

PDSA and MTSS:

Engaging Stakeholders for Attendance Improvement



LEADER BOARD

CHALLENGE 5
Desafio 5

STRIVE FOR LESS THAN FIVE DAYS ABSENT!

	K	1 ST	2 ND	3 RD	4 TH	5 TH	6 TH
SEPTEMBER	85%	91%	85%	98%	91%	94%	94%
OCTOBER							
NOVEMBER							

Session 4A – June 20 from 2:45-4:00 pm

TODAY'S PRESENTERS

Dr. Chris Hubbuch

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Dr. Michele Norman

Director of Elementary Education

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Dr. Kendra Lau

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ST. JOSEPH
SCHOOL DISTRICT

DISTRICT PROFILE

Enrollment

- 18th largest school district in Missouri with 24 schools
- Student enrollment of 11,300 students

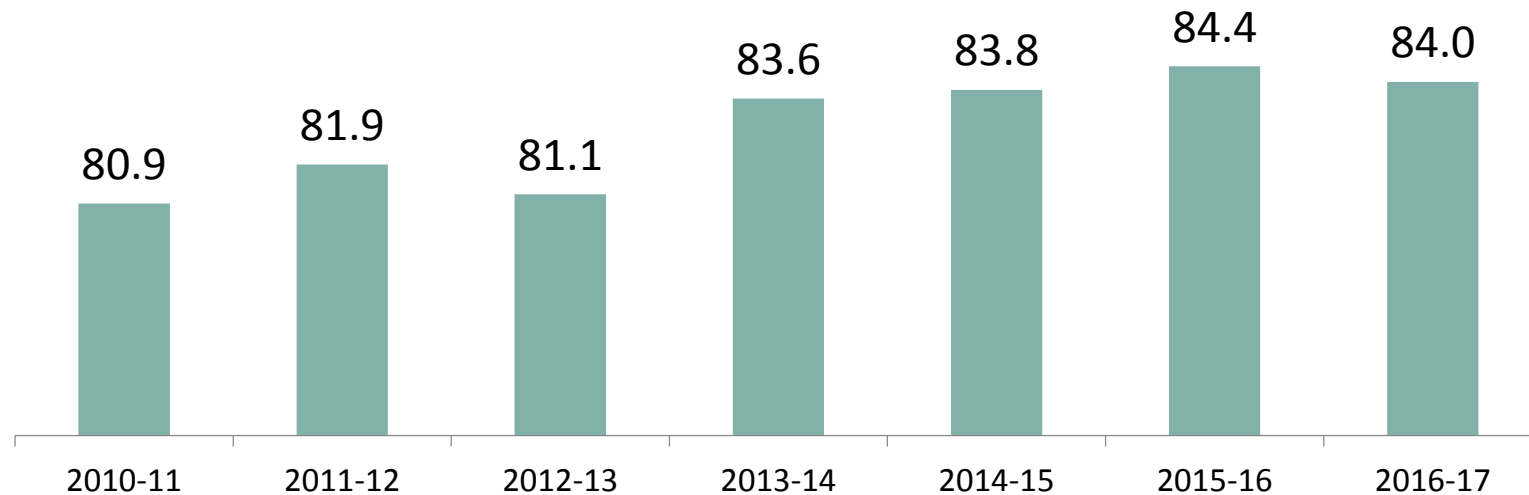
Demographics

- 74.7% White, 8.4% Hispanic, 7.8% Black, 6.2% Multi-Race
- 71.5% eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Chronic absenteeism was identified as a serious concern as far back as 2011 when the district reported an 80.9% proportional attendance rate.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

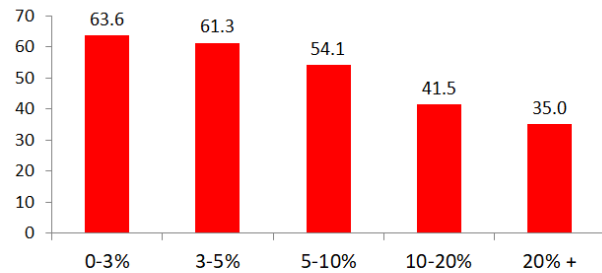
- An 84% attendance rate in May 2017 suggested something the district didn't want to accept or believe, the community may have grown tolerant of chronic absenteeism.
- It appeared targeted incentives, district communication, and community engagement efforts had made little difference on district attendance rates.



CHANGING COURSE

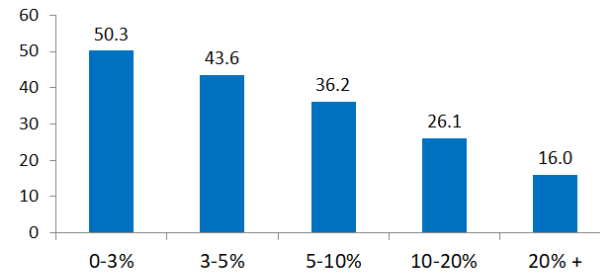
- Collaboration was widespread at the district level as several departments reviewed data and relevant research.

