Chronic Absenteeism, Causes, and Relationships to School Climate

By

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A Capstone Project submitted to the
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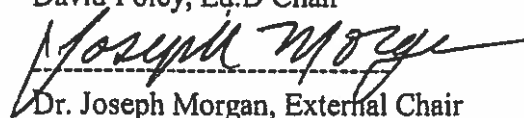and Administration

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Chronic Absenteeism: Causes and Relationship to School Climate

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Abstract

The purpose of this quantitative study is to provide data connections between access to transportation, positive school climate and chronic student absenteeism. The research focuses on broad questions: What are the common causes of chronic absenteeism in a rural American school? What impact does school climate have on chronic absenteeism? Do busing, student mentors/advisors, and improved school climate improve the rate of attendance in a rural school district? The study group for transportation was 1,500 students from the Waverly Central School District. The research study group for the Comprehensive School Climate Survey included over 800 students in grades 3-12 from the Waverly Central School District. The data demonstrates that there is a correlation between the addition of in-town bus routes and social emotional supports, and increased attendance.

Acknowledgments

The process for this doctoral capstone started long ago with a simple expectation from my parents. The mantra in our house was to perform at the highest level of your ability. My parents, Clyde and Monica Knolles, would never accept anything less than your best. My first college experience was unsuccessful, and I had given up on returning. I want to thank my mother and my wife, Melissa, for the encouragement to go back and the support to be successful. Without their support and understanding, I would not be in this position today. The final family member I need to thank is my daughter, Abbey. She has been understanding about long nights and lost weekends as I try to set a positive example for work ethic and achievement.

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Finally, thanks to the California University of Pennsylvania for the opportunity to join their first Educational Doctorate program. The support and guidance throughout the program was terrific, and I feel honored to be a part of the first Vulcan Class.

Contents

Research Questions

What external factors affect (outside of school) students' attendance?

- What is the attendance relationship between having in-town bus runs and not having in-town bus runs?

- Has the attendance rate changed between 2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2019-2020 due to the addition of in-town busing?

What internal factors affect (inside of school) student attendance?

- What is the relationship between students who feel safe at school and absenteeism?

- What is the relationship between students connected to an adult in the school environment and the rate of attendance?

- How do the rates of attendance compare with the addition of student advisors to the previous three years without the student advisors?

- How have changes in leadership affected the rates of attendance?

Introduction

The idea for this study started in February of 2018, when the researcher took the position of district superintendent at the Waverly Central School District in the Southern Tier of New York. The school district is comprised of approximately 1,500 students and is identified as a rural high-needs district by the New York Department of Education. All students in the district receive free lunch under the Community Eligibility Provision of the National School Lunch Program of the US Department of Agriculture. The school district was originally identified as a district in need of improvement by the New York State Education Department during the 2015-2016 academic year. The 2017 New York State accountability report card identified the district as failing to meet standards in: graduation rate (75%), performance standards in ELA and Math for the middle school level (5-8), and performance for students with special needs (K-12). The middle school was on year two of a direct State Intervention School Improvement Process (SIP) that could lead to loss of local control if the standards of performance are not reached in a four to five-year window.

In February of 2018, the leadership team at the Waverly Central School District started to analyze data relating to school performance. One of the statistics that was identified early in the process was attendance. During the 2016-2017 school year, the chronic attendance rate for the Waverly Central School District was 24%. This data indicated that 1 in 4 students in the school district misses 18 or more days of school each academic year. The graduation rate at the same time was hovering around 75% in 2016 and 2017. The leadership team identified the chronic absenteeism as a correlating factor to the low graduation rate. The team began to implement

more research on attendance to identify factors that could be used in the SIP process to improve the graduation and performance rates of all students.

In April of 2018, the Waverly Central School District received a report from the Tioga County Mental Health Department. The report was the summary data of a Prevention Needs Assessment Survey (PNAS) given to all Waverly students in grades 8, 10 and 12.[1] The critical finding for our district involved a low commitment to school by our students, multiple depressive symptoms and fear of being attacked and seriously injured while in school. The risk numbers were significantly higher at Waverly than the Tioga County average (six school districts in the county). For example, 12.1% of Waverly students identified being suspended in the last school year versus the county norm of 5.6%. Waverly students identified that they had attacked someone at school with the idea of seriously hurting them at a rate of 16.7%, compared to the county average of 7.1%. Drug and alcohol abuse while at school was reported at a 6.1% rate compared to the county-wide rate of 3.4%. The leadership team correlated this normed survey data to indicate a serious culture problem in the Waverly School District.

The Waverly School District took steps to address culture by creating school resource teams in the spring of 2018. The goal of the school resource team was to review attendance issues, work with families and create positive culture events for the individual schools. In the summer of 2018, the leadership team went on a planning retreat off site in Rochester, NY. The discussions at the retreat revealed that the school district did not have the resources to combat the negative school climate. In particular, the middle level (5-8) and the intermediate elementary school (2-4) were being overwhelmed with attendance and school discipline issues. The Waverly

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[1] The summary findings and next steps can be found in Appendix 1.

Board of Education approved a plan presented by the superintendent to hire additional personnel

to address the issue of school climate at the intermediate and middle level of the school district.

The civil service position title of family-student advisor was created to specifically address

school-family communication, attendance issues and climate in the school buildings. These two

positions were hired in the fall of 2018-2019 school year.

The *Chronic Absenteeism: Causes and Relationship to School Climate* study parallels the

work the school district was doing through the New York State School Improvement Process.

The district identified attendance (chronic absenteeism) and climate as two of the four goals to

be addressed throughout the 2018-2019 school year. The other two areas of focus were growth in

math and ELA on the 3-8 student performance assessments. This study takes place over the

2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years. The study measures climate through the USDOE

educational climate survey in 2019 and again in 2020. That data is then correlated to the district

attendance data to assess for a decrease in the chronic attendance measure. The study evolved to

include transportation as a barrier to attendance due to several high-poverty pockets in the

village. The attendance issue was identified through the work of the family-student advisors.

Access to in-town transportation was studied through the development of new in-town bus

routes. Data sets are readily available through school-wide reporting systems and survey data

that is compiled by the Waverly School Improvement Process. We developed the data sets

through Transfinder to establish a causal relationship for transportation access. The number of

in-town bus stops was increased through the study from two to four, and eventually to six, in-

town stops. The study effectively ends with the onset of the COVID-19 crisis on March 13, 2020

when the Governor of New York closed all public and private schools.

Study Overview

The capstone is a quantitative study that will involve between 500-1,000 students in the

rural upstate school district of Waverly, NY. The primary data collection tool will be the U.S.

Department of Education Climate Survey (EDSCLS). The Waverly Central School District has

surveyed students for baseline data in 2018-2019. This survey has been mandated by the New

York Department of Education to assist the Waverly School District with its improvement

process. The survey is being conducted outside of the capstone research and is a piece of the

school improvement process that is occurring in the Waverly Central School District. This study

will support district and school-level goals for the Waverly Central School District, which is

currently battling with a 20.15 percent rate of chronic absenteeism (2018-2019).

For the purpose of the study, the research team utilized 36 of the 74 questions available.

These questions were chosen to identify specific areas of need and interest. The survey will take

the average student approximately 30 minutes to complete. We have chosen 12 specific

questions from the target set for this particular study. The questions are from the Climate Survey

given by the U.S. Department of Education and target grades 3-12. The 2019-2020 results will be

compared with 2018-2019 results for further study and action plan development. The survey has

been normed, and the data obtained from the students are not individually identifiable. The

published results will not include name, grade, race or gender of any participant in the study.

The research team will catalog the data finding critical indicators based on student

surveys. The critical indicators include safety, relationships between students, relationships

between students and staff, and student perception of school climate. The goal of collecting the

survey data is to isolate specific factors for change and further study. Once factors have been

identified, the team will address them with action plans built by the student supports teams and

district attendance team following the National School Climate Improvement Model addressed under the improvement strategies.

Literature Review

National Attendance Statistics

The purpose of this study is to identify the critical components of student absenteeism. For this study, the research will use the term chronic absenteeism. The Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) identifies a student as a chronic absentee problem when they miss 15 days or more of school in a given year (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). Student absenteeism is complex because it involves every race and gender and cuts across all communities, from rural to urban. The federal government is working to isolate the causes of absenteeism by creating a federal database under the Civil Rights Data Collection Act. By isolating the reasons for chronic absenteeism, the data will assist schools and communities in combatting the growing crisis.

According to national statistics provided by the Department of Education, one in five students nationally is chronically absent as defined by missing 15 days or more of school per the U.S. Department of Education definition (USED, 2019). Therefore, nearly seven million students across the United States are chronically absent each year (USED, 2019). The seven million students identified in the data as chronically absent does not discern between excused and unexcused absences. While the reason for the absences is important because schools are using the data to build action plans, the federal data classifies all absences as having a negative effect on educational growth and opportunity.

Differentiation between Subgroups

The difference in gender when studying absenteeism is minimal nationally. Gender gap may have greater variance depending on the individual communities and community norms.

Nationally, both young men and women were chronically absent at a 16 percent rate in the 2015-2016 Civil Rights Data (USED, 2019). The Waverly Central School District data shows that both male and female attendance rates are consistent.

