Chronic Absenteeism & Truancy Prevention:

- What works
- How technology plays a role in implementing best practices
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Preventing Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy

School admins discover the first workable automated system dedicated to easing a nearly impossible challenge they’ve been coping with for decades.

Did you know? A student is chronically absent if he or she misses as few as two days of school a month: 2 days per month x 9 months = chronic absence. (Source: Every Student, Every Day: A Community Toolkit to Address and Eliminate Chronic Absenteeism).

In fact, according to the same report, an estimated 5 to 7.5 million students are chronically absent from school each year. Even when such absences are “excused” or understandable, chronic absenteeism is a primary cause of lower academic achievement.

Comprehensive, timely, coordinated. Is it possible to reduce absenteeism? What would happen if real-time student data for truancy officers wasn’t just a dream—but an actuality?

While there are plenty of underlying issues (chronic health conditions, housing instability, involvement with the juvenile justice system, unsafe conditions, etc.), absenteeism affects other students, too: “Not only are frequent absences harmful to the absentee, but they also have a negative effect on the achievement of other students in the classroom.”

Remarkably, chronic absenteeism is not measured by most U.S. states or school districts, leaving educators and parents without information they need to identify students who could use additional support to maintain regular attendance.

In this paper, we talk with a dozen different administrators, each from unique and diverse school districts. What they all have in common is a strong desire to improve conditions in their communities. But what would happen if they had a flexible, real-time and workable system in place that truly worked for them? These are their stories.
RaaWee K12 Truancy & Dropout Prevention System (TDPS) is a collaboration platform that provides tools to school districts for implementing best practices and strategies for preventing absenteeism and establishing a culture of perfect attendance.

Best Practices for Reducing Absences:
Tier-Wise Approach to Combat Absenteeism

**Tier 1:**
- **Awareness:** Creating awareness about the impact of absences amongst all stakeholders including school administrators, parents, students, communities etc.
- **Encouragement:** Acknowledging and rewarding students for good attendance.
- **Engage Early:** For example, to prevent truancy, engage parents before 3 unexcused absences occur because at the 3rd occurrence, students are already truants.

**Tier 2:**
- **Detection:** Access to Real-time Data Analysis. Detecting possible absenteeism behavior early.
- **Understanding Barriers:** Identifying the reasons and challenges students may be facing that are causing frequent excused or unexcused absences.
- **Personalized Interventions:** Provide interventions for absences quickly as per the specific circumstances of each student.
- **Mentors:** Teacher or coach becoming a mentor or creating cross-age buddy system, where a junior can look up to a senior student with good habits and becomes a mentee of either the coach or the student.

**Tier 3:**
- **Coordination:** Collaboration with 3rd party social services programs to help students and families overcome challenges they may be facing and providing legal interventions as the last resort.
- **Tracking:** Constantly monitor the progress after interventions were implemented and tracking if any adjustments are needed.
- **Follow-up:** Setting up plans to follow-up with students and families to sustain the gains made.

To learn more, visit:
- **AttendanceWorks**
- **School Attendance Improvement Strategies**
  [https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ai/cw/attendstrategy.asp](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ai/cw/attendstrategy.asp)
- **National Center for Homeless Education**
- **The Brookings Institution**
Jose Almazan is Director of Admissions, Attendance, and Dropout Recovery at United ISD. "Our staff is provided with up to date attendance data and especially with absence data relevant to truancy," says Almazan.

The real value and benefit of this is that, "We can quickly identify students and document the reason for their absences," he explains.

"Long gone are the days where we extract reports with limited parameters and have to calculate or determine by hand what stage of intervention implementation the students are at."

Is Real-Time Data the Key to Success?

"This system provides each attendance officer a daily list of students with the correct absences and places them on a stage of intervention," says Almazan. "Depending on the stages, each officer can now implement a prescribed truancy prevention measure to address the individual needs of the student."

"Real-time data is key to the success of any truancy program. Because daily attendance/absences are dynamic in nature, we never know who is going to be absent on any given day."