■ Percent of Students Proficient or Above on the 2017 MAP Assessment in English Language Arts for Grades 3-8 in the St. Joseph School District



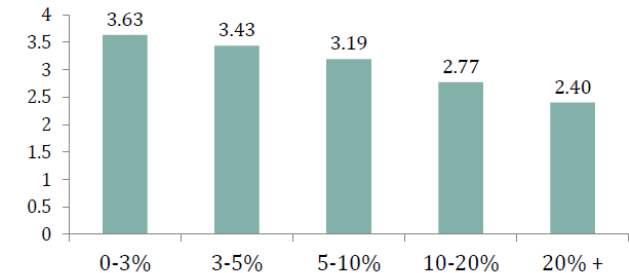
Student absenteeism rates for grades 3-8 during the 2016-17 school year

■ Percent of Students Proficient or Above on the 2017 MAP Assessment in Mathematics for Grades 3-8 in the St. Joseph School District



Student absenteeism rates for grades 3-8 during the 2016-17 school year

■ Average Weighted Grade Point Average of 2017 Seniors in the St. Joseph School District

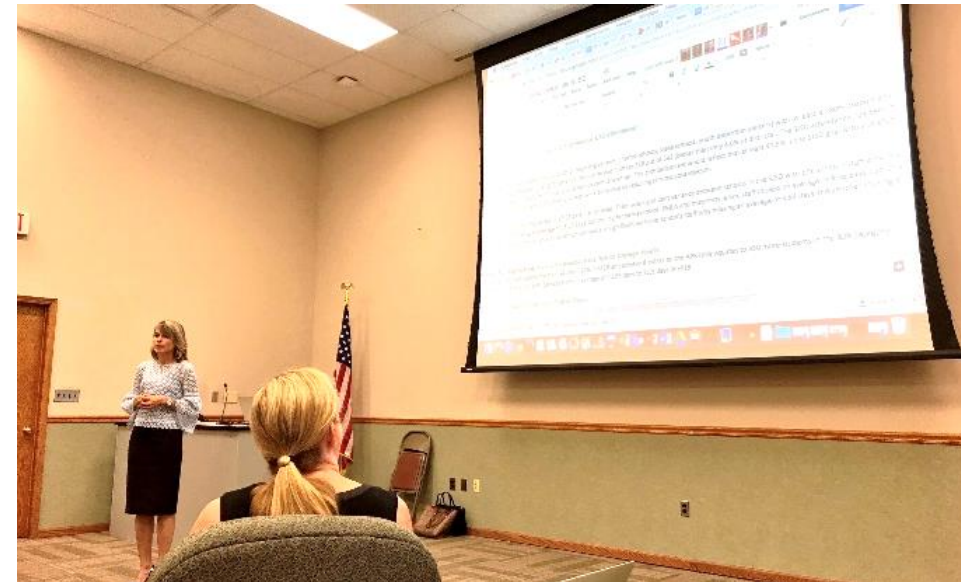


Student absenteeism rates for seniors during the 2016-17 school year

CHANGING COURSE

- A plan-do-study-act (PDSA) framework for attendance improvement began to take shape ([link](#)). District administrators provided input on the draft of the action plan throughout the development process.

TEAM ACTION STEPS	MEASURE/INDICATOR	END DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
<p>Consultation with Attendance Works about proposed action steps to address chronic absenteeism.</p> <p>Teleconference on April 24 with Sue Fothergill about research and effective strategies to address chronic absenteeism.</p>		April 2017	Chris Hubbuch Solon Haynes Michele Norman Kendra Lau
<p>Develop a Community Wide Campaign to Raise Awareness of Chronic Absenteeism Launch August 14, 2017.</p> <p>#Strivefor5StJoe – Fewer than 5 absences per school year. http://www.grps.org/challengefive http://www.attendanceworks.org/what-works/grand-rapids/ https://believe2become.org/programs/challenge-5/</p> <p>SISD Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=7&v=sM4KMNy13dc</p> <p>Cairo Santos Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7gTlySrricd</p> <p>Southside Parade Northside Parade</p>	<p>Target the 87-84%</p> <p>Monitor 2X/Month with District Level Attendance Team</p>	SY18 May Ongoing	<p>Community Partners: Chamber of Commerce County Commissioners Altec</p> <p>Bridget Blevins Marlie Williams Kendra Lau Chris Hubbuch Michele Norman Dave Lau Sarah DeGarn</p>
<p>Develop and maintain website at http://www.strivefor5stjoe.com/ to (a) share the importance of regular attendance, (b) share guidelines and data trends, and (c) share Strive for 5 updates.</p> <p>Develop @StriveFor5StJoe Twitter account as a communication tool for the K-12 attendance initiative.</p>		Deployed August 2017 Ongoing updates	Chris Hubbuch Kendra Lau Renee Slayman