Figure 1

Yearly Attendance Percentages
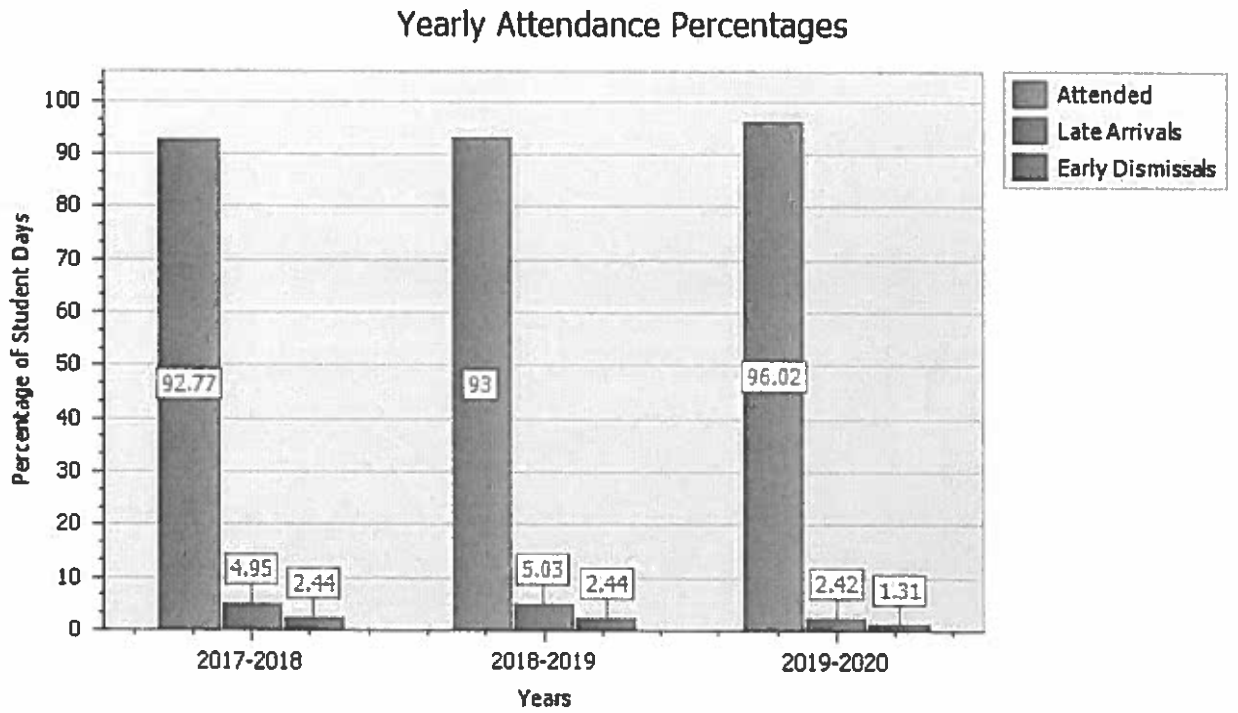
School Year:'2017-2018','2018-2019','2019-2020'
Building:All
Grade:All
Gender:'Male'
Ethnicity:All
Absence Funded:All
Is Absent:All

Note. Male student attendance at Waverly CSD from 2017-2018 through 2019-2020.

Figure 2

Yearly Attendance Percentages
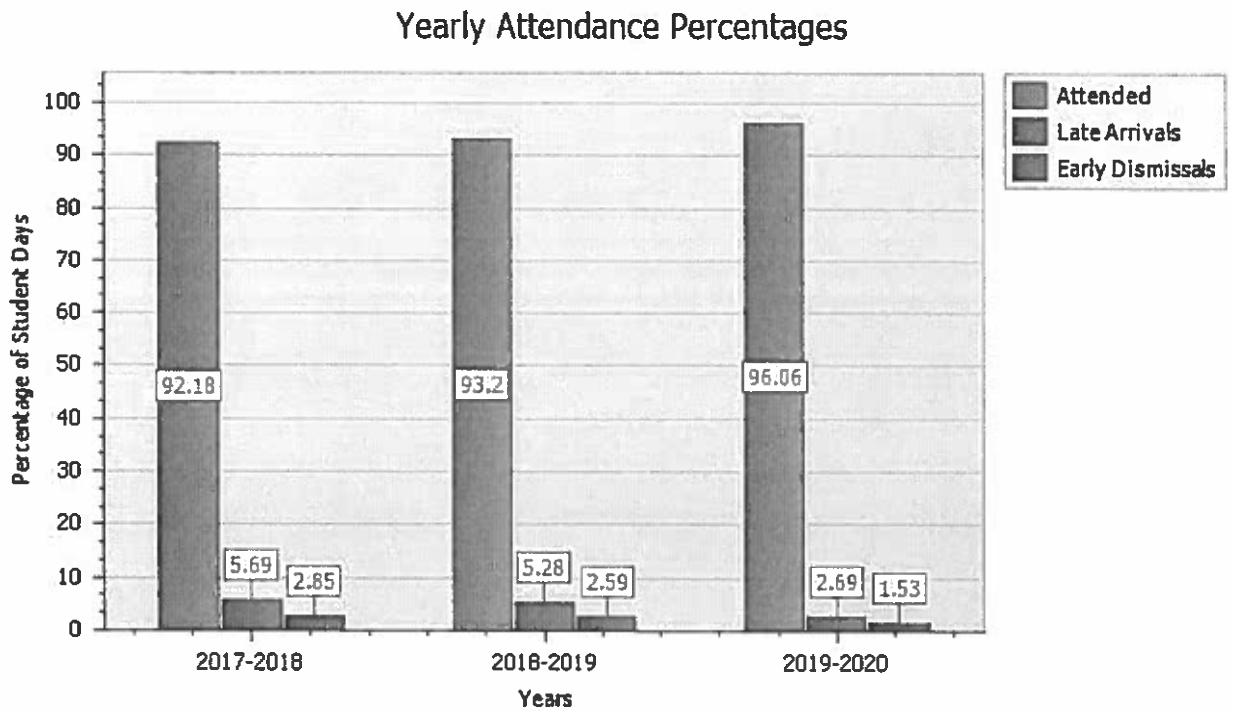
School Year:'2017-2018','2018-2019','2019-2020'
Building:All
Grade:All
Gender:'Female'
Ethnicity:All
Absence Funded:All
Is Absent:All

Note. Female student attendance at Waverly CSD from 2017-2018 through 2019-2020.

The issue of race as it pertains to chronic absenteeism is more varied. According to the

US 2016 Civil Rights Data Collection, children who identify as Native American or Pacific

Islander have a rate of chronic absence of 27 percent and lead all categories. Children who

identify as Black are at 22 percent chronically-absent. Students who identify as biracial or

Hispanic register between 16-18 percent. Students who identify as white have an absentee rate of

14 percent. Students of the Asian race are the lowest in the United States at 8 percent. The national combined average of all students is 16 percent (USED, 2019). In the local study Waverly is performing, student chronic absence rate is higher in poverty and special education subgroups. More on this will be presented later in this document.

More critical information found in the Civil Rights Data Collection is the impact of the special education population as it relates to chronic absenteeism. A special education student is 1.5 times more likely to be chronically absent than a general education student (USED, 2019). Special education attendance numbers are critical for school and student achievement. The data illustrates that the most vulnerable learners are missing more time than students in regular education tracks. The high absenteeism rate directly affects the number of services delivered to special needs students. Students who are scheduled to receive related services i.e. speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy or other IEP specified services do not get the opportunity to make up missed sessions due to absences.

Another subgroup that has been affected by chronic absenteeism are English Language Learners (ELL). This group is 1.2 times more likely to be chronically absent than a native English-speaking student (USED, 2019). The impact absenteeism has on the overall performance of ELL students could be tremendous as schools are unable to get resources to chronically absent students. The Economic Policy Institute (EPI) has ELL students as the most likely students to miss three or more days of school per month of instruction (Garcia & Weiss, 2018).

Age Factors

The grade level of the student is one factor in the rates of chronically absent students: elementary level, middle level, and high school level. In the elementary and middle levels, the research suggests that students who are chronically absent throughout the United States is

approximately 14 percent. The chronic rate of absenteeism increases as students age and matriculate through high school to 20 percent (USED, 2019). The impact chronic absenteeism has on a student's ability to meet graduation requirements, the creation of a work ethic, and preparation for college and career readiness is potentially threatening to the U.S. workforce.

Effects on Academic Performance

"A Nation at Risk" identified attendance as a key issue for student success in education. Twenty-five years later, researchers, using data from the report "A Nation Accountable: 25 Years After A Nation at Risk," see that students are still struggling to attain proficiency in math and literacy (USED, 2008). A key contributing factor in gaining proficiency is regular attendance of school, as noted in the following 2008 statistics:

Of the 20 children born in 1983, only six would have been proficient readers in fourth grade, and only four would have been proficient in math. A new class of 20 kids born in 1997, and tested in 2007, would have seven proficient readers in fourth grade and eight students who are proficient in math. So, while we are gaining ground in math, two-thirds of our fourth-graders are still not proficient readers. (USED, 2008)

Missing school causes problems when trying to foster relationships, maintain a positive school culture, and create a consistent environment to grow and learn.

US researchers are studying the core mission of the schools centered on academic growth through standardized testing under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Using data analysis to measure learning in educational environments, the data study, *Student absenteeism: Who misses school and how missing school matters for performance*, published by the Economic Policy Institute, focuses on the impact of absenteeism and student achievement. The statistics used were compiled under ESSA and used data from the National Assessment of Educational

Progress (NAEP) in 2015. An overview of the research that compares data from the NAEP in 2003 and similar data in 2015 finds:

> Data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in 2015 show that about one in five students missed three days of school or more in the month before they took the NAEP mathematics assessment. Students diagnosed with a disability, students who were eligible for free lunch, Hispanic English language learners, and Native American students were the most likely to have missed school, while Asian students were rarely absent. On average, data show that children in 2015 were missing fewer days than children in 2003. (Garcia & Weiss, 2018)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) supports earlier numbers provided by the Civil Rights Data Collection on chronic absent data and the relationship between attendance and success in school. The NAEP does further drill down and finds that there is a direct correlation between student absenteeism and the performance of the students on the NAEP math assessment in 8th grade (Garcia & Weiss, 2018). The study acknowledges, "Analysis also confirms prior research that missing school hurts academic performance: Among eighth-graders, those who missed school three or more days in the month before being tested scored between 0.3 and 0.6 standard deviations lower (depending on the number of days missed) on the 2015 NAEP mathematics test than those who did not miss any school days" (Garcia & Weiss, 2018).

The impact chronic absenteeism has on academic performance varies by race. According to a 2014 attendance study done in the Sacramento City School District, we find the following data sets:

- For Hispanic non-ELL students, missing more than ten days of school harmed their performance on the math assessment more strongly than for the average (0.74 standard deviations vs. 0.64 on average).

- For Asian non-ELL students, the penalty for missing school was smaller than the average (except for those missing 5–10 days).

- Missing school hindered performance similarly across the three poverty-status groups (non-poor, somewhat poor, and poor). However, given that there are substantial differences in the frequency with which children miss school by poverty status (that is, poor students are more likely to be chronically absent than non-poor students), absenteeism may, in fact, further widen income-based achievement gaps.