"When our average enrollment in our schools is over 900 in middle schools and 2500 in our high schools, we need some type of program that can do all the calculations and tells us who has met the parameters for intervention," he says.

Calculating The Results We Need

"The main advantage is that we have full technical support from the developers when needed," says Almazan.

"By far, the RaaWee team has an outstanding record with us. From day one, their technical support has been outstanding in developing the software to calculate the results we need to provide assistance to the chronically absent students."

After all is said and done, Almazan sums it all up: "The real benefit has been: better attendance in our schools, proper identification of needs to get students engaged in school—and all of this culminates into additional funding possibilities," he adds.

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“Other districts are super jealous, they’re like, ‘You guys have the Cadillac of attendance programs.’ And I agree!”

— Myra Castaneda, Program Director for Educational Support, Galena Park ISD

Myra Castaneda is the Program Director for Educational Support at Galena Park ISD. “Before, we didn’t have any software. We had different forms, we were sending letters at different times. It wasn’t a uniform process. We had to do something that was going to be more structured and organized.”

Before: Not a Uniform Process

Specifically, the previous ‘system’ or lack thereof, made for a disorderly, dispersed operating basis. “There was not a uniform system that we were following,” shares Castaneda, “and everybody had different forms. Some people were sending the letters at different times, and some printed the letters. It was just not a uniform process.”

Despite those challenges, Castaneda describes how the district found their way forward.

“We had to do something that was going to be more structured and organized, so district administration could actually go in and see, ‘Hey, this school’s been really low with attendance. Let’s see what they’re doing. Oh—well you know what, they’re not putting their interventions in, they’re not sending warning letters. So that’s why, they’re not on the ball!’

After: A View of What’s Really Going On

Using RaaWee, “We can all see what’s been done for these kids,” says Castaneda. “And then, if we’re missing something—you can pull up one student and say, “Man, this kid has 20 absences. I wonder what’s going on?” The counselors see it on the dashboard, and they’ll put in, ‘Oh, well, you know what, the parents just got divorced.’

“RaaWee is a great system and I would encourage everybody to use it—it has brought a lot more focus on the truancy piece. And people are like, ‘Oh my gosh, I didn’t even realize this!’

“It’s just a good system in trying to figure out stuff for the students, building the relationship, and paying more attention to discipline.”

“And then they know that the district has a view on what they’re doing, too. You know when people are checking on you, you’re probably going to get it done.”

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Rocky Zepeda, although currently in the early stages of the process of rolling out the RaaWee system in his district, has in fact been talking with RaaWee for a number of years as RaaWee conducted a thorough preliminary study of what exactly school districts really needed and wanted in a system that would truly help school administrators do their jobs in the best possible way to better serve their students and communities.

Two Kinds of Experts

In conducting the research, there was a lot of investigative and exploratory collaboration.

In school terms, RaaWee did their homework.

“Yes, we shared information,” says Zepeda.

“And at the beginning, when we first met with RaaWee, I made it very clear that they obviously were the experts in the systems, the technology and use of, and putting together the system—whereas, we were the experts in school attendance.”

The Making of an Effective & Efficient Product

“And so together,” Zepeda continues, “we shared information about how the system would be used, and for what purpose it would be used to ensure we’d be in compliance with state requirements on attendance, and that their system would be able to produce what we needed effectively to meet those legal requirements.”

“A lot of Student Information Systems out there don’t focus on specific needs. If they do, it requires a lot of cumbersome data mining.”

In stark contrast, “RaaWee does all that for you in real time and allows you to focus on the real need of moving forward without spending a lot of man hours, time and effort,” says Zepeda.

“It definitely takes that collaboration in order to get an effective and efficient product for use in your district and for the purpose that you’re going to use it. And RaaWee worked very closely with me and we did a very good job of understanding those formats that needed to be put in place,” he says.

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“RaaWee TDPS allows us to see the amount of ADA we are losing as a result of absences, and provides research-based strategies to address this.”
— Araceli De La Cruz, Director of Student Services, Goose Creek CISD

Is the RaaWee system better than what this beautiful Texas Gulf Coast region consolidated school district already had in place?