CHANGING COURSE

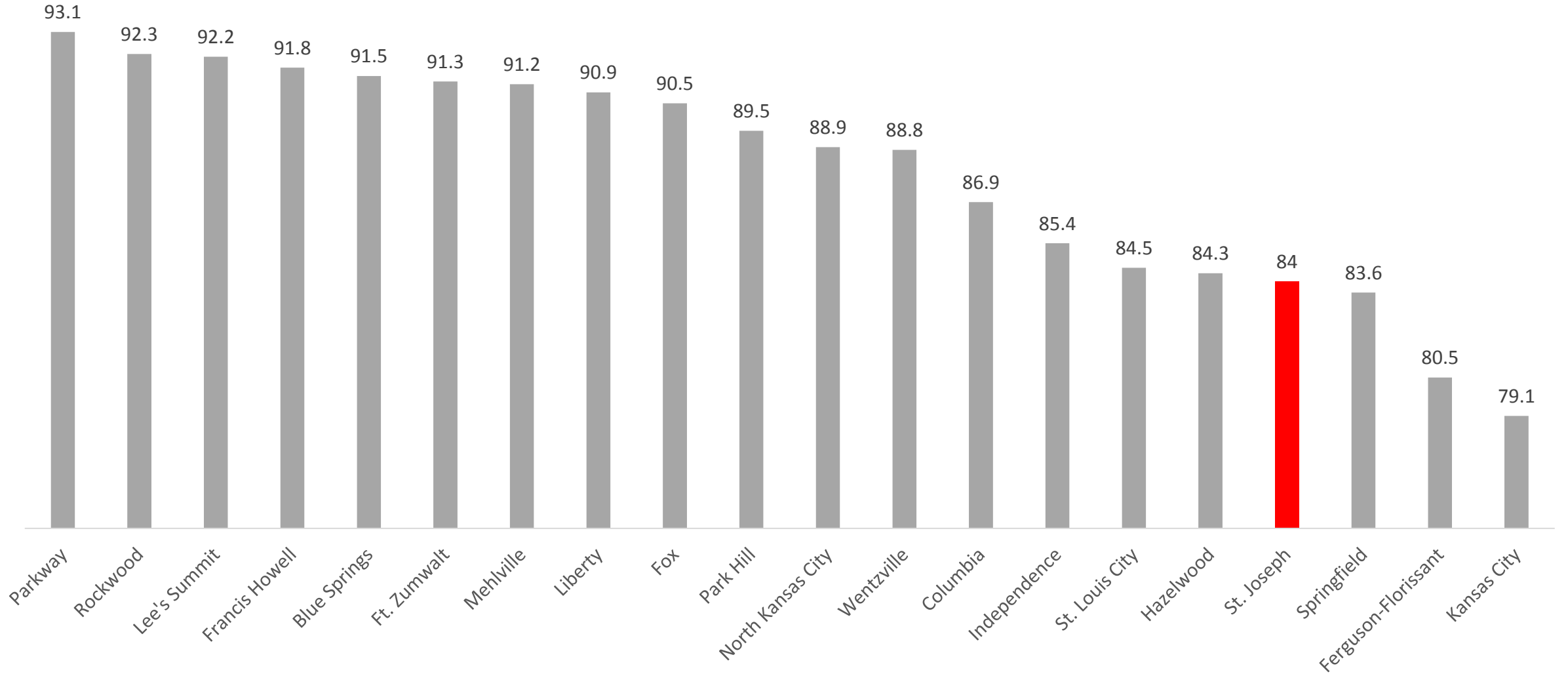
- A website was developed in the fall of 2016 to share research about school attendance, attendance data, school board policy, and district attendance procedures.
- This would become an integral part of district communication as the improvement plan developed.

CHANGING COURSE

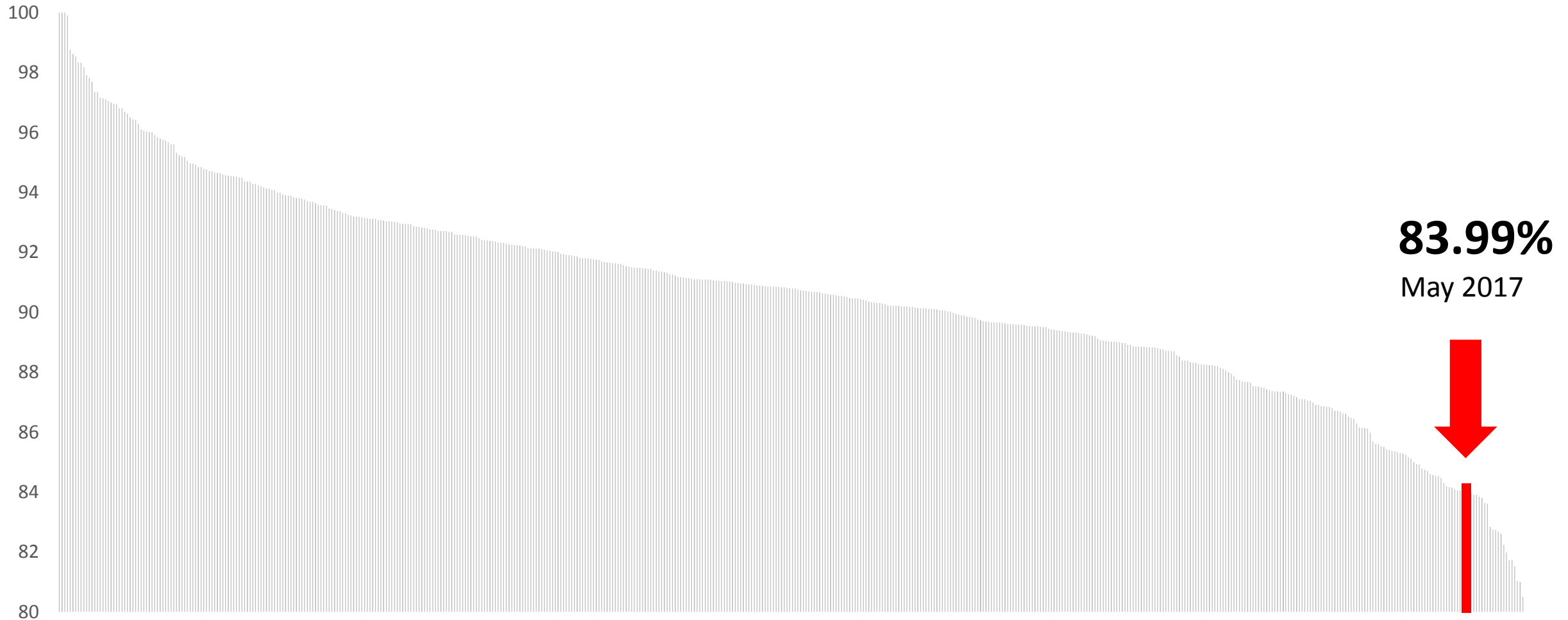
- Meetings were held throughout the 2016-17 school year with various community agencies such as the United Way, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the Chamber of Commerce, the Social Welfare Board, and Mosaic Life Care.



BUILDING AWARENESS



BUILDING AWARENESS



The data above reflects the 538 districts or reporting centers with attendance greater than 80% during the 2016-17 school year. At 83.99%, St. Joseph ranked number 516 last year. Approximately 328 districts met the state goal of 90% last year.