  (UC Davis Center for Regional Change, 2014)

The first two bullets do not critically influence the Waverly local study at this time. The third bullet will impact this particular study as the Waverly Central School District is 98 percent white in race. The significant factors the study will be analyzing will deal with the third bullet in the above notation as it relates to poverty and non-poverty. In the area of the overall impact of attendance versus performance, research done by Garcia and Weiss (2018) shows a direct correlation between the rate of absenteeism and performance on the 8th-grade NAEP math assessment.

Figure 3

The more frequently students miss school, the worse their performance

Performance disadvantage experienced by eighth-graders on the 2015 NAEP mathematics assessment, by number of school days missed in the month prior to the assessment, relative to students with perfect attendance in the prior month (standard deviations)
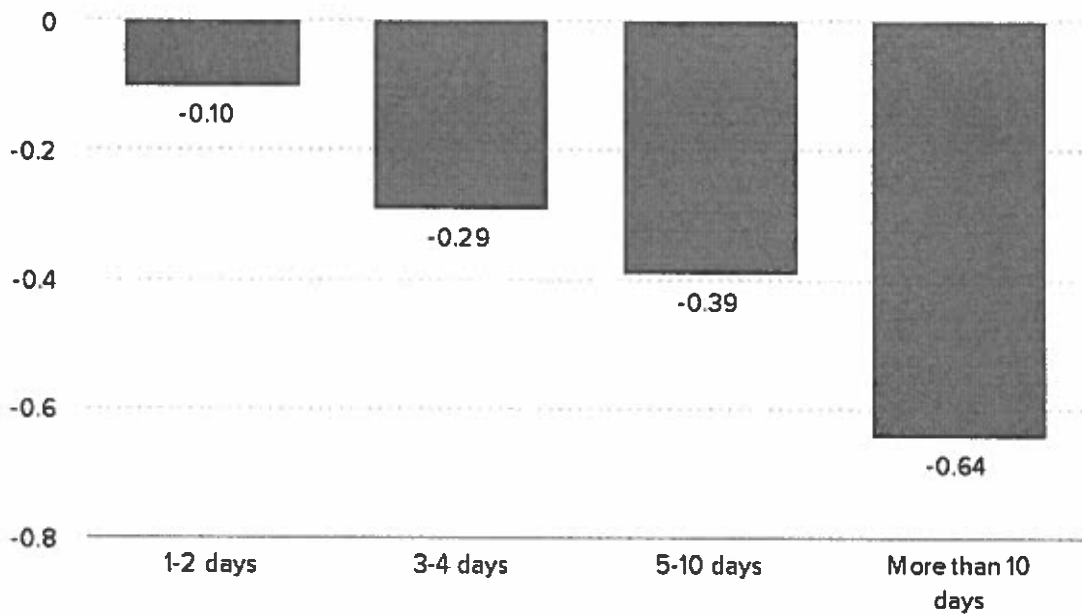
Notes: Estimates are obtained after controlling for race/ethnicity, poverty status, gender, IEP status, and ELL status; for the racial/ethnic composition of the student's school; and for the share of students in the school who are eligible for FRPL (a proxy for school socioeconomic composition). All estimates are statistically significant at $p < 0.01$.

Source: EPI analysis of National Assessment of Educational Progress microdata, 2015

Economic Policy Institute

Based on the national research presented, this study will move forward under the premise that there is a direct correlation between absenteeism and student performance. The study will collect local data to investigate the attendance rate impacting the performance rate of the student within the Waverly Central School District.

Student and Caregiver data on Student Absenteeism

The 2014 study of the Sacramento City Unified School District, in partnership with the UC Davis Center for Regional Change and Community Link Capital Region, focused upon student and parent reasons for absenteeism. In 2012-2013, the UC Davis research team collected survey data to see what students and parents had to say about barriers to attendance; below is a chart of the top reported reasons for missing school according to the subject group.

Figure 4

Attendance Challenge	% of Participants Affected
Student Physical Health	36%
Parent/Caregiver Discretion	31%
Transportation	28%
Academic Issues	27%
Student Mental Health	24%
Relationships	22%
Parent/Caregiver Health	17%
Student Responsibilities Outside of School	17%
School Related Discipline	16%
Lack of Coordination with Other Services	15%
Unfulfilled Basic Needs	13%
Student Safety Concerns	10%
Student Access to Health Care	6%
Cultural Disconnect	2%

Note. Data from the University of California-Davis, 2012-2013.

The number one reported reason for student absenteeism in the Sacramento study was physical health (36%). In the Sacramento study, the percentage was higher for students in special education than for students without special education services. Physical health also impacted minority students to a greater degree than white students. Another factor in the physical health category was the health of the student's caregiver. One out of six chronically absent students said

the health of the caregiver impacted their attendance (UC Davis Center for Regional Change, 2014). Waverly Central School District's number one excuse for absence is illness.

The second reason for student absenteeism in the Sacramento study is based on adult decision-making as to whether or not to send the student to school. Parent/Caregiver (32%) discretion was the number two factor for absenteeism in the Sacramento study. The study found that caregiver stress was a significant driver in the parent/caregiver discretion category. The adult stress was having a direct impact on student attendance. Significant impacts in the data identified the 7-8 grade levels as severely impacted by the parent/caregiver component. The Waverly research team believes parents regularly allow students to stay home for reasons that are not acceptable per school policy. This belief is based on parent discussions, attendance discussions with students and written excuses based on parent health, disrupted situations in the home or students stress.

The barrier that transportation (28%) creates was the number three item on the Sacramento list. The major impact on transportation in the study was convenience for the caregiver/parent and student. Attendance in the study shows impact because drop-offs were inconvenient, neighborhood schools are no longer open, and caregivers are less likely to provide or follow through on transportation. Distance from the student's residence to the school is a factor in attendance. The Waverly study will compare absenteeism numbers from before in-town stops were created, and after the in-town stops began regular operations. High school students were impacted to the greatest degree in the Sacramento City Unified School District data, with a rate of 39 percent (UC Davis Center for Regional Change, 2014). The Waverly study proposes that our greatest impact area will be on students in the elementary schools due to poverty housing and the location to local schools.

Academic issues were reported by 27 percent of the surveyed Sacramento City students as a reason for absenteeism. In the study, the rates of impact on academic issues were the highest in high school. The study identified boredom in school for 42 percent of students reporting academic issues as a reason for absenteeism. The climate survey used by the Waverly study will address engagement as a specific category for students. Sacramento City grades 1-3 reported high rates of boredom as the reason the students do not attend. Though the Waverly study will not address the primary level, an early intervention study may follow the initial 2019 Waverly study.

Mental health issues (24% overall) are highest in the 7-8 grade band. The 7-8 grade group reported at 39 percent while the high school range reported at 36 percent in the area of mental health. One-third of all special education students in the Sacramento Study reported mental health as a barrier to student attendance. It was not a significant driver for a race with the exception that Asians reported at a much lower rate than other races at 5 percent (UC Davis Center for Regional Change, 2014). Waverly has mental health social workers at the elementary, middle, and high school level who work with families to reduce this barrier to attendance. By having the therapy at the schools, the research team believes the social workers will increase attendance.

Personal relationship issues in the school environment have an impact on chronic attendance. The Sacramento Study is split evenly between relationships with fellow students and relationships with adults as the cause for the absenteeism. In the K-6 grade band, relationships with peers are more significant, while the 7-12 band has a more heavily-weighted adult impact. Not surprisingly, the 7-8 grade band again has the highest area of impact in this category at 40 percent of respondents indicating this is an issue. Students with special needs also indicate that

relationships with adults is a cause of absenteeism for 31 percent of respondents. The Waverly study will address personal relationships through the climate survey and cross-reference the data with the school attendance data.

Parent/caregiver health (17%), outside responsibilities (17%), and school discipline (16%) are all reported as having an impact on chronically absent students within the Sacramento City Unified School District data. High school students reported at a higher rate in these areas, and it impacted special education students to a greater degree than non-special education students. The Waverly study will collect data on students with special needs and students without special needs. The study will identify any statistical differences in the rate between the two subject groups as it relates to attendance.

Impact of School Climate on Chronic Absenteeism

The Waverly study will focus on the impact of multiple factors on student attendance. The climate and culture of the school district will be the primary focus of the Waverly study. The United States Department of Education has conceptualized school climate as broadly consisting of the domains of safety, engagement, and environment; which encompass constructs such as perceptions of safety, incidents of delinquent or aggressive behavior, school connectedness, relationships with teachers, parental involvement, school resources, and perceptions of the physical and learning environment (DOE, 2014). "School Climate refers to the quality and character of school life. School Climate is based on patterns of students', parents', and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal interactions, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures" (National School Climate Center, n.d.).

The US Department of Education has readily available surveys for schools to implement.

Many states are currently tracking school climate data to gauge the impact on performance,

safety, and attendance. The State of Georgia has been tracking climate in public schools since

2008. In a 2012 report on school analysis, the data identified that a 1 percent growth in positive

school climate led to a 1.6 percent increase in student attendance (Georgia Department of

Education, 2018). These are similar statistics to other studies across the nation.

A study by Vought and Hanson (2017) identified several specific dimensions of school

climate in a survey of California middle school students, including (a) safety and connectedness;

(b) adult-student relationships; and (c) opportunities for meaningful student participation

(Vought & Hanson, 2017). This study found a weak correlation between cultural negativity in

school for Black students and student achievement. Other areas of impact seem to be the race of

the teachers and the ability of the school to embrace the ethnic races of the students, but there are

no conclusive evidentiary studies to be found. The Waverly 2019 study will address the areas of

connectedness, relationships, and student involvement to measure the impact of these school

climate issues on attendance.

In 2015, researchers Jia, Konold and Cornell studied 276 Virginia high schools and found

that a school climate characterized by lower rates of bullying and teasing was predictive of

higher graduation rates four years later. Schools with high levels of bullying and teasing had

dropout rates 29 percent above the state average, compared with schools with a low level of

bullying and teasing, which had a dropout rate of 28 percent below average (Jia, Konold &

Cornell, 2015). The association between school climate and graduation rates was just as strong

as the association between student poverty and graduation rates (Academy for Social-Emotional

Learning Schools, n.d.).