“Yes,” says Araceli De La Cruz, Director of Student Services at Goose Creek CISD. “We’ll be able to streamline communication and processes,” she explains.

Why is that? “We expect to provide parents as much information as possible to address the contributing factors leading to the truancy/absences.”

Does a Dedicated System Really Make a Difference?

With a dedicated system solely for the purpose of tackling truancy, chronic absenteeism and dropout prevention, there has never been anything better to help the district take control. “RaaWee allows us to see the amount of ADA we are losing as a result of absences. It also provided research based strategies.”

Furthermore, “The program allows us to provide numerous benefits to all stakeholders,” says De La Cruz, referring to parents, administrators, educators—and most importantly, the students themselves.

A System That Actually Gets Used

When it comes to any system that potentially helps administrators better serve their students and their communities, one test of a truly workable system is if users actually use it. “The previous program we had was not user friendly so our staff would seldom log in,” reveals De La Cruz.

Seldom logging in is simply not the case with their new RaaWee system. With easily accessible and relevant data, automatic alerts, and so much more—hours turn into seconds. “RaaWee is a great resource for districts to address truancy and absences,” De La Cruz reports, citing how easy it is to see what’s going on through the system’s action dashboards.

“We just started using it in December, but [they have] been great to work with. The program is wonderful,” she adds.
“I've been working with this district addressing truancy, chronic absenteeism, and dropout prevention for 20 years and have helped grow the policies and procedures designed to address these issues,” says Johnny Barrington, Lead Truancy Officer at Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD.

“The system that we developed was better than nothing, but was not as comprehensive as what was needed,” he says.

In fact, the system required a need for “time-consuming reports to figure out the who, what, and when—who needs intervention and who needs to do the intervening; what interventions are needed; and when does the intervention need to take place,” explains Barrington.

It Really Answers Our Questions

With RaaWee, all that has changed.

“The TDPS is more efficient and provides the answers to those questions so that our assistant principals, attendance clerks, and truancy / dropout prevention specialists can dedicate their time, energy and resources to providing the interventions.”

Barrington now sees “more consistency in regards to applying truancy prevention measures across the district.”

How to Address Underlying Issues

Barrington thinks RaaWee is better than the system they had been using in previous years.

With RaaWee, “We can see real time data so that we can address the underlying issues that cause the symptom of truancy and chronic absenteeism, which can lead to dropout,” he says.

In other words, says Barrington, “We can now focus on the causes of truancy and dropout and better find solutions to address those causes.

An Implementation with Immediate Benefits

“We haven't had a full year of experience using the new system,” says Barrington, “but we've already received praise and gratitude from many campus administrators regarding how this system is easing their workloads.”
“Efficiency in the RaaWee K12 Truancy & Dropout Prevention System has allowed us to actually get to the real work of helping students.”
— Kevin Chase, Superintendent, Educational Service District 105

“More time to work with families. Kevin Chase is Superintendent of Educational Service District 105. “The automation of many of the time-intensive tasks has freed up time to work with individual families and students,” explains Kevin Chase, Superintendent of Educational Service District 105.

“It’s like adding a half-time clerical support person in every building. Efficiency in the system has allowed us to actually get to the real work of helping students.”

“Standardized interventions across buildings and use of prevention measures “has helped get more students in the green attendance zone,” reports Chase.

**The Single Most Enticing Feature**

The system’s most helpful features, according to Chase, include: use of data to see barriers, early warning for students and parents about too many absences.

But what is the single most enticing feature?

“Efficiency! The investment helps staff do more. Integration helps everyone work as a team. No more siloed actions.”

Before, Chase says his district experienced “not enough time to do the job, so very little actual interventions being provided. Hopeless feelings.”

Now? “The job is at least doable; we can make a difference.”

**A Light at the End of the Tunnel**

For those considering such a system, Chase advises:

“The program is an investment in your frontline staff. You’re asking them to do so much, that they can’t get to it all. It is a light at the end of the tunnel.”

“Also, you can track progress or lack thereof in real time at the district and building level.”