BUILDING AWARENESS

- To help build awareness in the community, a review of district absenteeism rates was included as part of a high school schedule and graduation credit study in January 2017 ([link](#)).
- This analysis showed high school attendance rates in St. Joseph ranking in the bottom 6% of all Missouri high schools over an 8 year period (2009-2017).

BUILDING AWARENESS

Part 1 - Proportional Attendance

Proportional Attendance by High School

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education uses the proportional attendance rate in Missouri, or the percentage of students attending school 90% of the time, for district accreditation purposes. The state-wide target is 90% of students attending 90% of the time. The table below provides the proportional attendance rate and state-wide attendance ranking among high schools for Benton, Central and Lafayette.

Year	Benton	State Rank	Central	State Rank	Lafayette	State Rank
2009	71.6%	475 / 507	76.0%	436 / 507	72.0%	469 / 507
2010	68.8%	476 / 504	73.2%	450 / 504	60.6%	488 / 504
2011	67.1%	482 / 502	73.5%	463 / 502	64.0%	488 / 502
2012	66.1%	488 / 501	75.0%	464 / 501	63.8%	490 / 501
2013	66.5%	487 / 499	74.8%	470 / 499	63.5%	489 / 499
2014	69.8%	488 / 502	77.4%	469 / 502	67.3%	490 / 502
2015	69.3%	489 / 501	77.7%	458 / 501	69.4%	487 / 501
2016	66.7%	496 / 501	81.3%	433 / 501	69.3%	494 / 501

DESE (2016). Retrieved from <https://dese.mo.gov/search-mo-gov/proportional%2Battendance%2Brate>

BUILDING AWARENESS

Proportional Attendance by Grade Level

Proportional attendance data is provided below for Benton High School, Central High School and Lafayette High School. The table below shows proportional attendance by grade level at each school during the last three school years. This data shows a downward trend in proportional attendance from grades 9-12. The rate of chronic absenteeism in SJSD is provided below for grades K-12. This data shows a concerning trend of chronic absenteeism beginning as early as kindergarten.

2016 Average Proportional Attendance Rate: Grades K-12

Benton	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
9th	77.40%	73.90%	74.70%
10th	66.60%	67.60%	64.90%
11th	71.00%	65.40%	64.20%
12th	62.80%	69.90%	61.80%

Central	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
9th	83.90%	83.70%	83.90%
10th	76.60%	78.30%	85.60%
11th	75.40%	77.20%	79.50%
12th	69.70%	69.50%	75.00%

Lafayette	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
9th	72.20%	75.00%	72.20%
10th	70.70%	66.50%	71.20%
11th	62.00%	71.00%	62.40%
12th	61.50%	63.40%	70.50%

2016 Chronic Absenteeism Rate: Grades K-12

When a student is absent from school for any excused or unexcused reason for at least 10% of the school year that is defined as chronic absenteeism.

Grade	Absenteeism Rate	Student Count
K	17.1%	n=1006 students
1	12.1%	n=986 students
2	8.8%	n=1013 students
3	9.7%	n=947 students
4	8.8%	n=941 students
5	12.5%	n=917 students
6	12.1%	n=917 students
7	13.9%	n=907 students
8	22.2%	n=905 students
9	22.7%	n=860 students
10	25.6%	n=910 students
11	32.9%	n=887 students
12	33.6%	n=791 students

BUILDING AWARENESS

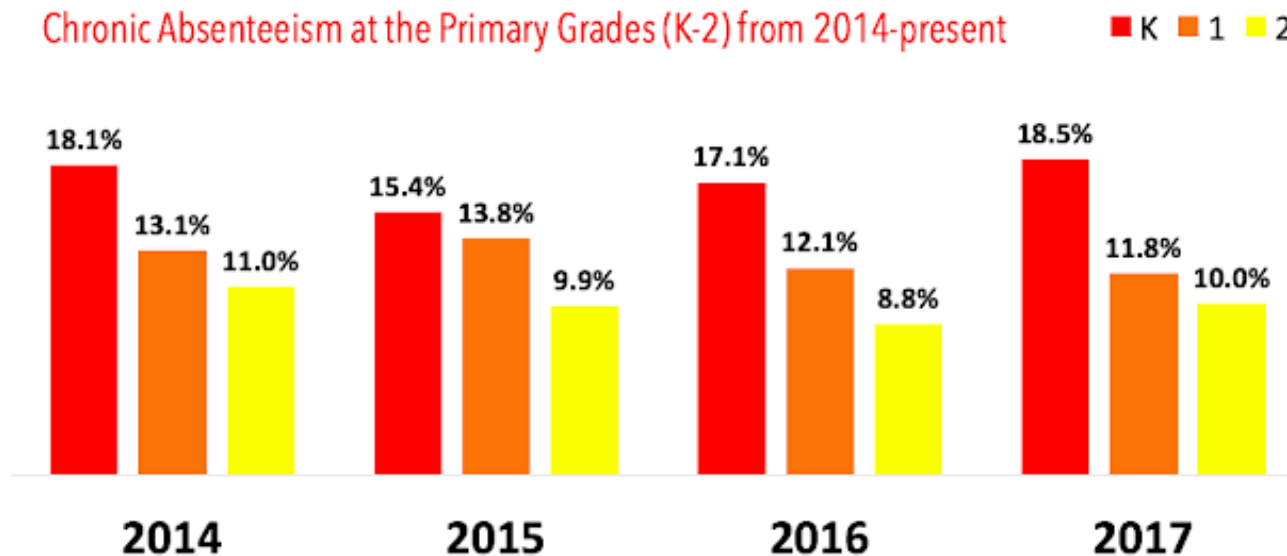
Proportional Attendance by District

The proportional attendance rate from the 2015-2016 school year placed St. Joseph School District at #518 out of #560 districts or reporting agencies. Among the 20 districts with enrollments exceeding 10,000 students, St. Joseph ranked #18 in 2015-2016.