The impact of climate on attendance, academic performance, and safety is relevant to all subgroups in public school. The research indicates that a significant concern is the victimization of one specific sub-group in schools. The LGBT community has been researching and advocating for an improved climate in public schools for decades. In the 2012 study from NYU, published in the *Journal of School Violence*, "The Effect of Negative School Climate on Academic Outcomes for LGBT Youth and the Role of In-School Supports" analyzes survey data relating to a sample of 5,730 LGBT students between the ages of 13 and 21 who had attended secondary schools in the United States (Thaler, 2015). The study found that due to a negative school climate, LGBT youth were more likely to perform poorly on assessments and be chronically absent.

Improvement Strategies

American schools are in search of the silver bullet that will allow administrators to connect kids to school, teach kindness, improve student achievement, and put an end to chronic absenteeism. School staff in most school districts provide stakeholders with the materials needed to be successful in improving climate to improve attendance, safety, and academic achievement. There are many models for improvement in the field, so it is essential to research and find a process that fits the particular school, community, and students that are the focus of the improvement project (National School Climate Center, n.d.).

Waverly will conduct chronic absenteeism research by using a national school climate improvement model from the National School Climate Center (NSCC). Phase one of school climate improvement, according to the NSCC, is preparation (NSCC, 2020). The Waverly Central School has begun facilitating discussions regarding school climate at the building and

district level. The discussions focus on the impact of climate on safety, attendance, and academic achievement. In addition, the district has started research and compilation of the data that the school district possesses, including academics, graduation rate, attendance, discipline reports, and other essential documentation to get an accurate picture of the district and the stakeholders inside the district. Groups at Waverly are meeting regularly and have created a process for meetings to evaluate climate and absenteeism, safety, and academic achievement. The district will continuously need to ensure that staff are committed to the mission of constant climate improvement in order to improve in these key areas.

The second step to improving the school climate at Waverly Central School District is to have the students participate in taking the survey. Waverly Central School District will use the National School Climate Center (NSCC) Tool. The Comprehensive School Climate Inventory (CSCI) is a nationally-recognized school climate survey that provides an in-depth profile of the school community's particular strengths, as well as areas for improvement. With the CSCI, Waverly School District can quickly and accurately assess student, parent/guardian, and school personnel perceptions in order to get necessary data to make informed decisions for lasting improvement (NSCC, n.d.).

The third step to school climate improvement leading to improved attendance, safety, and academic achievement, involves action planning based on data analysis of the NSCC tool. Waverly Central School District will involve teams at multiple levels, including grade level, building level, district level, and community level. The student's voice is critical in the process as the district moves forward to create a better climate and system to work with students and families.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Methodology

Participants

The attendance capstone focuses on the student population of the Waverly Central School District. The intention of this study is to determine the effect of transportation on student attendance in a rural community. This rural upstate school district educates about 1,500 students in its Pre-K through grade 12 programs. The community has a village center and surrounding areas encompassing students from a region spanning approximately 80 square miles. This district is in a snow belt for upstate New York and averages four snow day cancellations annually. The district has 18 full bus runs and also runs four vans to pick up children in regions where buses are not able to access.

The study uses the transportation activities of all students (K-12) to gauge the impact of transportation on attendance. More specifically, an evaluation of in-town transportation will occur. The Waverly Central School District has historically not offered in-town busing to students within a mile and a half radius of the school. This study hypothesizes that student attendance will improve with in-town busing opportunities for students. The transportation study will look at all students, students by subgroup (IEP, poverty), and students on in-town routes. The data set will be built using over 50,000 data records between the student management system and the transportation system.

The second area Waverly is studying includes an evaluation of the climate of the school and the impact of the environment on attendance. This part of the study involves researching students in grades 3-8 from Elm Street Elementary and Waverly Middle School. The study surveyed over 800 students in 2019 and then again in 2020. The survey used is a nationally-

normed instrument from the National School Climate Center. The students used laptop computers to complete the survey. The survey was given to the students voluntarily.

Research Design

This quantitative study looks into two factors and the relationship each element has on student attendance. The research team hypothesizes that both elements (1) in town busing and (2) improved climate in the school environment will contribute to increased student attendance. The study for transportation is a review of the previous three years of student transportation usage data and the correlation with student attendance. The study includes all transportation routes which are entered into a pivot table with the individual student identification numbers and attendance data.

The second part of the study uses the results of the 2018-2019 Comprehensive School Climate Survey compared to the results for the same age range on the same survey for the 2019-2020 academic year, comparing year-to-year results. The team believes that with the addition of key mental and social-emotional supports (family-student advisors), the students will score school climate higher. The connection to be made would be that with improved school climate, attendance of students would also improve. The social-emotional supports added in the 2018-2019 school year were a guidance position at the elementary level, student counselor in the middle and elementary school, and a new leadership team in the middle school.

The pivot chart tracks all attendance, and an overarching timeline of events with the track on attendance was provided. The line graph provides a quality longitudinal look at the attendance of the district over three years and identifies key factors and staffing changes. These are not

necessarily part of the analysis, but they are external events that may impact the reliability of the study.

Figure 5
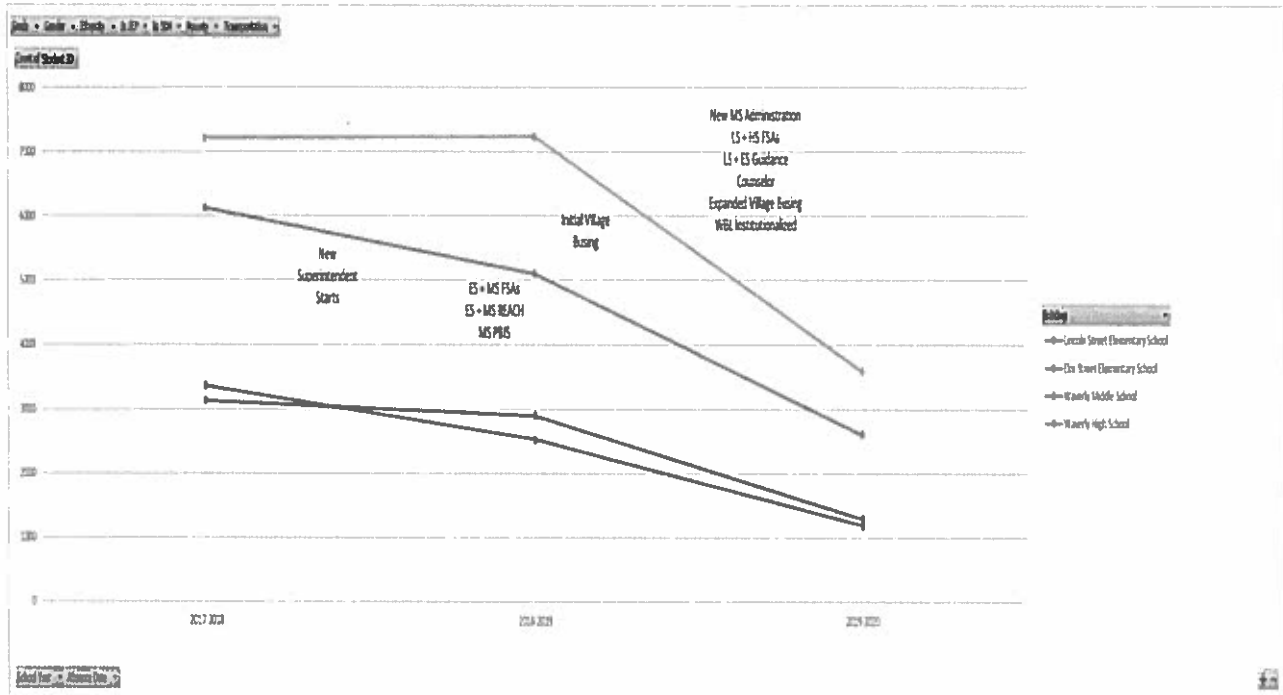
Note. Waverly CSD milestones and absenteeism counts.

Instrumentation

The main instruments used to collect and collate data is the school data management system, SchoolTool, which tracks all student data, including student absences. The second instrument used is Transfinder. Transfinder is a transportation planning and tracking software that identifies bus routes and passengers. The third instrument is the Excel pivot tables that allow us to combine the data sets and begin to isolate specific areas that use in-town stops and the impact of different routes on attendance in different schools.

The primary instrument in use for the collection of student data as it relates to school climate is the Comprehensive School Climate Survey from the National School Climate Center. This nationally-normed climate survey includes 36 questions and uses a five-answer scale (strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, strongly disagree) to delineate a student's positive or negative response to the question. The instrument was loaded into a Survey Monkey template and students were asked to participate during social studies classes. The two surveys compare data using a basic Excel worksheet in a side-by-side comparison by year, and then the results are compared to the attendance numbers in the pivot chart.

Data Collection Procedures

Attendance is collected daily by the Waverly Central School District, using teacher reporting through the student management program, Schooltool. The daily attendance is then cross-checked by a building employee who reconciles the period-by-period attendance report and the daily attendance report. The student attendance saves into the management database. The database contains records for the last seven years, and records are retrievable and able to be exported into other programs.

Data for the climate surveys were collected through the web-based survey tool, Survey Monkey. Survey Monkey collects the student responses and provides the results in both graphs and Excel. The data was then compared by entering the results side by side to evaluate rates of change. The data storage for the surveys saves at both the district level and in the Survey Monkey database.

The busing information for the Waverly School District is housed within the Transfinder database. This database does not directly communicate with SchoolTool, so the information is

entered into an Excel pivot table. Student identification numbers are then identified further with flags for IEPs and free and reduced-lunch indicators. This information is stored at the district level and is for district use only.

The final pivot table contains all students in the Waverly Central School District. The pivot table includes all student transportation runs and all attendance records for the last three years. The table has tabs for student subgroups, and all students are attached to grade and school. Unfortunately, the data collection was stopped in February of this year as a result of the COVID-19 school shutdown, which led to a smaller data set for the 2019-2020 academic year. The pivot table allows us to compare our data by month, so we used the full-year and six-month sets where applicable.

Data Analysis Procedures

The basis of the data analysis in this study is attendance rates. The hypothesis is that two major factors contribute to Waverly students' school attendance, school climate and access to transportation. The Waverly School District added two in-town bus routes in 2018-2019 to provide access to in-town students. In the 2019-2020 academic year, the Waverly School District added four additional bus routes in town, bringing the total to six in-town routes. The data of students on these routes was then compared to the attendance rates of the same period. The final attendance from the pivot table will show the impact of in-town busing on student attendance. In order for the differential to be significant, the district evaluated data to determine an increase or decrease in attendance of five percent.

