9%) subgroups did not. Special Education had the lowest percent attendance of any subgroup. All of the groups fell below the 92.5% state high school satisfactory standard for the fourth year in a row.

The Hispanic subgroup was the only group to decrease (by .2%) in 2007. Although the high school attendance rate has increased in the last two years, Crisfield High School has shown a steady decline from 91.9% in 2005 to 90.1 % in 2007.

1. We are challenged to develop a culture of regular high school attendance.

D. CHANGES OR ADJUSTMENTS TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS WITH RESOURCES AND A TIMELINE:

We are challenged to motivate middle level students to attend school.

A specific attendance incentive plan will be designed and implemented with Grades 6-8 at each site. This plan will include interventions for students in Truancy Court as well as other students who improve their rate of attendance. Transition programs for the 6th and 8th Grade will assist staff in developing relationships with the incoming grade to encourage a positive school atmosphere. Professional Development will be held weekly to assist teachers with improving student engagement and success.

PROGRAMS, PRACTICES, STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES FOR MIDDLE LEVEL STUDENT ATTENDANCE	
Intervention	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement middle level Attendance Incentives to encourage satisfactory attendance by all students. 	Amount Budgeted: \$2,000 Source: Local Timeline: 2007-2008
Materials, Supplies, Equipment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide general supplies to support the 6th and 8th 	Amount Budgeted: \$540

PROGRAMS, PRACTICES, STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES FOR MIDDLE LEVEL STUDENT ATTENDANCE	
grade transition program.	Source: Local Timeline: August 2007
Professional Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicate Professional Development (APD) sessions to Differentiated Instruction as a means to increase student engagement and improve attendance. 	Amount Budgeted: \$ 71,615 Source: Thornton Timeline: 2007-2008 <i>Duplicated Reference</i>

We are challenged to motivate parents to have their middle level students to attend school regularly.

Communication with parents and the community about the importance of school attendance will be improved through the use of posters, brochures and newsletters. Professional development for student support staff will increase their skills in communicating with parents on the importance of attendance.

PROGRAMS, PRACTICES, & STRATEGIES FOR FAMILY SUPPORT OF MIDDLE LEVEL ATTENDANCE	
Materials, Supplies, Equipment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce posters, brochures and letters used to communicate with parents regarding the importance of school attendance 	Amount Budgeted: \$ 500 Source: Local Timeline: 2007-2008
Professional Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide ongoing professional development for school counselors and LST staff on the value of school attendance when communicating with parents. 	Amount Budgeted: \$0 Source: Staff Time Timeline: 2007-2008

We are challenged to develop a culture of regular high school attendance.

Attendance clerks have been hired at each high school. Clerks will track absences, collect and record absentee notes, contact parents of absentee students, send letters to parents of students with excessive absences, and notify counselors of students who are in danger of failing due to absences. The SCPS attendance policy was revised to remove the make up option for excessive absences. Administrators and teachers felt that the make up opportunity encouraged rather than prevented absenteeism. Valuable classroom instruction was lost. Attendance incentives could be in the form of individual gifts, group activities for those reaching 94%, alarm clocks for those who need them, special events tickets, and other items or activities.

**PROGRAMS, PRACTICES, & STRATEGIES FOR HIGH SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE**

Staffing

- Hire Attendance Clerks to make regular parent contacts, notify counselors and learning support specialists of students in danger, and improve communication between the student, family and the school.

Amount Budgeted: \$40,000

Source: Thornton

Timeline: 2007-2008

**Duplicated Reference*

Intervention

- Remove make up option for absenteeism and reinstate mandatory 94% attendance for passing.

Amount Budgeted: \$0

Source: Local

Timeline: August 2007

- Design and implement high school specific interventions to motivate satisfactory attendance for all students.

Amount Budgeted: \$4,000

Source: Local

Timeline: 2007-2008