State Rank	District	Percent At 90
151	Rockwood R-VI	93.4
172	Francis Howell R-III	93.1
180	Parkway C-2	93.0
195	Lee's Summit R-VII	92.8
209	Blue Springs R-IV	92.6
220	Mehlville R-IX	92.4
265	Ft. Zumwalt R-II	91.8
292	Liberty 53	91.4
350	Park Hill	90.5
357	Wentzville R-IV	90.3
364	Fox C-6	90.2
407	North Kansas City 74	89.2
446	St. Louis City	88.3
449	Columbia 93	88.3
496	Hazelwood	86.1
497	Springfield R-XII	86.0
514	Ferguson-Florissant R-II	84.7
518	St. Joseph	84.4
531	Kansas City 33	83.0
537	Independence 30	82.1

BUILDING AWARENESS

- Further analysis showed a serious issue with chronic absenteeism in grades K-2, with consistently high rates of absenteeism over a four year period ([link](#)).



ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

- In the spring of 2017, district administrators conferenced with representatives from Attendance Works, a national attendance improvement initiative located in Washington D.C.
- Their input was invaluable as the district developed policy recommendations and PDSA action steps.



ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

To ensure alignment to the district's strategic plan the following SMART goal was developed to guide planning:

- The SJSJ will increase attendance from 84.0% to 87% in SY18 and achieve 8 points on the Annual Performance Report (this equates to 450 more students in the 90% category).

ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

- The district attendance policy was revised to include [research](#) about chronic absenteeism, attendance [guidelines](#), and reporting procedures for the elementary and secondary grade levels.
- Policy changes included [standardized procedures](#) for parent communication, attendance letters, and revised high school credit requirements.

ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

- A tiered reporting schedule was developed to monitor progress and communicate with students and parents.

Absences	Semester 1	Semester 2	Reports & Letters	Attendance Conferences
2	Aug. 28	Jan. 16	Report mailed home	-
3	Sept. 11	Jan. 22	Report mailed home	-
3	Sept. 18	Jan. 29	Report mailed home	-
4	Sept. 25	Feb. 5	Report mailed home	principal/student conference
4	Oct. 2	Feb. 12	Report mailed home	principal/student conference
5	Oct. 9	Feb. 20	Report mailed home	parent phone call
5	Oct. 16	Feb. 26	Report mailed home	parent phone call
5	Oct. 23	Mar. 5	Report mailed home	parent phone call
6	Oct. 30	Mar. 12	Report mailed home	parent conference requested
6	Nov. 6	Mar. 19	Report mailed home	parent conference requested
6	Nov. 13	Mar. 26	Report mailed home	parent conference requested
7	Nov. 20	Apr. 16	certified letter mailed	-
7	Nov. 27	April 23	certified letter mailed	-
7	Dec. 4	April 30	certified letter mailed	-
8	Dec. 11	May 7	certified letter mailed	-
8	Dec. 18	May 14	certified letter mailed	-

STRIVE FOR FIVE

- Following extensive study, our district embarked on a journey to replicate elements of the Challenge Five Initiative from Grand Rapids Public Schools in Michigan.



***STRIVE FOR LESS THAN
FIVE DAYS ABSENT!™***

Regular school attendance prepares
students to be COLLEGE & CAREER ready.

#StriveFor5StJoe

LAUNCH OF ATTENDANCE INITIATIVE

- Our Superintendent announced the launch of the Strive for Five attendance initiative to the local media in August.
- The initiative was introduced to every K-12 administrator in the Buchanan County Prosecuting Attorney's conference room.



LAUNCH OF ATTENDANCE INITIATIVE

- Introductory press conference at Parkway Elementary on August 14.



LAUNCH OF ATTENDANCE INITIATIVE

- An informational presentation was developed to explain to students and parents how our district arrived at the five day goal. [\(link\)](#)
- Secondary students reviewed the presentation on the first day of school during their advisory period.



LAUNCH OF ATTENDANCE INITIATIVE

- Exterior and interior signage installed at each school before August 16.



LAUNCH OF ATTENDANCE INITIATIVE

- Leaderboards were installed inside each school to chart monthly attendance by grade level.

LEADER BOARD

CHALLENGE
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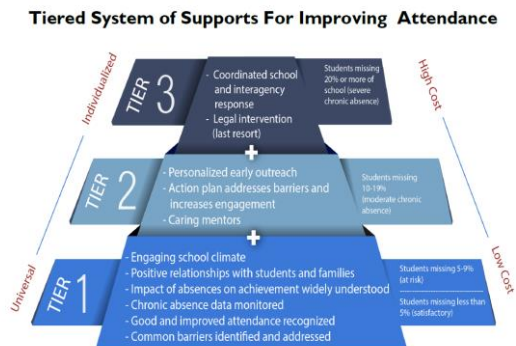
STRIVE FOR LESS THAN FIVE DAYS ABSENT!™

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SEPTEMBER	85%	91%	85%	98%	91%	94%	94%
OCTOBER							
NOVEMBER							



LAUNCH OF ATTENDANCE INITIATIVE

- Toolkits developed for school leaders at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels.
- Resources included prepared social media posts, sample letters for parents, fliers, design elements, and personal calendars for elementary students.



CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM
means missing 18 days or more of the school year.

THAT IS 2 DAYS PER MONTH!

STRIVE FOR LESS THAN FIVE DAYS ABSENT!

MISSING TWO DAYS PER MONTH PUTS YOUR GRADUATION AT RISK.

