

# House Education Committee Attendance Report

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development

Dr. Deena Bishop, Commissioner

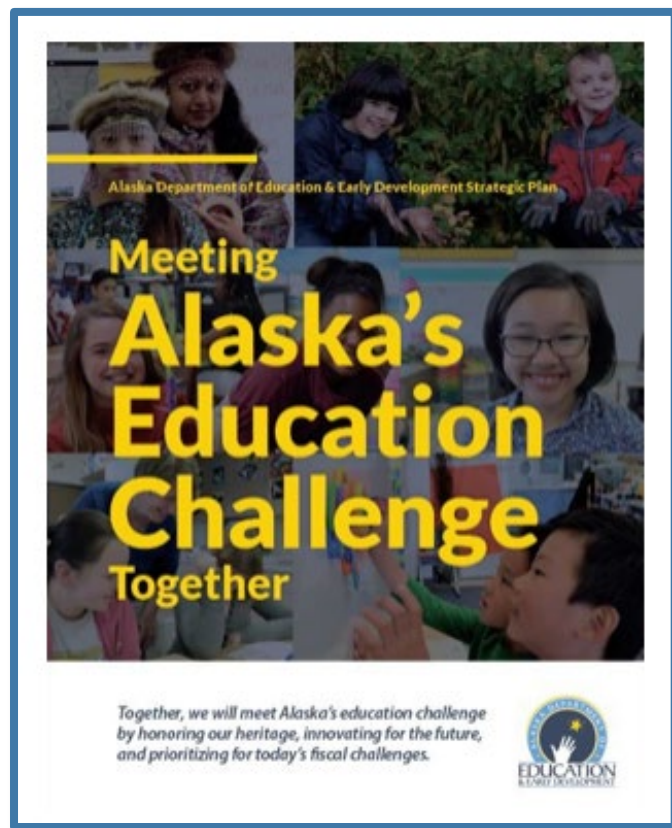
April 11, 2025



# Mission, Vision, and Purpose

Mission	Vision	Purpose
<p>An excellent education for every student every day.</p>	<p>All students will succeed in their education and work, shape worthwhile and satisfying lives for themselves, exemplify the best values of society, and be effective in improving the character and quality of the world about them. - Alaska Statute 14.03.015</p>	<p>DEED exists to provide <b>information, resources, and leadership</b> to support an excellent education for every student every day.</p>

# Alaska's Education Challenge



## Five Shared Strategic Priorities:

1. Support all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.
2. Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs.
3. Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources.
4. Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals.
5. Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and tribes.

# 01 ATTENDANCE & CHRONIC ABSENCE

## WHY IT MATTERS

Attendance is a crucial issue in Alaska schools. During the 2022-2023 school year, 45% of students were chronically absent, meaning they missed more than 10% of the school year.

Recognizing this challenge, the State Board of Education (SBOE) Chair asked:

### WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ADDRESS CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM?

#### CHILDREN WHO ARE CHRONICALLY ABSENT ARE MORE LIKELY TO:



Fall behind in reading by the end of third grade



Struggle in Middle School



Be at risk of not graduating High School on time

# 02 CHRONIC ABSENCE VS. ATTENDANCE

## *WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?*

### CHRONIC ABSENCE

Chronic Absence acts as an early warning system. Identifying students who miss 10% or more of the school year—even intermittently—helps schools address academic risks proactively.

### ATTENDANCE

Attendance is a straightforward measure: the total days attended divided by the total days in session. For all schools, the goal is for students to attend at least 95% of school days.

