The Baltimore Attendance Collaborative and the Baltimore Student Attendance Campaign

Students in Baltimore are missing too much school. Nearly one in four children in Baltimore are chronically absent from school. And when students miss school, they miss important milestones, fail to read on grade level, do not move on with their peers and do not graduate.

For students to succeed in school, they have to be there. Making that happen requires a multifaceted and coordinated strategy. The Baltimore Student Attendance Campaign, housed at the Family League of Baltimore, is such an effort.

The campaign has five goals:

• Increase student attendance in Baltimore City Public Schools
• Increase student attendance in Community Schools
• Increase student attendance in Baltimore Attendance Collaborative schools
• Increase student attendance in the early grades (prekindergarten – 3rd grade)

The Campaign’s Strategies to Dramatically Increase Attendance:

• Raise awareness among schools about the problem of chronic absence.
• Increase student attendance through individual student intervention, prevention strategies, and through the removal of attendance barriers.
• Learn evidence based strategies for improving student attendance from each other and national examples.
• Promote the use of data and research to develop strategies to increase attendance.
• Advocate for policies and practices to increase attendance.
• Collaborate on projects to improve attendance.
• Support individual schools’ capacity to respond to issues of absenteeism.

Baltimore City Public Schools

2013-14 Student Enrollment: 84,730 total
1 pre-k/Kindergarten school
17,062 students in grades 6–8
75 elementary/middle schools
22,882 students in grades 9–12
9 middle schools
7 programs (not schools)
These include 31 charter schools and 19 schools managed by external operators.

44,786 students in grades pre-k–5
1 pre-k/kindergarten school
17 middle/high schools
83.8% African American; 8% White; 6.2% Hispanic/Latino
54 elementary schools
4.5% low income (based on eligibility for Free or Reduced-Price Meals)
54 elementary schools
31 high schools
3.9% English language learner
75 elementary/middle schools
1 elementary/middle/high school

Maryland School Assessment (MSA) and Chronic Absence

After a 24% decline from 2012 to 2013, suspensions are at an all-time low.

Students who are Chronically Absent scored lower on the MSAs than those students who are not Chronically Absent. The gap is wider in Math than in Reading (i.e. 23.4 percentage points in Math vs. 16.1 percentage points in Reading)

Baltimore City Schools Out-of-School Suspensions and Expulsions

Suspensions indicate the effectiveness of the structures and interventions in place to support positive student behavior, and are another way in which to measure school climate.

SOURCE: Official MSDE files

This is an informal report from Baltimore City Public Schools.
For more information on our School Climate Initiative, please visit: http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/climate