Students who miss as little as two days per month put themselves at risk of not graduating from high school.*

*Source: North Central Comprehensive Center

#StriveFor5StJoe
STRIVE FOR LESS THAN FIVE DAYS ABSENT!

CHALLENGE 5 DESIGN
STRIVE FOR LESS THAN FIVE DAYS ABSENT!

We are excited to have you enrolled in school and we look forward to each opportunity to educate you. As a school, we would like to partner with you to combat chronic absences by striving for less than five days absent per school year. Use the information below to help you start forming healthy habits for the school year and your future.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Make sure you have the required shots before school begins.
- Lay out clothes and pack your bags each night before school.
- Create a regular routine for going to sleep and waking up in the morning.
- Arrange medical appointments and vacations when school is not in session.

Check with our school nurse or office staff if you are not sure whether to stay home due to illness.

If you are anxious about going to school, talk to teachers or school counselors for advice.

Reach out to a family member or trusted adult if you are having trouble getting to school.

ONGOING COMMUNICATION

- Sideline banners and PSA announcements were shared during varsity football games throughout the fall.



ONGOING COMMUNICATION

- Athletes and coaches from the Kansas City Chiefs and Missouri Western State University delivered encouraging messages about the importance of regular attendance.



ONGOING COMMUNICATION

- District officials rode on a float during the Southside Fall Festival Parade in September and the Northside Festival parade in October



MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT STRIVE FOR FIVE

- You only care because you want the ADA
- We don't need this at all of the schools
- This isn't an issue at my child's school
- 90% attendance is good enough – It's an "A"
- Missing a couple days each month is fine
- Lack of understanding about barriers to attendance
- Missing school during grades Pre-K through 2nd grade doesn't really matter all that much
- You are forcing kids to come to school sick

BIG IDEAS ABOUT REGULAR ATTENDANCE

- The goal of missing fewer than 5 days is about resetting community norms about absenteeism and better preparing our kids to compete in the world, wherever their HS diploma and dreams take them.
- Showing up each day is a mindset. Students who attend school regularly become adults who show up to work each day, ready to contribute value to their employer and the community where they live.

BIG IDEAS ABOUT REGULAR ATTENDANCE

- Children in every Missouri community manage chronic health conditions or seasonal illnesses. We are not unique. What is unique is our tolerance of low student attendance over the past decade.
- Telling ourselves that we have it worse than any other community is not accurate or helpful. That only serves to normalize and institutionalize mediocrity. We are so much better than that as a community.

PDSA ACTION STEPS

Community Engagement

- Designed to engage parents in attendance improvement efforts and reinforce the habit of regular attendance, the walking school bus was implemented at Edison Elementary the fall of 2017.



PDSA ACTION STEPS

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

- A district leadership team was established to lead the implementation of the MTSS model with a focus on academics, behavior, and attendance.
- An integrated system of student supports was developed during the 2017-18 school year ([link](#)).

PDSA ACTION STEPS

Social Emotional Learning Supports

- Three core action steps targeted the social emotional domain including the monitoring of hope and engagement.
- Resources used include the Gallup Student Poll, the implementation of the Strong Kids curriculum by the middle school counseling department, and Sprigeo as an online bully prevention resource.

PDSA ACTION STEPS

Instructional Delivery

- To encourage persistence to graduation, a virtual learning platform was adopted for the high school level to support credit recovery, alternative education, and homebound instructional services.
- A competency-based program was implemented for high school students at Webster Learning Center during the 2017-18 school year.

PDSA ACTION STEPS

Data Analysis

- In support of the MTSS process, attendance review teams were established at each school to review student attendance data every 10 days. Teams were composed of an administrator, counselor, nurse, social worker, and attendance secretary.

PDSA ACTION STEPS

District Policy

- In support of regular attendance, several policies were implemented to target specific grade spans. Graduation credits were increased for the class of 2021 to narrow the gap between available and required credits.
- The district late work policy was revised to allow 1 day extra per absence to complete work, a reduction from 5 days.

PDSA ACTION STEPS

District Policy

- A mandatory summer school policy was implemented in students in grades K-8 based on chronic absenteeism and academic performance.
- The high school attendance policy was revised and established an 8 absence limit per class, per semester in order to earn credit.

PDSA ACTION STEPS

Communication

- A tiered approach to parent communication was developed for the elementary and secondary level based on absenteeism.
- Attendance frequency reports, proportional attendance reports, and standardized attendance letters were developed in the school information system.

MEDIA COVERAGE

- Over 20 articles and news reports were completed by local news media about the attendance initiative from August 2017 through May 2018.
- Reports are archived online ([link](#)).

VIDEO: Absenteeism in St. Joe is highest in kindergarten



STUDENT LEADERSHIP

- Student leaders at the high school level provided input on desired incentives, short-term booster activities, and helped spread the message of regular attendance across the community.



REMOVING BARRIERS

- Missouri Care made a special donation of a washer and dryer to help break down barriers to regular attendance for students at Truman and Bode Middle Schools.



FUNDING THE INITIATIVE

- A budget of \$15,000 was created and funded by the school district and community partners to launch the attendance initiative.
- There were additional building and district costs for student celebrations and postage.

Budgeted Expenses to Launch Initiative	
*Project Management & Marketing	\$8,563.27
Strive for Five Leaderboards (17)	\$2,639.97
Strive for Five video	\$980.00
Strive for Five posters (hallways)	\$875.54
Strive for Five T-Shirts	\$330.60
	\$13,389.38

*Project management, designing, copywriting, printing for Knock & Talk, development of toolkit, translation of materials into Spanish.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- The community partners listed below made generous gifts of time, funding, supplies, gift certificates, and resources to support our attendance initiative.