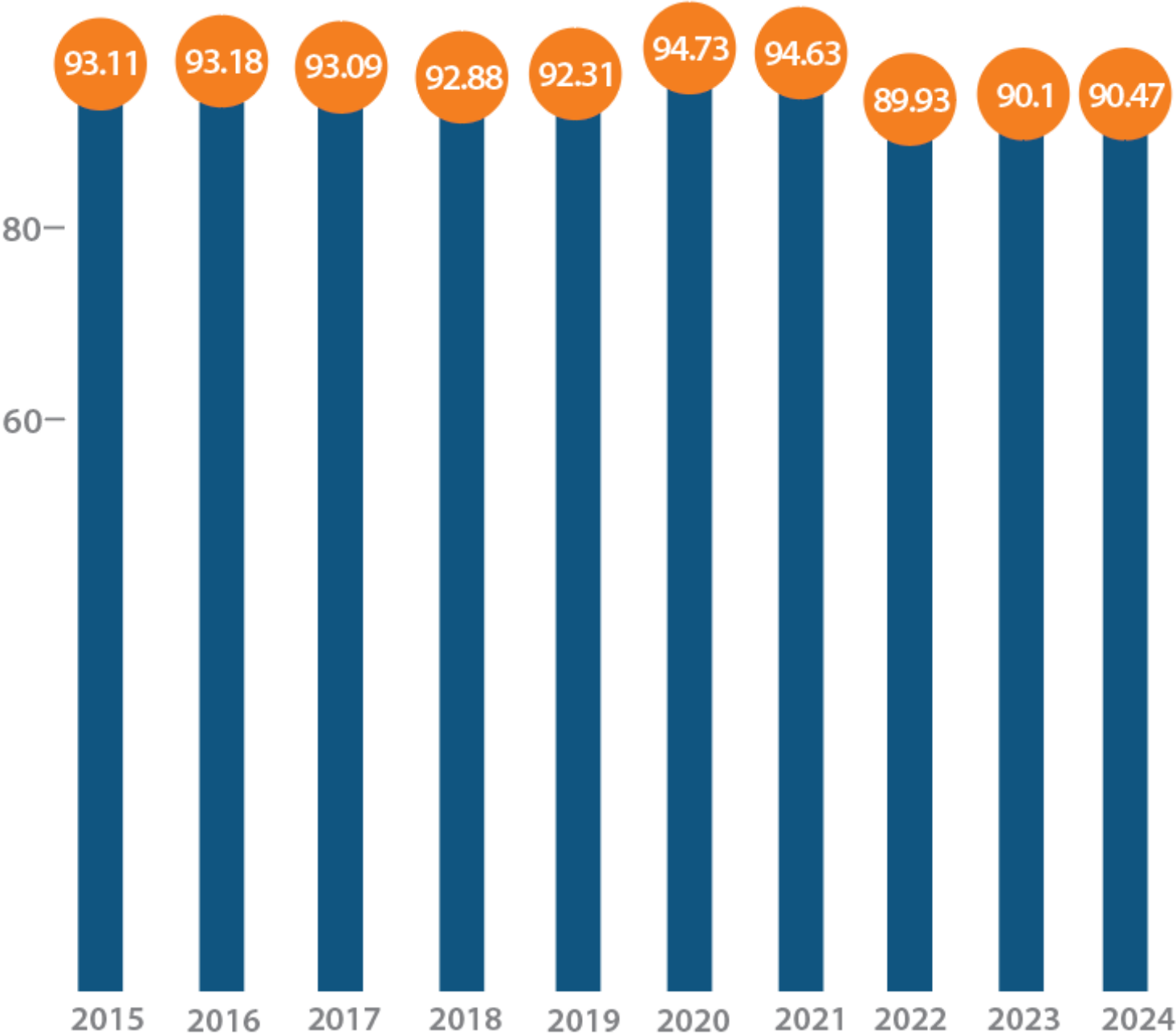


Students missing 2-4 days in September are five times more likely to be chronically absent for the rest of the year