Also being considered is the relationship between school climate and school attendance, operating under the hypothesis that increased rating of school climate will correspond with

increased attendance rates. The study compares the 2019 climate study and the 2020 climate survey for the Waverly School District. The Waverly School District added social-emotional staff, a new leadership team, and climate improvement strategies throughout the district. Measure of the increase and decrease in attendance against the positive or negative results from the climate survey were explored. A side-by-side comparison of the surveys was utilized and consideration of will any differential of five percent or more to be significant in each item. The study then categorizes the results to determine if climate became more or less favorable. That information compares student attendance for the year 2019 of the survey against student attendance of the 2020 survey.

Limitations and Delimitations

The major limitation of this study is the size of the control groups and the longevity of the study. The transportation portion of the study encompasses 1,500 students. The climate survey had a group of 880 in 2019 and a group of 801 in 2020. The original goal was to incorporate the 21 schools in our regional group, which would have increased our group to over 20,000. Due to difficulty coordinating and regional differences, this was not possible.

The COVID-19 pandemic closed our school down before students were scheduled to take the survey. The surveys were to be delivered after state testing had concluded for consistency between the 2018-2019 survey data and the 2019-2020 survey data. That did not happen, but we were able to get the survey done the day before we closed schools. As a result, usable data was acquired but not in the same exact same time frame. A similar situation exists with the transportation study. The transportation numbers are not complete in year three due to the COVID-19 closure. We still have two full years and three years of six-month data sets.

Additionally, the area had a major flu issue this year in the winter months that may have contributed to some of our high attendance numbers.

The attendance data sets are confirmable through the New York State Department of Education reporting system. There are no concerns about the validity of the students using school transportation. The Comprehensive School Climate Inventory is a normed and reliable survey approved by the United States Department of Education for school improvement processes.

Results

District Aggregate Attendance Rates

The aggregate attendance rates from 2017-2018, 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 for Pre-kindergarten through 6th-grade show growth. The growth rate from 2017-2018 to 2019-2020 shows that the annual attendance rate grew from 93.5 percent in 2017-2018 to 95.2 percent in 2019-2020. This improvement has multiple potential contributing factors including:

- New district leadership team in February of 2018.

- Start of a grades 3-8 afterschool enrichment program in September of 2018.

- First attempt at in-town busing in October of 2018.

- Expanded in-town busing and new school leadership teams, additional counselor, and student-family advisors focusing on attendance improvement in September of 2019.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Figure 6

Yearly Attendance Percentages
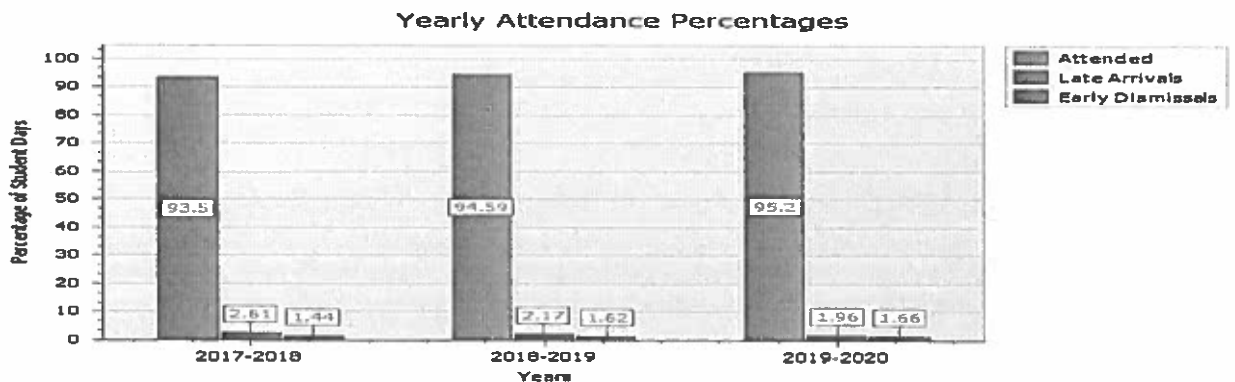
School Year:'2017-2018','2018-2019','2019-2020'
Building:All
Grade:'Full-day PK','Grade 01','Grade 02','Grade 03','Grade 04','Grade 05','Grade 06','Grade Full-day K
Gender:All
Ethnicity:All
Absence Funded:All
Is Absent:All

Note. Waverly CSD PK-6 student annual attendance percentage as calculated by our student

management system.

The aggregate attendance rates from 2017-2018, 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 for grades 7-12

show minimal growth. The growth rate from 2017-2018 to 2019-2020 shows that daily

attendance grew from 91.17 percent daily to 91.92 percent in 2019-2020. This data set has

multiple potential contributing factors including:

- New district leadership team in February of 2018.

- Start of a grades 3-8 afterschool enrichment program in September of 2018.

- First attempt at in-town busing in October of 2018.

- Expanded in-town busing and new school leadership teams, additional counselor, and

  student-family advisors focusing on attendance improvement in September of 2019.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Figure 7

Yearly Attendance Percentages
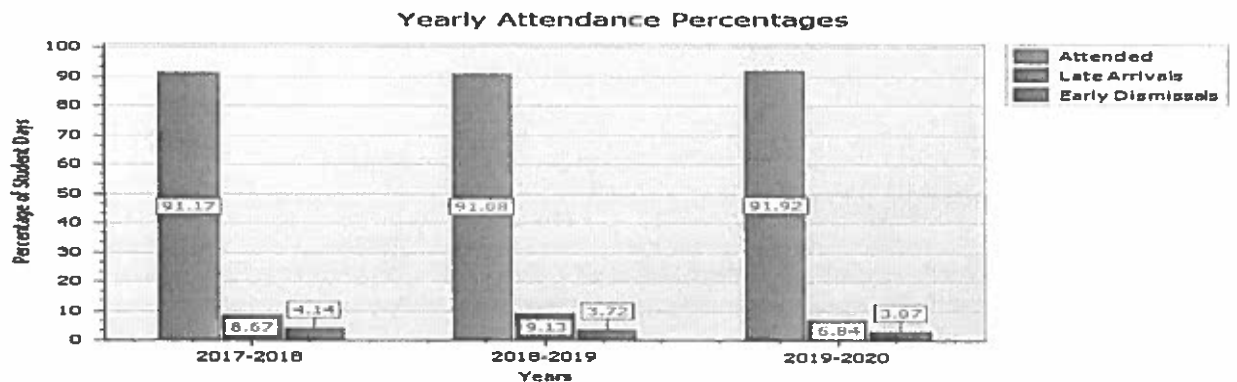
School Year:'2017-2018','2018-2019','2019-2020'
Building:All
Grade:'Grade 07','Grade 08','Grade 09','Grade 10','Grade 11','Grade 12'
Gender:All
Ethnicity:All
Absence Funded:All
Is Absent:All

Note. Waverly CSD grades 7-12 student annual attendance percentage as calculated by our

student management system

Below is a representative grouping of student grade levels to illustrate the findings of the

data from the study.

Grade 1 Attendance at Lincoln Street School

These graphs demonstrate a consistent improvement in the attendance of first-grade

students at Lincoln Street Elementary School. The COVID-19 Crisis caused us to limit our data

set for 2019-2020. The graphs provide a clear picture by identifying the data set months for

October, December, and February. Generally, the first-grade results illustrate a decrease in

student absences for all students who access the in-town bus run, students in poverty who ride

the in-town bus run, and students with IEPs who ride the in-town bus run. The sample size of this

grade has a mean of 105 students. The number of first-grade students on the in-town run

averages 8-12. The December data set shows the all student in-town bus absences number for the

month decreased from 33 in 2017-2018 to 22 in 2019-2020. The students in the poverty group

saw a decrease from 24 absences in 2017-2018 to 11 absences in 2019-2020. Students with IEP

identifiers did not show a decrease in December absences with the addition of in-town bus runs.