The structure of the system creates an environment for “standardized practices,” says Chase. How?

“Leading best practices [are] incorporated into the system.”

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“Every parent, every student has a story; the RaaWee system allows us to be able to pinpoint what type of in-house resources we have available for them.”

— Tony De La Rosa, Supervisor of Student Attendance, Midland ISD

What is the real value of RaaWee? According to Tony De La Rosa, Supervisor of Student Attendance for Midland ISD, “It allows our campuses to map out who they need to work with as far as students are concerned,” he says.

“Before, we were depending on our student software database which was kind of like pulling needles in a haystack. There was really no direction. It’s provided us with that direction that we need to be able to help out parents and students,” says De La Rosa.

What’s the Best Thing You Can Do to Help A Student or Parent?

“The best thing that you can do to help out a particular student or parent that’s having issues, and also to help out your campus, is to get right on top of it right away,” De La Rosa explains. “The sooner the better.”

“With RaaWee, it’s been able to allow us to communicate with these parents sooner than later,” says De La Rosa.

“A lot of times whenever we are working with them, every parent and every student has a story. It allows us to be able to pinpoint what type of in-house resources we have available.”

“If we don’t have in-house resources that can help them, then we’ll definitely go out to the community and try to set them up with what we have in our community,” he says.

Confronting Some Real-Life Issues

“Sometimes, a lot of these students fall under that certain criteria, such as being homeless or being pregnant or just extenuating circumstances that prevent that student from going to school on a daily basis,” explains De La Rosa.

“We have a lot of families that are coming from out of state or from different school districts and a lot of them are just—well, they simply don’t have any viable means of transportation or anything like that.”

According to De La Rosa, with a real-time system where no student falls through the cracks, helping those in need has made a real difference: “We’ve been able to work with our transportation department to be able to assist those families and those students to get them to where they need to be,” he says.

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“Go for it! This is a real time saver, thanks to its ability to work with our SIS and provide the real-time data...[it’s] made it much easier...”

— Jamie Burt, Director, Student Services, Pasadena Independent School District (Texas)

Jamie Burt is the Director of Student Services, Department of Accountability & Compliance, at 55,000-student Pasadena Independent School District in Pasadena, Texas. Asked about chronic absenteeism and truancy prevention and what technology has helped her to easily implement best practices, Jamie offers: "Definitely RaaWee's Truancy and Dropout Prevention System (TDPS)." And just how has it helped, specifically? "The ability to work with our SIS to upload on a nightly basis the absences students accumulate," she explains. The real difference that she has seen using the RaaWee K12 solution is in its simplicity and true helpfulness: “Three-day warning letters are automatically generated and the multitude of reports are awesome!” says Jamie.

Incredible Results
Having access to real-time data for interventions management and attendance tracking—is this truly helpful in implementing strategies against chronic absenteeism and truancy prevention, especially in a large district? And have they really recently seen an improvement in Average Daily Attendance close to 1% and reduced chronic absenteeism by more than 20%? Is that even correct? "Yes,” says Jamie, explaining the true value and benefits of using such a system: “Real-time data and the fact that [CEO] Saleem [Qazi] has worked with us and met every need of our district – expanded the number of users for a particular feature and has adapted/created many reports based on our needs,” she adds. The advantages and real benefits to using a solution solely dedicated to truancy and dropout prevention do not go unnoticed. Jamie describes them as such: “The real-time data is a game changer and the ability to track the interventions provided.” But the real difference comes in the ease the system provides., especially compared to how it used to be: "Before,” says Jamie, “we had to work with our programmers to self-create everything we needed for truancy prevention.”

‘Go for it!’
So Jamie’s advice for a district leader in similar shoes, grappling with what to do regarding issues of chronic absenteeism and truancy, and worse - dropouts - had this to say regarding selection and use of the RaaWee K12 Solution: “Go for it! Saleem / RaaWee exceeds expectations in customer service! TDPS is a real time saver, thanks to its ability to work with our SIS and provide the real-time data,” she adds. “The action boards of TDPS has made it much easier for all campus stakeholders, since they can easily identify which students need attention in the attendance area,” says Jamie. "Working with Saleem has been an awesome experience,” she emphasizes.