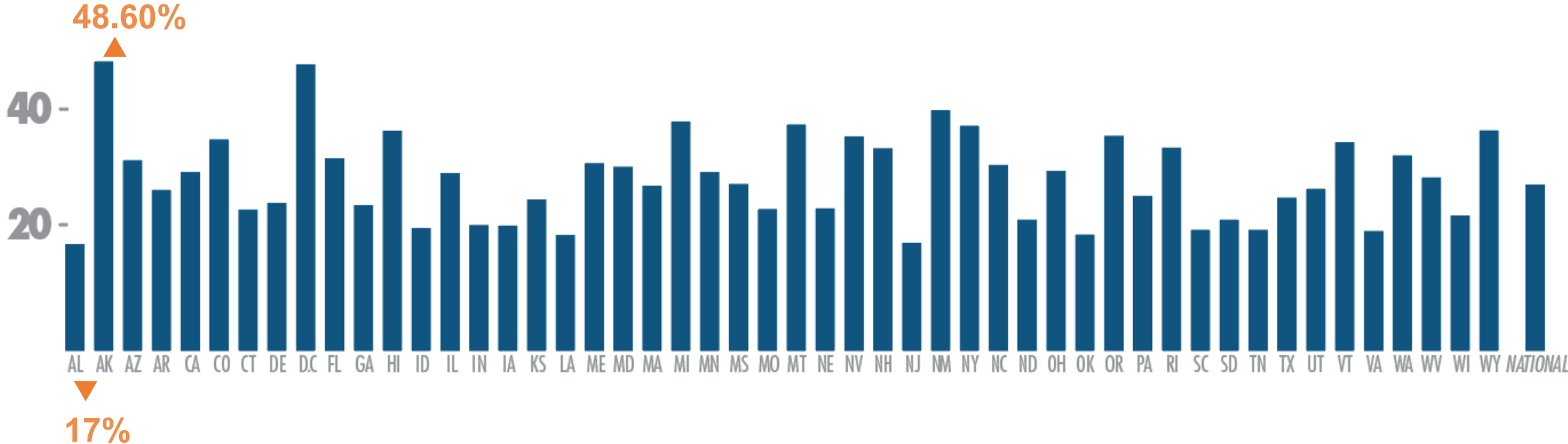
Missing just two days per month equates to 10% of the school year—or 18 total missed days, which is nearly one month of lost instruction

# ALASKA STATE ATTENDANCE AVERAGE



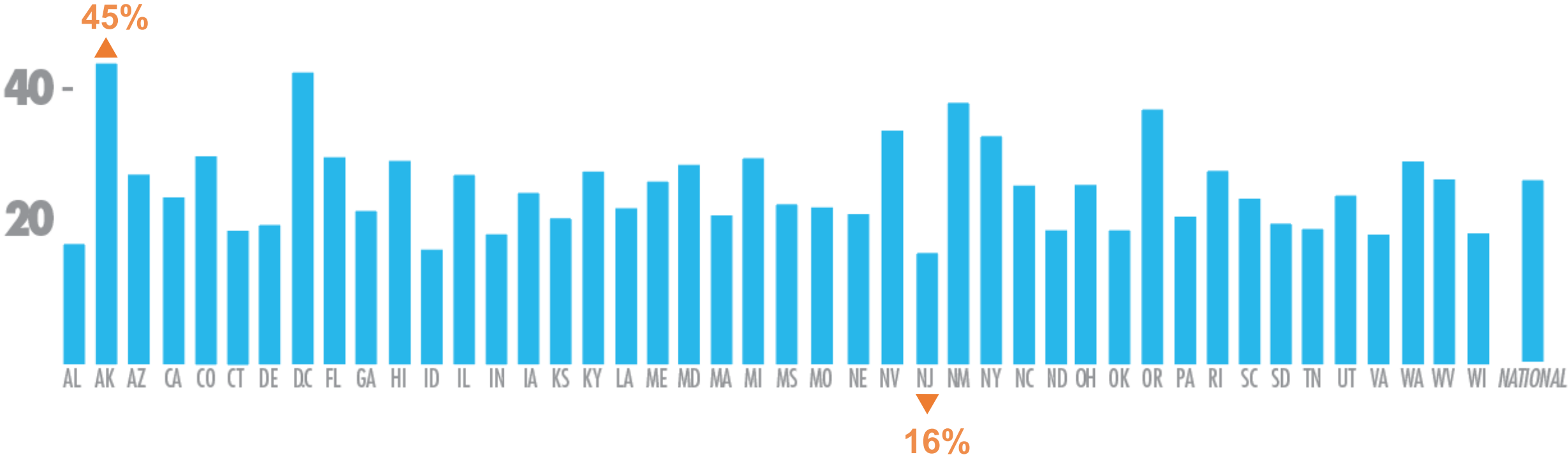
# NATIONAL CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RATES