Figure 8
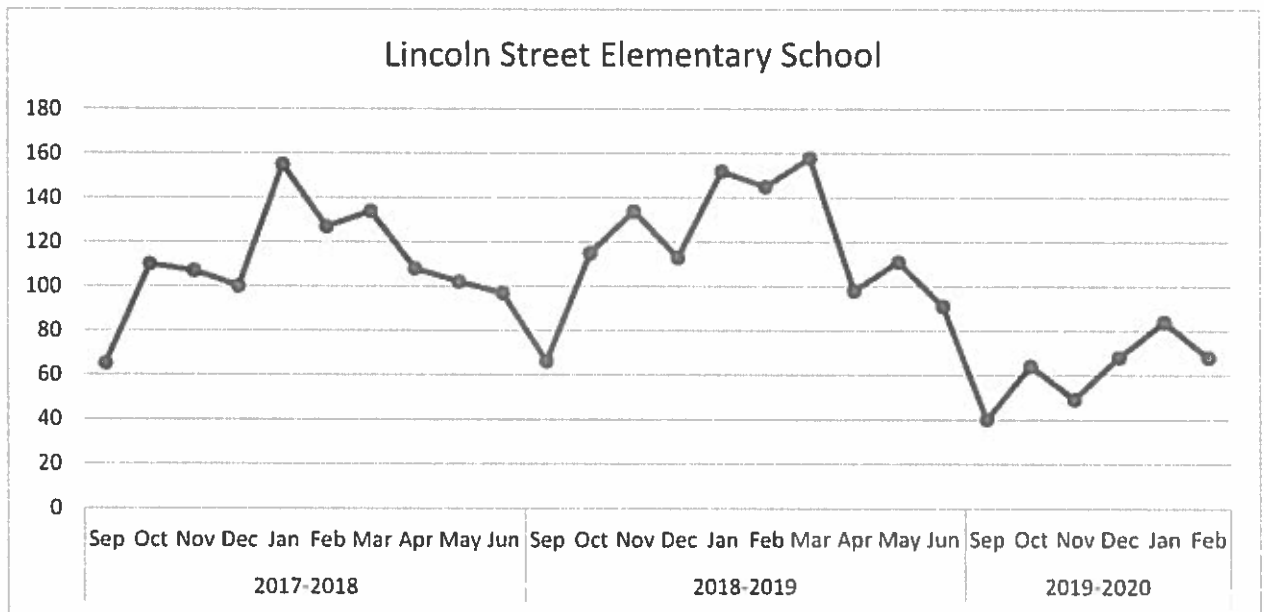
Note. All first-grade student absences by month.
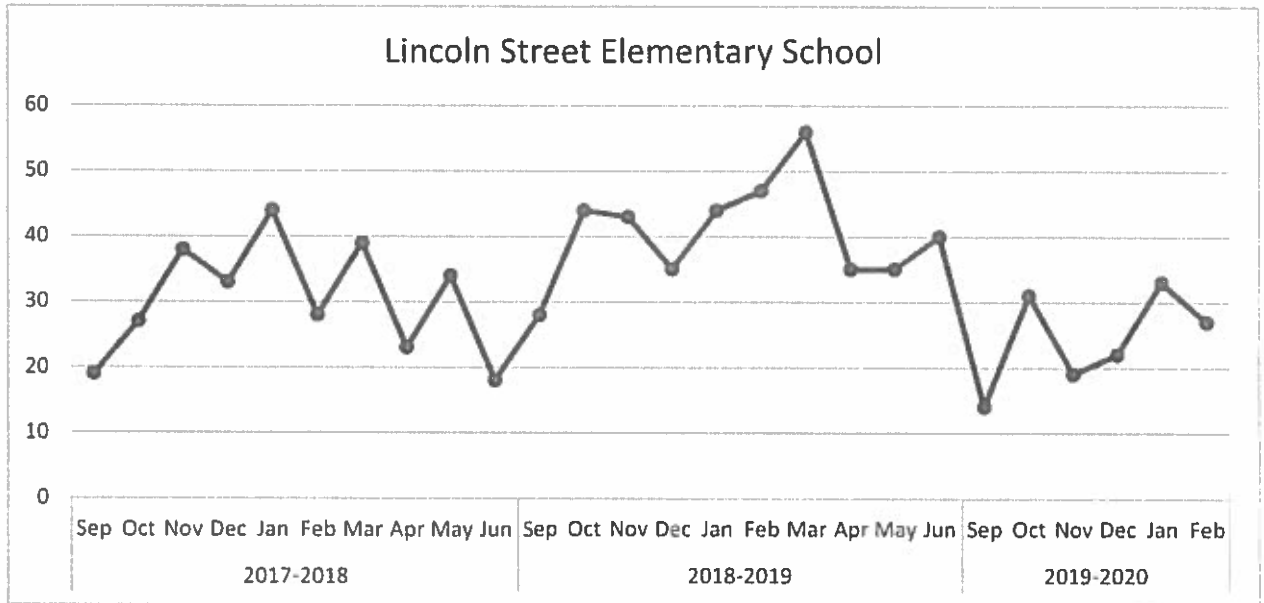
Figure 9

Note. First-grade student absences by month for students who utilized in-town bus runs.

Figure 10
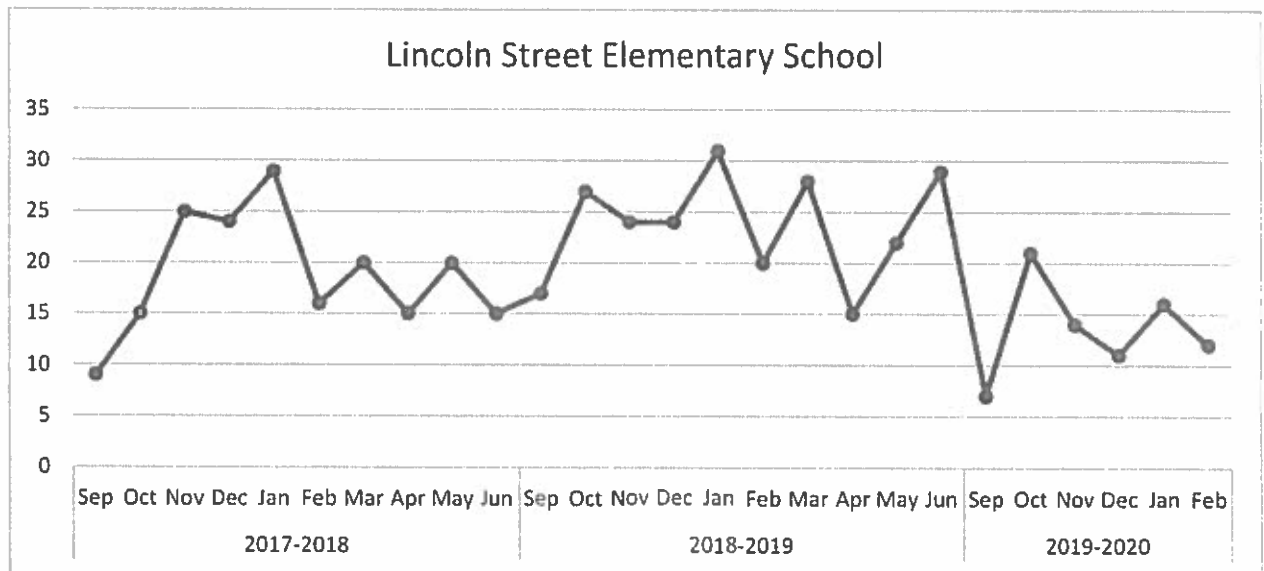
Note. First-grade student absences by month for poverty students who utilized in-town bus runs.

Figure 11

Note. First-grade student absences by month for IEP students who utilized in-town bus runs.

Grade 2-4 Attendance at Elm Street School

The grade 2-4 graphs illustrate a consistent improvement in the attendance of Elm Street Elementary School students. The COVID-19 closure caused us to limit our data set for 2019-2020. The graphs still show a clear picture by identifying the data set months for October, December, and February. The grades 2-4 demonstrate show an increase in student absences for all students who access the in-town bus run and students in poverty who ride the in-town bus run and a decrease for students with IEP's who ride the in-town bus run. The sample size of this cohort has a mean of 340 students. The December data set shows the all student in-town bus absences number for the month increased from 97 in 2017-2018 to 116 in 2019-2020. The students in the poverty group saw an increase from 43 absences in 2017-2018 to 74 absences in 2019-2020. Students with IEP identifiers showed a decrease in the absences for December from 26 in 2017-2018 to 14 in 2019-2020 with the addition of in-town bus runs.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Figure 12

Note. All 2nd - 4th grade student absences by month.

Figure 13

Note. 2nd - 4th grade student absences by month for students who utilized in-town bus runs.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Figure 14

Note. 2nd - 4th grade student absences by month for poverty students who utilized in-town bus

runs.

Figure 15

Note. 2nd - 4th grade student absences by month for IEP students who utilized in-town bus runs.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Grade 5-8 Attendance at Waverly Middle School

The grade 5-8 graphs show a consistent improvement in the attendance of Waverly

Middle School students. The COVID-19 closure caused us to limit our data set for 2019-2020.

The graphs still show a clear picture by identifying the data set months for October, December,

and February. The grade 5-8 results show a decrease in student absences for all students who

access the in-town bus run, students in poverty who ride the in-town bus run, and students with

IEPs who ride the in-town bus run. The sample size of this school cohort has a mean of 425

students. The December data set demonstrates the all student in-town bus absences number for

the month decreased from 227 in 2017-2018 to 164 in 2019-2020. The students in the poverty

group saw a decrease of 110 absences in 2017-2018 to 86 absences in 2019-2020. Students with

IEP identifiers showed an increase in the absences for December of 2017-2018 of 23 to 34 in

2019-2020 with the addition of in-town bus runs.

