



Reducing Chronic Absenteeism to Increase Student Success

Course Syllabus

Course Description

School success is often evaluated through three key indicators: academic achievement, student behavior, and attendance. Among these, reducing chronic absenteeism is a critical first step—students cannot learn effectively or benefit from behavioral supports if they are not present. While improving attendance may seem straightforward, it is a complex challenge that demands intentional planning and a multifaceted approach. This course equips educators with essential background knowledge about chronic absenteeism and its far-reaching effects. Participants will explore evidence-based strategies and practical tools designed to strengthen student engagement, improve attendance, and foster a culture of consistent school participation.

This course enhances classroom teaching effectiveness and supports improved student outcomes by introducing new knowledge in understanding and addressing chronic absenteeism through tiered systems of support and evidence-based attendance strategies.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Define chronic absenteeism and identify two of its causes, and two of its impacts.
2. Explain the components of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) and outline two specific Tier 1 strategies in a brief written plan for reducing chronic absenteeism.
3. Design and implement one Tier 1 activity—such as a family communication plan or classroom relationship-building routine—and reflect on its potential impact on attendance.
4. Select one Tier 1 strategy (e.g., health support, incentive program, or enrichment opportunity), adapt it to your specific context, and draft an implementation outline.
5. List and categorize two Tier 2 interventions for at-risk students and develop a brief case-study example demonstrating how one intervention could be applied.
6. Describe two intensive Tier 3 interventions and create an individualized support plan for a hypothetical student with severe attendance challenges.

Modules

- Module 1: Chronic Absenteeism, Quiz 1
- Module 2: Tiered System of Supports & Tier 1 Supports, Quiz 2
- Module 3: A Deep Dive into Tier 1 Supports, Quiz 3
- Module 4: A Deeper Dive into Tier 1 Supports, Quiz 4



- Module 5: Tier 2 Supports, Quiz 5
- Module 6: Tier 3 Supports, Quiz 6

Grading

Each quiz must be passed at an 80% or higher (three attempts allowed).

Format

This is a self-paced, asynchronous (no required live meetings) course. Throughout the PD course, you will find it helpful to take notes along the way to assist with the quizzes. Within each module, you will find reflection assessments that are not graded but will help in your journey through the course. There is an interactive forum in the course to help you connect with peers and instructors, share ideas, and collaborate on best practices throughout your learning journey.