2021-22



# NATIONAL CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RATES

2022-23





# 03 WHY ARE STUDENTS ABSENT?

*UNDERSTANDING THE ROOT CAUSE OF ABSENTEEISM IS CRITICAL*



Collaborate with districts to explore the factors driving absenteeism in their school communities



Engage students and families as active partners in developing solutions, rather than framing them as part of the problem



ATTENDANCE

=



ENGAGEMENT  
IN SCHOOL

=

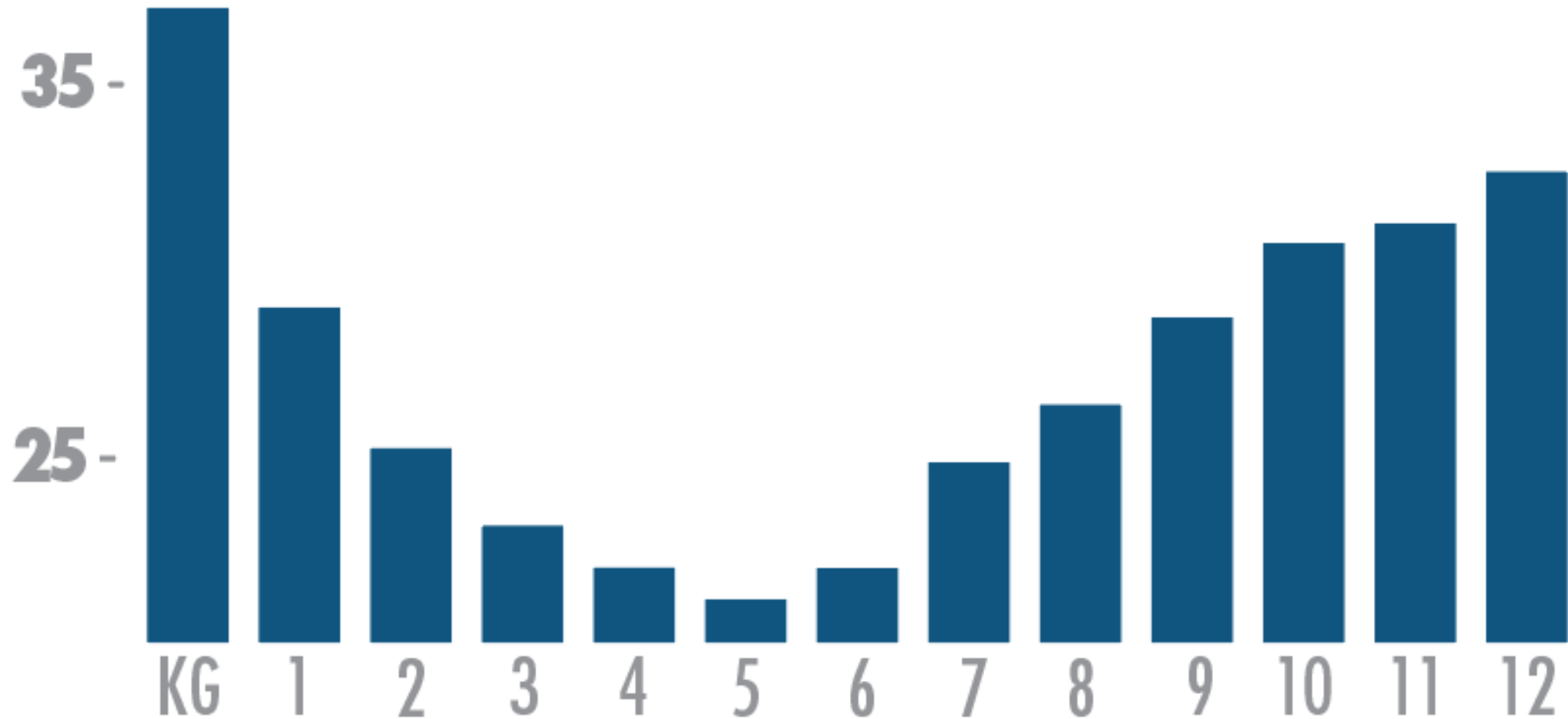


STUDENT  
LEARNING

**Missed school days directly impact student wellness and academic outcomes**

# NATIONAL CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM BY GRADE LEVEL

2022-2023

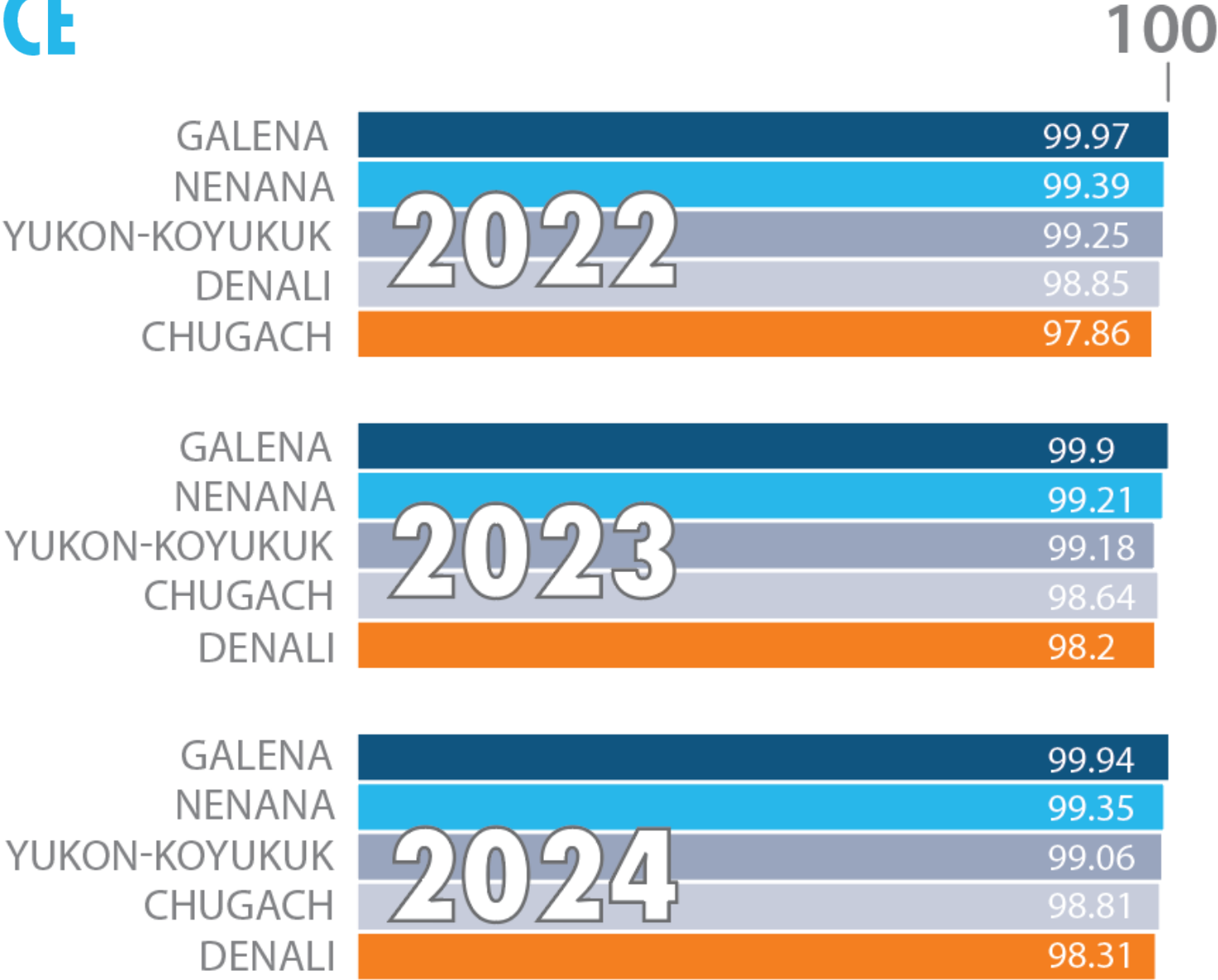


# DISTRICTS WITH THE HIGHEST ATTENDANCE

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Our primary focus has been to