Figure 16

Note. All 5th - 8th grade student absences by month.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Figure 17
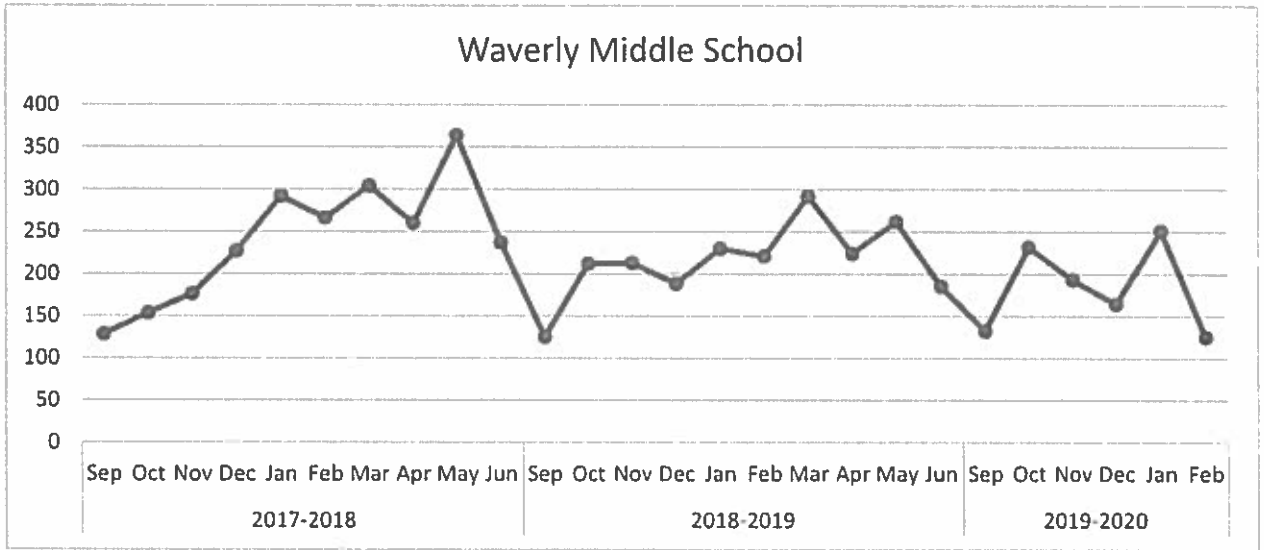
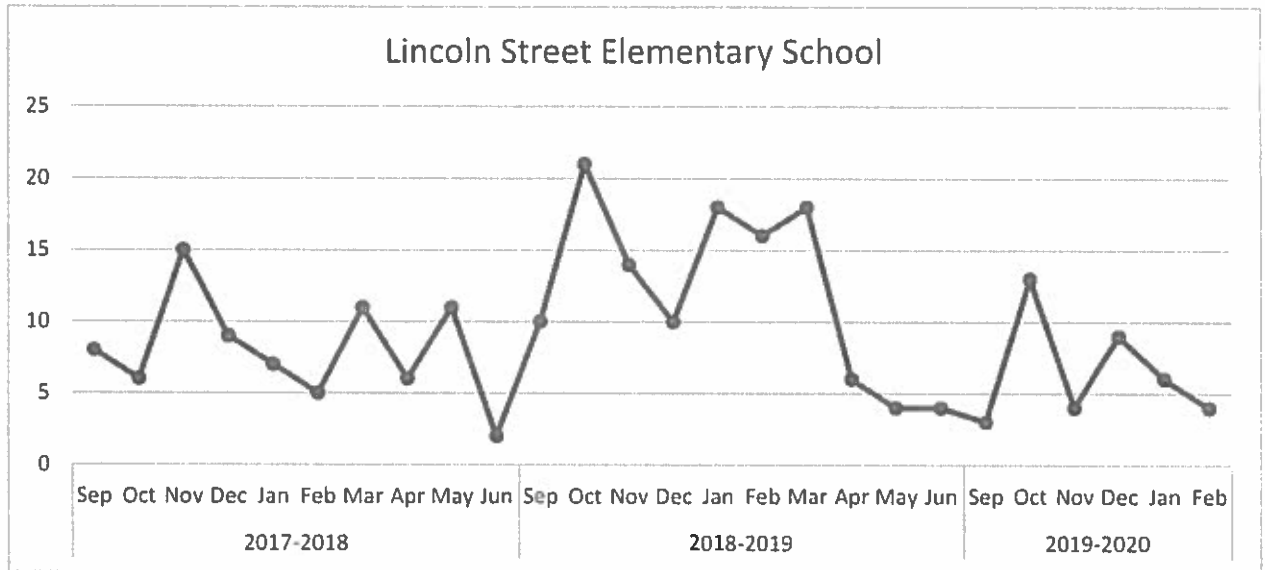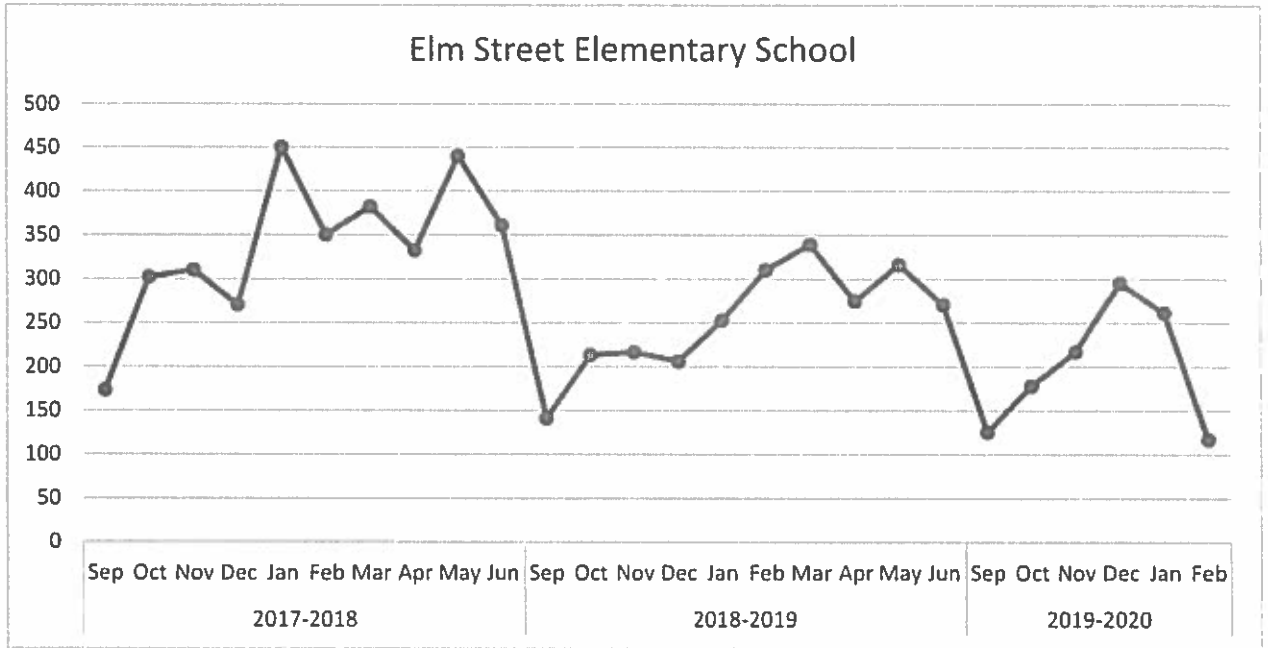*Note.* 5th-8th grade student absences by month for students who utilized in-town bus runs.

Figure 18
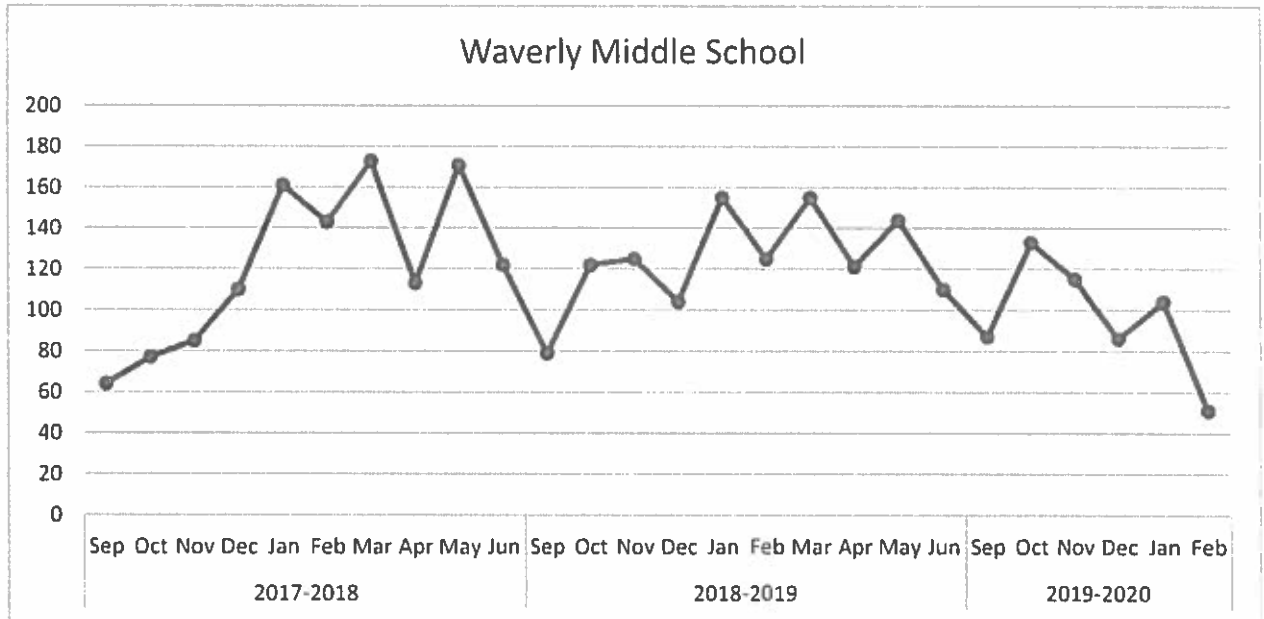
Note. 5th-8th grade student absences by month for poverty students who utilized in-town bus

runs.

Figure 19
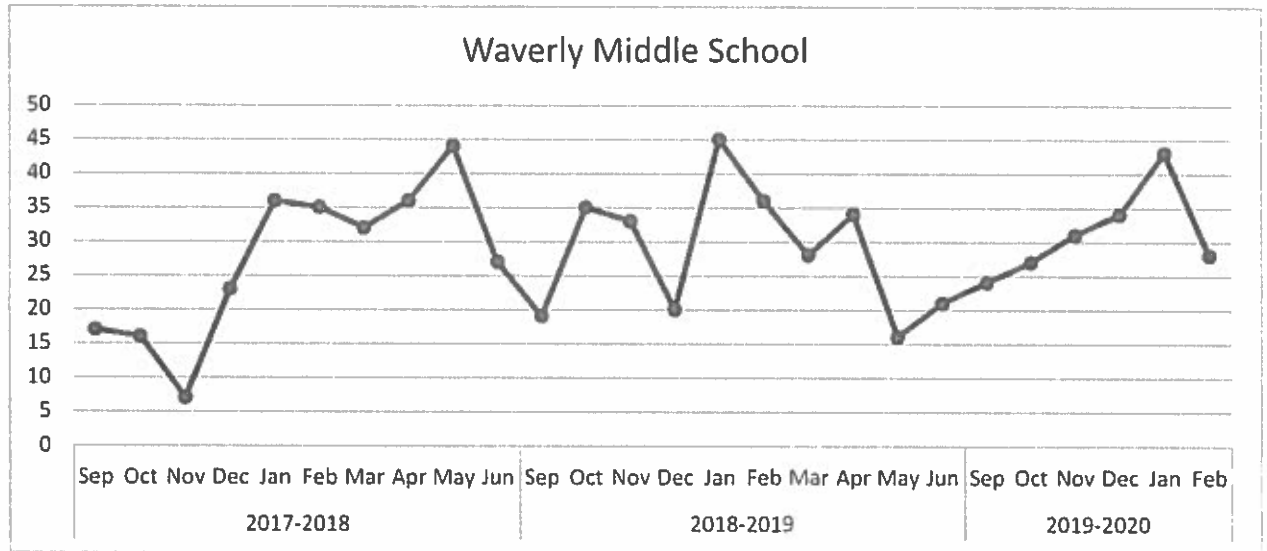
Note. 5th-8th grade student absences by month for IEP students who utilized in-town bus runs.