CELEBRATIONS

- Frequent celebrations were planned throughout the district to recognize regular attendance.
- Schools were recognized for improvement on the initiative's website at www.strivefor5stjoe.com and on Twitter at @StriveFor5StJoe.

CELEBRATIONS

- Hy-Vee donated hundreds of cookies to the elementary, middle, and high school with the highest attendance in September.



CELEBRATIONS

- Hyde Elementary held a “You Can Make it Week!” as a timely intervention when staff noticed a small decline in student attendance.



CELEBRATIONS

- Spring Garden found ways to monitor progress and encourage regular attendance using seasonal themes such as Thanksgiving break.



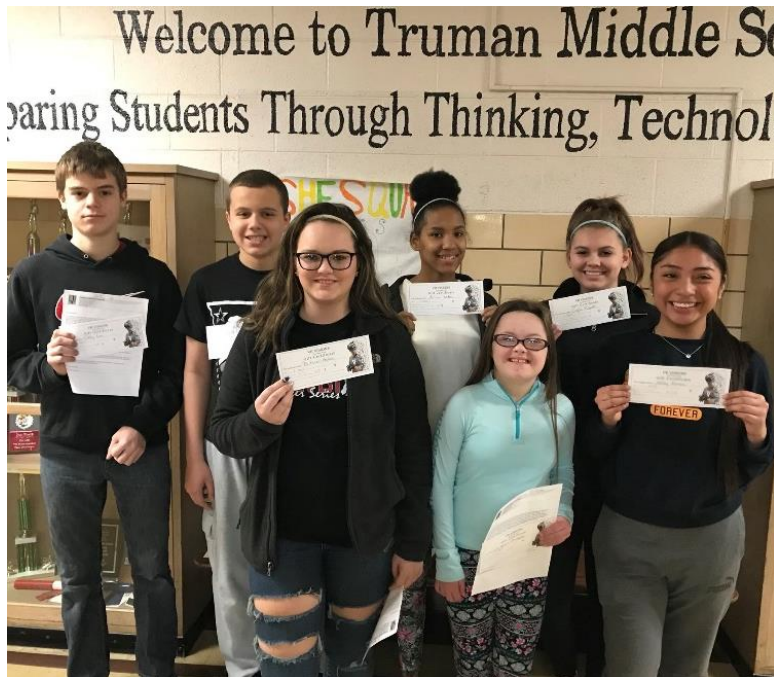
CELEBRATIONS

- In honor of their school's 100th anniversary, Lafayette High School treated 181 students with 100% attendance to a luncheon catered by Olive Garden.



CELEBRATIONS

- Students in grades K-12 enjoyed surprise incentives and recognitions to celebrate 95-100% attendance (VIP lunch seating, gift cards, gold card bowling trip, etc.)



STAFF INCENTIVES

- Teachers at Lafayette High School with perfect attendance enjoyed a special luncheon in their honor.
- The Human Resources office distributes certificates for perfect staff attendance each quarter.



SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES

- By the end of the first quarter there were 748 more students with perfect attendance than at the same time the previous year.
- During the first semester there was a 14% decrease in instructional time missed from 2016 to 2017 with 46,703 fewer hours of instruction missed ([link](#)).

SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES

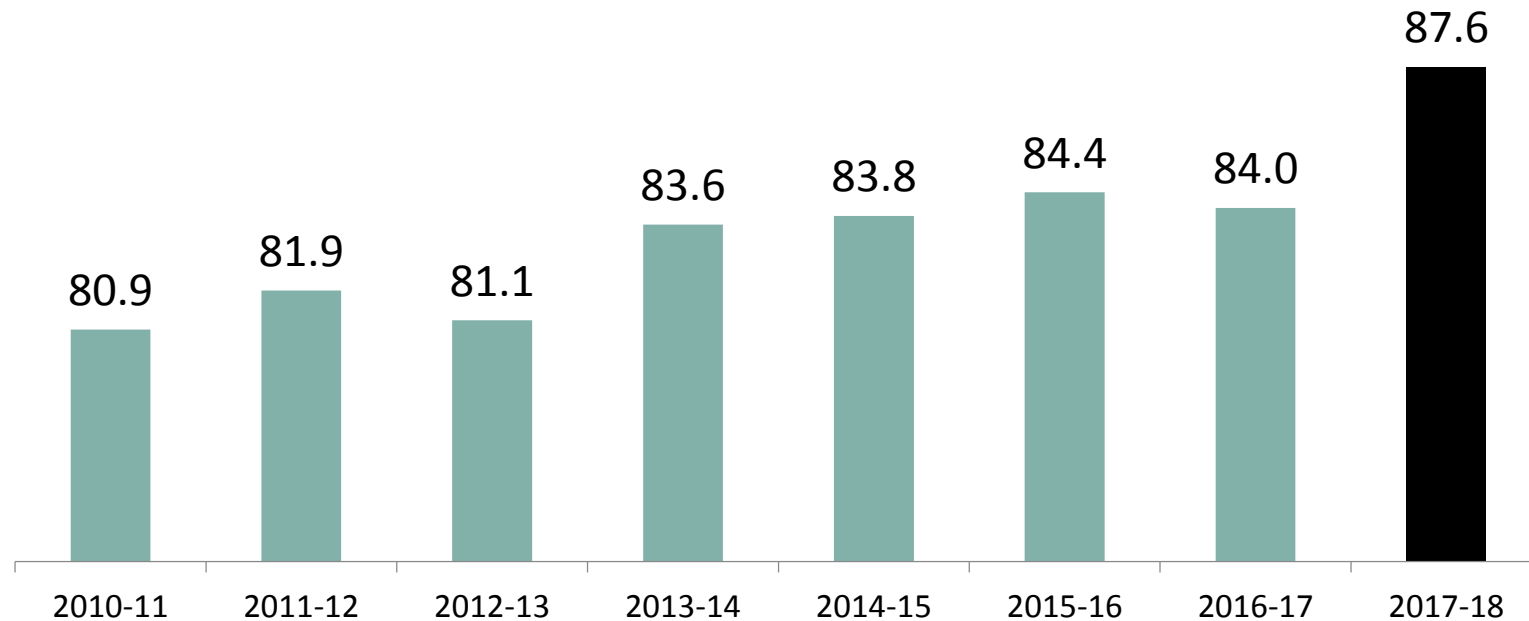
- Analysis suggests that students continued to receive treatment for medical appointments while unverified absences, parent choice, health, and general absences declined [\(link\)](#).
- There was also a notable increase of college visits from high school students in 2017 [\(link\)](#).