raise the presence of positive messaging around attendance and improve attendance data collection and sharing. By reducing chronic absenteeism, we aim to work directly with families on hurdles to regular attendance.

– Dan Polta, Superintendent



# DISTRICTS WITH THE LOWEST CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

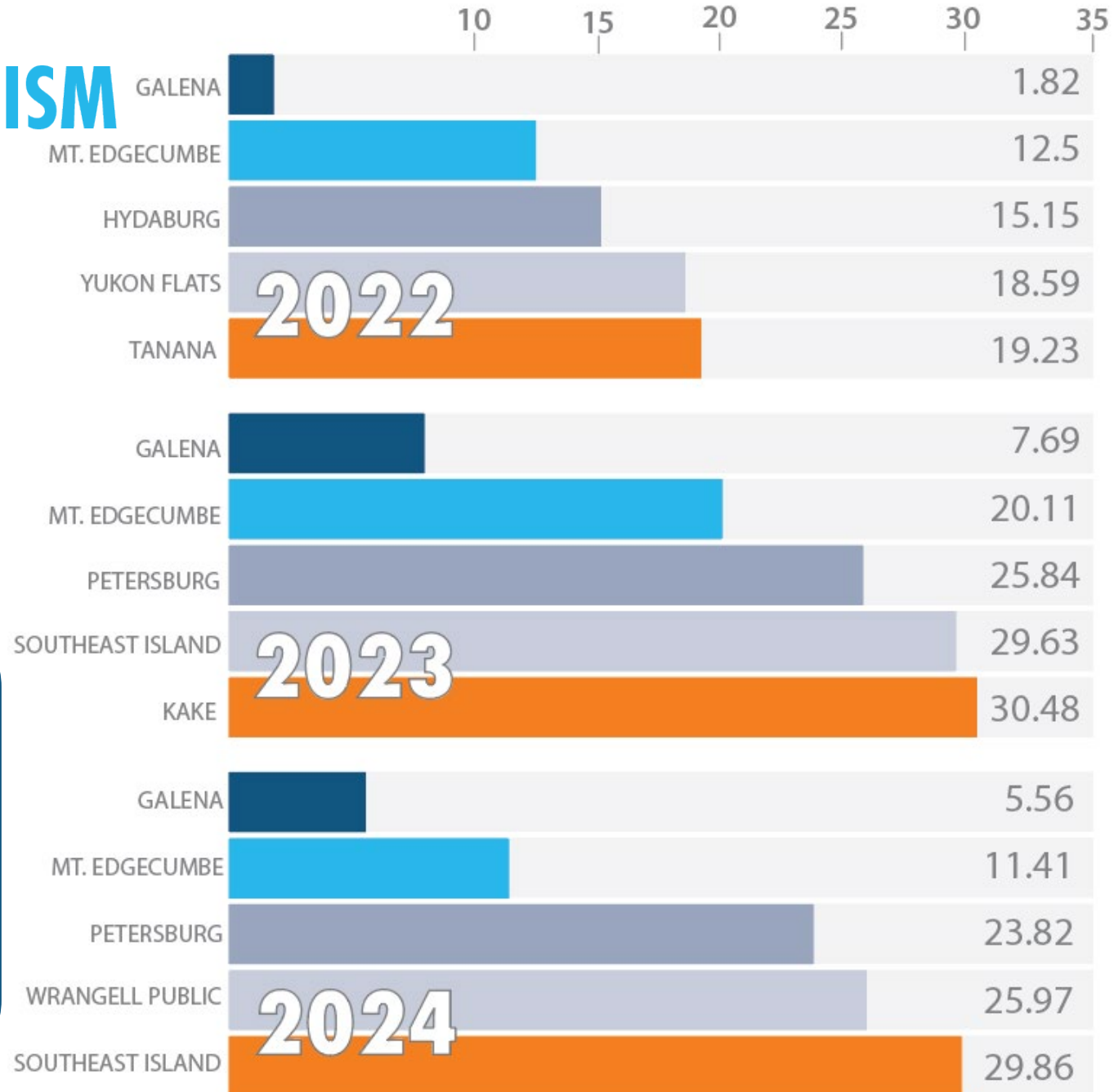
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