“It is refreshing to work with a technology vendor that will truly listen to your needs and meet your expectations. He is genuinely kind and makes you feel like he truly is concerned with your success.”

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In sum, the RaaWee system is “Early intervention to aide in getting students back to school so that we minimize the loss of instructional minutes.”
— Jennifer Casel, Student Services Coordinator, East Side Union High School District, San Jose

“A huge help. The system has allowed for earlier intervention and nearly 1 million in savings, says Jennifer Casel of ESUHSD.

“The RaaWee Truancy Dropout Prevention System has been a huge help to ESUHSD, allowing us to monitor and track truant students so that we can intervene earlier and more frequently,” says Jennifer Casel, Student Services Coordinator at 24,500-student East Side Union High School District in San Jose, CA. “Overall, we saw a decrease in the number of total student days absent across the district which translates into roughly $840,000,” she says.

Making a Measurable Difference
Having access to real-time data for interventions management and attendance tracking, the district has experienced significant improvement, having 12,500 lesser full-day absences in the first year using TDPS, meaning they’ll bring in even more in ADA funding as a result. Is that even correct? “Absolutely!” says Jennifer, explaining: “We send letters out to families once per week allowing them an opportunity to be informed on a more frequent basis when their child is accruing unexcused absences. The regular monitoring has also enabled us to intervene earlier and provide students and their families with academic programs that might be a better fit as well as prevent some students from become chronic absentees.”

In sum, the system is “Early intervention to aide in getting students back to school so that we minimize the loss of instructional minutes,” she says.

Benefits to using a system solely dedicated to truancy and dropout prevention? “The system is set up and dedicated to prevention and intervention; there are no special reports we have to customize through our Student Information System and we have been able to automate the process of sending letters to families. We used to send notification of truancy to families monthly and then we were only able to focus on those with the greatest number of unexcused absences as we lacked the manpower to efficiently manage the overall process.”

So, Any Words of Wisdom?
“Start using it today! It took us awhile to onboard our site teams and utilize all the features since we were coming from a ‘home-grown’ system that didn’t have all the functionality in the RaaWee solution, but once we were up and running, it was so easy to manage. We’ve added functionality for the coming school year (monthly certificates for perfect attendance; an alert for 4+ consecutive unexcused absences to site admins) and I cannot wait to see how that will positively affect our attendance rate,” says Jennifer. “The team at RaaWee has been exceptionally easy to work with—so helpful customizing reports or other features for ESUHSD. Customer service is impeccable, they’re a joy to work with!” Reviewing reports monthly with Associate Principals, a noticeable site-level change: the ‘save rate’ between each of the notices of truancy (1, 2 and 3) mailed home. “Fewer families receive notice 2, once notice 1 has been mailed. Notice 1 is mailed after 3+ unexcused absences of 30 minutes or more, and encourages families to check in with their child’s school site if they need additional resources or support,” says Jennifer. “I cannot emphasize enough how easy it is to work with the RaaWee team; they are just as focused on ESUHSD’s attendance as I am it seems!”

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“One of the things that we were having trouble with in our district is staying on top of the kids who are continuing to have unexcused absences,” says Sara Martinez, Dropout Prevention Coordinator at Seguin ISD.

What prompted the district to decide to implement the RaaWee system?

“This system was more automated, it spits it out for you, instead of us churning out reports and going through person by person and then generating our own letters, addressing our own envelopes,” explains Martinez.

What Will Draw You to the Program

Part of the simplicity of RaaWee is the letters that it so easily generates. For Martinez, “Putting everything in the mail” is vital. Previously, “Before we knew it, that kid who had three unexcused absences, it took us three days to get their letter out, four days to get their letter out, and they were already at seven unexcused absences,” she recounts.

“So, just efficiency is the way RaaWee works, and that really drew us to the program,” she notes.

Before, it was “just really time consuming,” she explains.