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

- Knock and Talk Program in grades K-10.
- Letters to the Editor.
- Concerns about sending sick kids to school.
- Feedback on social media.
- Identifying staff for implementation efforts.
- Fidelity of practice for attendance review teams.
- Community response to attendance letters.
- Unanticipated attendance dip in March.
- Staff and student buy-in.

RESULTS FROM YEAR 1

- Proportional attendance increased 3.59% during the 2017-18 school year [\(link\)](#).

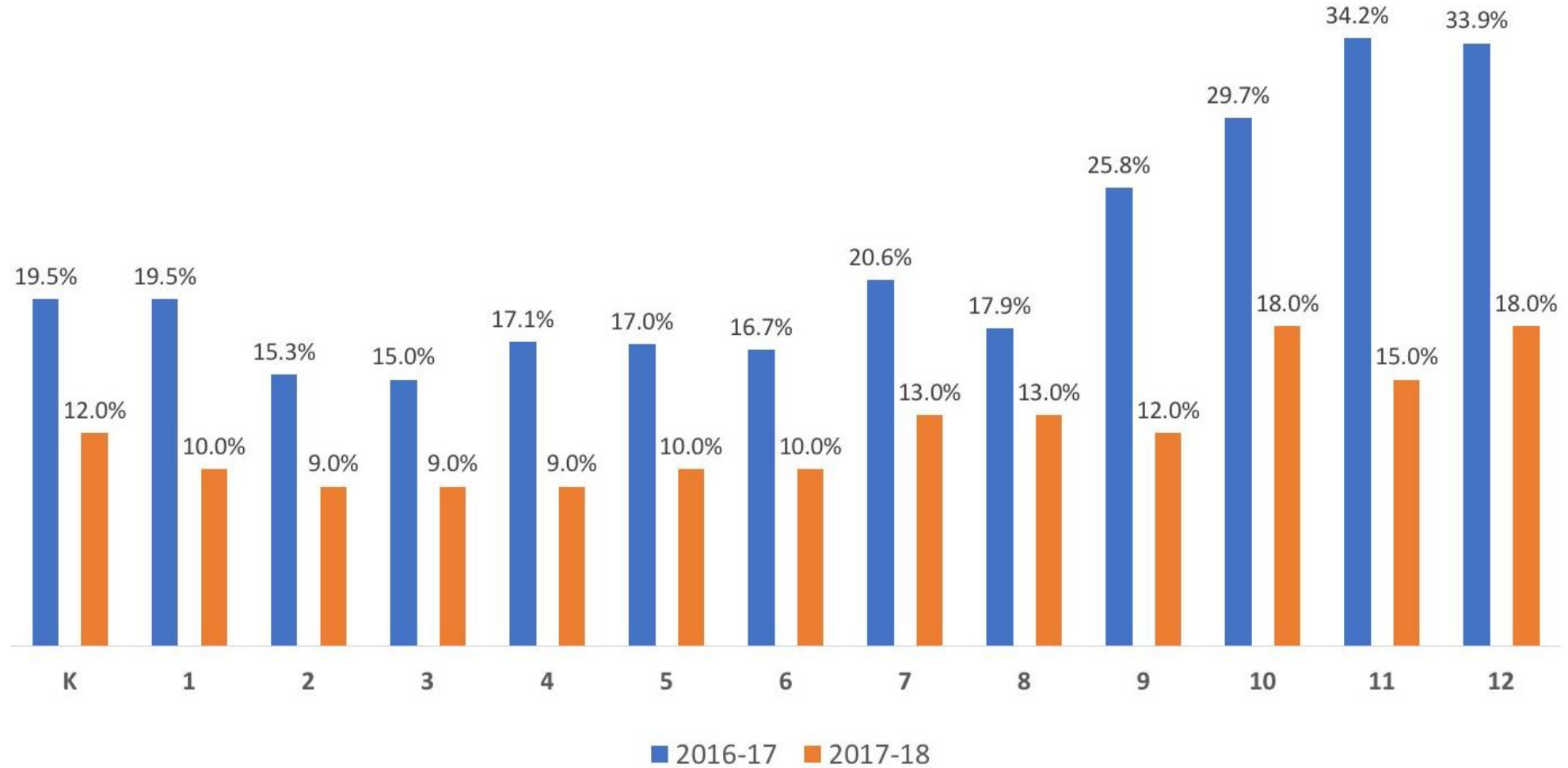


RESULTS FROM YEAR 1

- Proportional attendance increased 3.5% at Middle School and increased 7.9% at High School.
- 21 schools increased proportional attendance from the previous school year. 13 schools saw improvements of more than 3%.
- 10 schools met the 90% state guideline in 2017-18, an increase of 2 schools from the previous year.



CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RATES BY GRADES K-12



PDSA and MTSS:

Engaging Stakeholders for Attendance Improvement



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