This is a community-wide effort where the value of education has long been entrenched in the culture. The schools are truly the heart of the community, supported by agencies, tribes, and families working together to ensure student success.

Robyn Taylor | Superintendent

At Southeast Island School District, we have built a strong culture of care, connection, and support, where attending school is an expectation and a natural part of our community. Our small schools foster close relationships and meaningful learning experiences, making education relevant and inspiring for our students.

Rod Morrison | Superintendent



# 04 ALASKA'S COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAWS

**AS 14.30.010**

***WHEN ATTENDANCE COMPULSORY***

**AS 14.30.020**

***VIOLATIONS***

**AS 14.30.030**

***PREVENTION AND REDUCTION OF TRUANCY***

# 05 WHAT CAN DEED DO TO SUPPORT SCHOOLS?

*PROVIDE VALUABLE RESOURCES & PARTNERSHIPS TO COMBAT CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM*



Partner with education stakeholders to raise awareness of the issue



Leverage and align existing improvement systems



Expand Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to provide universal resources for all schools

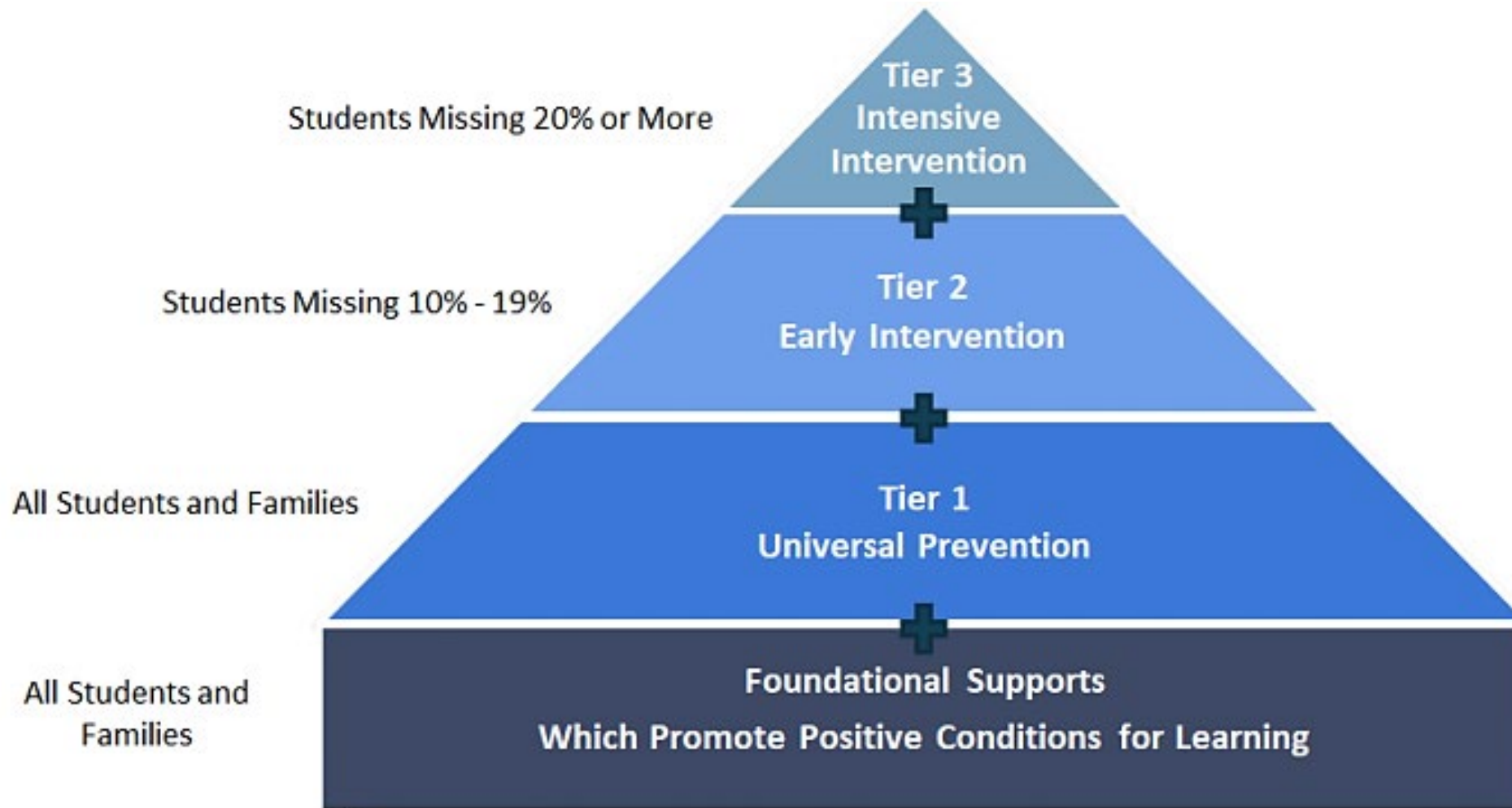
# EXAMPLE OF LEVERAGING EXISTING REQUIREMENTS

## DEED School Support

- Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) Schools
- Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) Schools
- Alaska Reads Act – District Reading Improvement Plan (DRIP)/Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

**WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ADDRESS CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM?**

# IMPROVEMENT PLANS INCORPORATING MTSS (MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS)





# 06 EVIDENCE-BASED SOLUTIONS

## HOW TO ADDRESS CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM EFFECTIVELY

### Shift Attitudes and Beliefs



Challenge outdated perspectives on absenteeism (those shaped by the pandemic)

### Use Data for Proactive Solutions



Monitor attendance trends closely & intervene early

### Build Capacity with District Partners



Provide training, tools & resources to support attendance initiatives

### Implement Evidence-Based Strategies



Introduce programs that have proven to reduce absenteeism & foster student engagement

# BUILDING AWARENESS



# Contact Information

Dr. Deena Bishop, Commissioner

Department of Education and Early Development

[deed.commissioner@alaska.gov](mailto:deed.commissioner@alaska.gov)

(907) 465-2802

## Stay Connected

### Find us online:

- Our website: [education.alaska.gov](http://education.alaska.gov)
- Facebook and Twitter: @AlaskaDEED

### Give us a call:

- Main line: 907 465 2800