“Our office gets out and does a lot of home business—that face-to-face contact with students,” she says. “We pick up students in the morning when they miss the bus, or their parent's car doesn't start.”

Without the RaaWee system, the old way of doing things using a time-consuming system was “taking away time from [helping people face-to-face], because we were having to generate everything manually,” explains Martinez.

On Our Way

“We have student support officers doing most of the pickups in the morning. They are the ones who are also doing the letters. Myself and our secretary, of course, help them because they are generating so many letters. So we were helping them to get that done,” she says.

With RaaWee moving into place, “It's going to be great,” she says. “Once we get it going, we can really start our interventions and let the campuses do more letters, more face-to-face contacts with parents and students. It's going to work great!”
“Our system for documenting absences was very antiquated,” says Darrell Muncy, former Director of Campus Support Services at Denton ISD, who just recently retired after 31 years. “Our director of technology contacted Saleem and said, “Hey, we need to re-do things, so if you could meet with Darrell Muncy and his attendance team, and come up with a solution, then that would be a great thing for us to have.”

“Intercepts students. Darrell Muncy, former Director of Campus Support Services, Denton ISD, says the new system “expedites the ability to intercept those kids that are creating a pattern much more expeditiously.”

“When Saleem got involved in it, he started seeing our process and what we did. He took it to the next level and, without a doubt, he came up with a whole system that did everything that we did as a school district. He implemented it via technology. Basically, it simplified things so much that we think it had a drastic effect on our attendance.”

“He kept making tweaks to it. Then he came up with what I refer to as the Cadillac version. I mean it had all the bells and whistles.

It immediately contacted the assistant principal or the attendance liaison, or the attendance officer that student A was having a problem with attendance; and they've already met the minimum number allowed by the state.

It expedites the ability to intercept those kids that are creating a pattern much more expeditiously. Where it used to be we'd have to sit down with a pencil and a piece of paper and count how many absences; and ... whether this was verified or ... It's just an incredible thing that he created. That's ... He came to us. It was a blessing that he came to us.”

A Return to the Real Focus

“As a former administrator, I started out as an assistant principal. When you've got 600 ninth graders, you're in charge of every one of them. You got fights breaking out. You got kids skipping class. You got angry parents. You got kids fighting and just all kinds of things. They also expect you to go into every classroom and observe teachers.

“The amount of time that it saved our assistant principals, our attendance liaisons, our administers; they now can focus on the things that actually they need to be doing such as running the school.

“The time saved allowed them to be much more effective educational leaders. They get to go into the classrooms more, it's just a very time conscious. It's a great program.”
“We were searching for a program that would provide a solution for truancy, yet allow us to use our district defined attendance procedures,” says Sue Pike, Director of Information Services at Deer Park ISD. “Most programs were cookie cutter and didn’t allow for this type of individuality. However, RaaWee was able to give us this flexibility of ideas. They’ve been a very good fit as a program and as a company, checking in frequently, ensuring the program is meeting our needs. Many times that contact comes from the CEO! They’re continuously improving and expanding.

“Even though we purchased RaaWee to help us keep up with our truant students, they’re much more than just a ‘truancy program’. They have their truancy and excessive absence solutions, but they also have a positive attendance solution,” Pike explains. “An important part of our purchase was that RaaWee allowed us to make the program fit our district needs. The attendance letters can contain our district wording, so it can fit either the ‘truant’ type letter, or a ‘positive attendance’ direction. There are also many reports within the system. Their Attendance Contract is one report we’ve incorporated into many of our district solutions. Another favorite: the monthly attendance calendar we email to our parents. We’ve had many positive comments from parents about this report.”

Why A Standardized System Matters

“RaaWee uses our district guidelines to trigger the attendance letters according to a set number of absences. These were set by us as a district; RaaWee worked with us to make our “attendance rules” work in the program. This was an important feature as we looked for a truancy program. They’ve held true to this promise. RaaWee keeps the campuses procedurally consistent, avoiding confusion with our parents, and making training new attendance staff much easier. Having a dedicated attendance system keeps us focused.”

Lambright has been exceedingly pleased. “I can easily monitor and track information in RaaWee. I can see the parent communication entered by the schools. I can see what letters have been sent or have been suppressed. Our campuses have found that the dashboard is very easy to navigate. It shows which students are hitting your attendance thresholds. So staff can easily see which students need interventions.”

Making What Was Difficult—Easy

“I know it may sound like it is too good to be true,” Pike says, “but RaaWee does a great job in being proactive in what we need because they listen to their customers. They have a very good product. The dashboard in RaaWee makes it very easy to gather information so campuses can make best decisions for their students and parents. Our community is important to us,” says Pike, “so we want the best for our students. From elementary school onward, creating good habits for attendance and for learning is essential.”
“We realized that the way we were dealing with attendance at the local level was very manual,” says Kirsten Legore, Executive Director of Student Services at Seguin ISD.

“We were manually looking through the data, the student information system, going into attendance, and then having that system run us reports, and then from those reports we were going through them—each individual report for each individual school—to see which students were not attending school,” she says.

“And then, that was prompting intervention that we were doing, but nothing was systematically occurring by way of the software,” she explains.

‘We Were Spinning Our Wheels’

“The SIS just tells us the data, but then we had to take that, turn it into what we were looking for, and then complete the interventions,” says Legore. “Everything was being done on spreadsheets that we were then entering, and so on. We knew that what we were doing was spinning our wheels.”

“With technology having improved to where it was, we knew that we used other products for other purposes, and it goes a lot faster, and it’s a lot easier—so we started looking for an attendance system that could do the same thing for us: where we can look at a school and the software generates automatically what we’re looking for—and tells us, and prompts us, to do the interventions, and then we complete the interventions. And it’s already telling us what to do next—instead of us having to manually do all of that,” she explains.

‘We Are Done Manually Slogging Through’

“Now—and the goal with implementing an attendance software program is—all of our time will not be spent manually slogging through data reports. Instead, the system will do that for us, and we’ll be busy with actual intervention, working with campuses who will be doing a lot of interventions themselves. And then, our district level interventions—and just having more time working with the individual student and the family on getting the student to come to school,” she says.

Legore observes, “There aren’t a lot of products out there that do this, and it does seem like it’s an important component of how schools work.”
Do we have an integrated system in place that helps us track our awareness campaigns, prevention measures, interventions, rewards, and effectiveness?

— from ‘Checklist Schools Must Use’ for a perfect attendance culture, provided by RaaWee K12 Solutions

✔ CHECKLIST SCHOOLS MUST USE:

Read then mark with Y / N.

**Awareness:** Do we have defined Actions/Steps for creating awareness about the importance of attendance in all stakeholders at least twice a semester: District and Site Administrators, Students, Families? _____

**Prevention:** Do we have a Prevention Plan that engages students and families early? _____

**Acknowledgement:** Do we have a uniform encouragement & acknowledgment method in place for students with good attendance? _____

**Interventions:** Do we have a uniform intervention plan and approaches for curtailing Unexcused Absences, Excessive Excused Absences, Tardy, and Chronic Absences across all sites? _____

**Onboarding:** Are all stakeholders at sites and district office on board with the importance of executing the plan to track and improve student attendance? _____

**Rewards for sites:** Do we have a reward system in place for sites that execute district plan and engage students in a most timely manner as per the plan? _____

**Real-time Data:** Do we have access to real-time analytics for our interventions, truancy, chronic absenteeism, students at-risk for chronic absences, barriers to attendance in our subgroups and communities etc.? _____

**One System for tracking attendance and managing interventions:** Do we have an integrated system in place that helps us track our awareness campaigns, prevention measures, interventions, rewards, and effectiveness according to our plans and strategies in one place? _____

**Attendance Review:** Do we have an Attendance Review Board/Team that reviews the data and quickly engages those students and families who have challenges to keep good attendance to discuss how the district can help them? _____

**Executive Commitment:** Do we have Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent’s buy-in to our overall strategy and plan? _____

______________________________

The more “Y” answers you have, the closer you will be to attaining and sustaining a perfect attendance culture.

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