Grade 9-11 Attendance at Waverly High School

The grade 9-11 graphs show a consistent improvement in the attendance of Waverly High School students. The COVID-19 closure caused us to limit our data set for 2019-2020. The graphs still present a clear picture by identifying the data set months for October, December, and February. The grade 9-11 results show a decrease in student absences for all students who access the in-town bus run, an increase for students in poverty who ride the in-town bus run, and a decrease for students with IEPs who ride the in-town bus run. The sample size of this school cohort has a mean of 350 students. The December data set shows the all student in-town bus absences number for the month decreased from 159 in 2017-2018 to 122 in 2019-2020. The students in the poverty group saw an increase of 22 absences in 2017-2018 to 62 absences in

2019-2020. Students with IEP identifiers showed a decrease in the absences of 26 for December 2017-2018 to 23 in 2019-2020 with the addition of in-town bus runs.
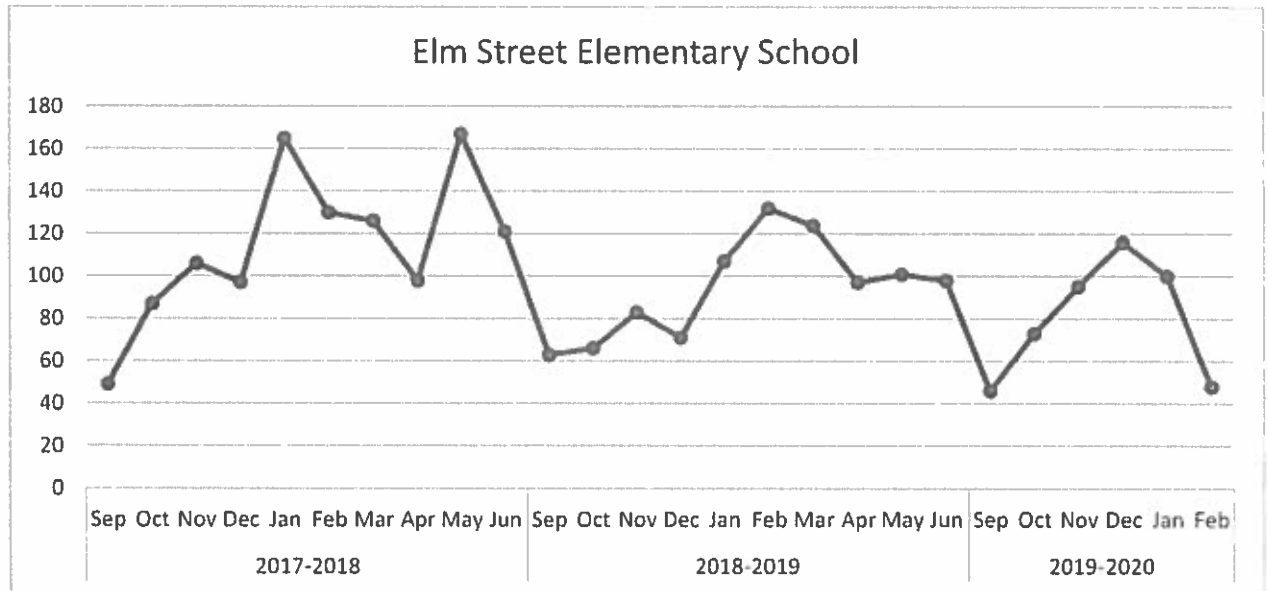
Figure 20

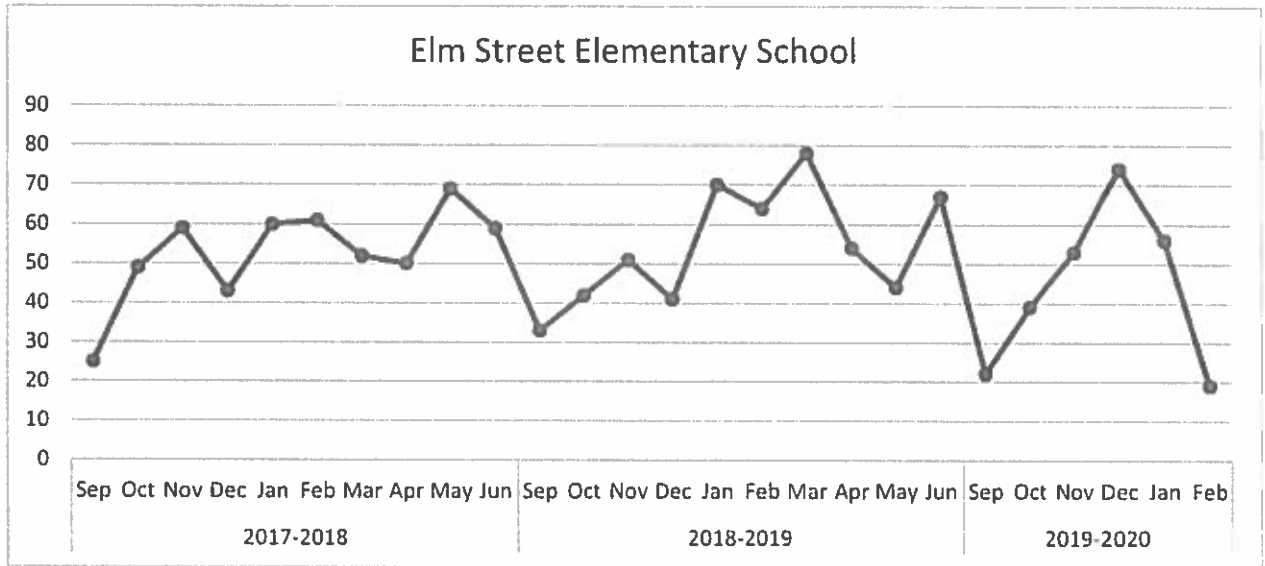*Note.* All 9th - 11th grade student absences by month.

Figure 21
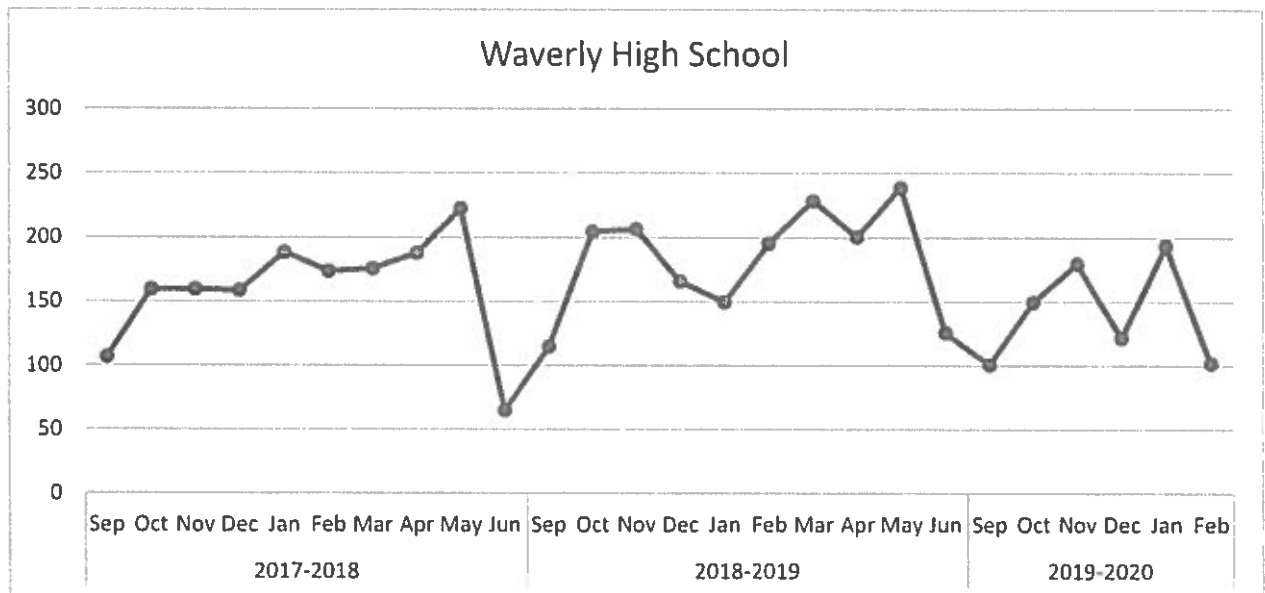
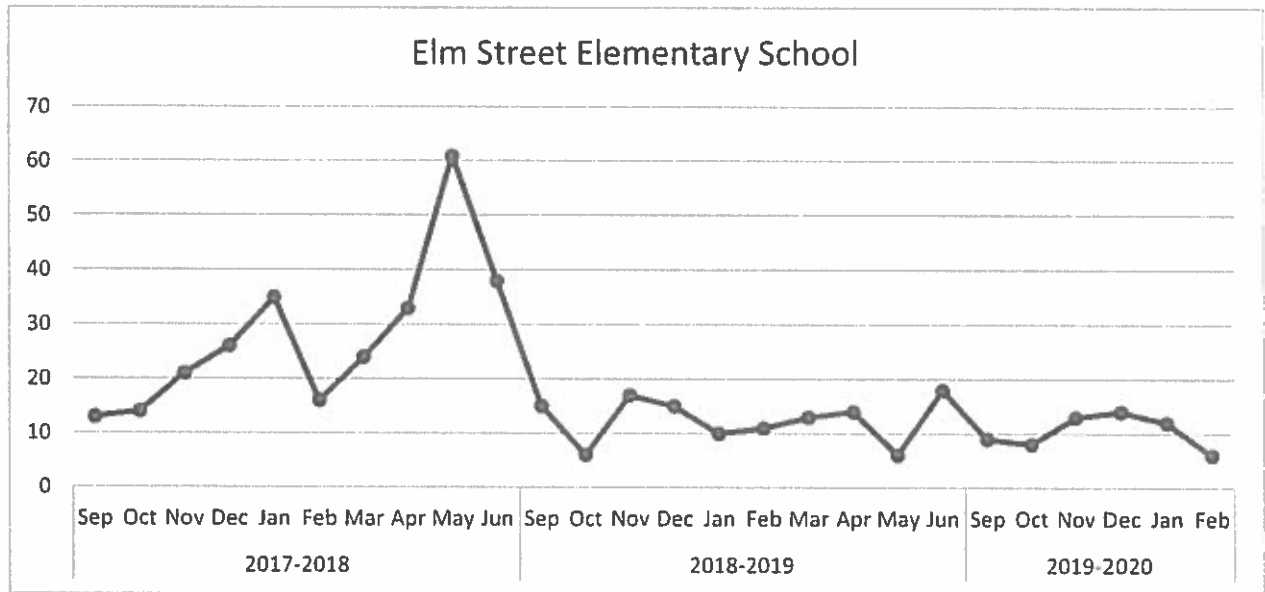*Note.* 9th-11th grade student absences by month for students who utilized in-town bus runs.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Figure 22
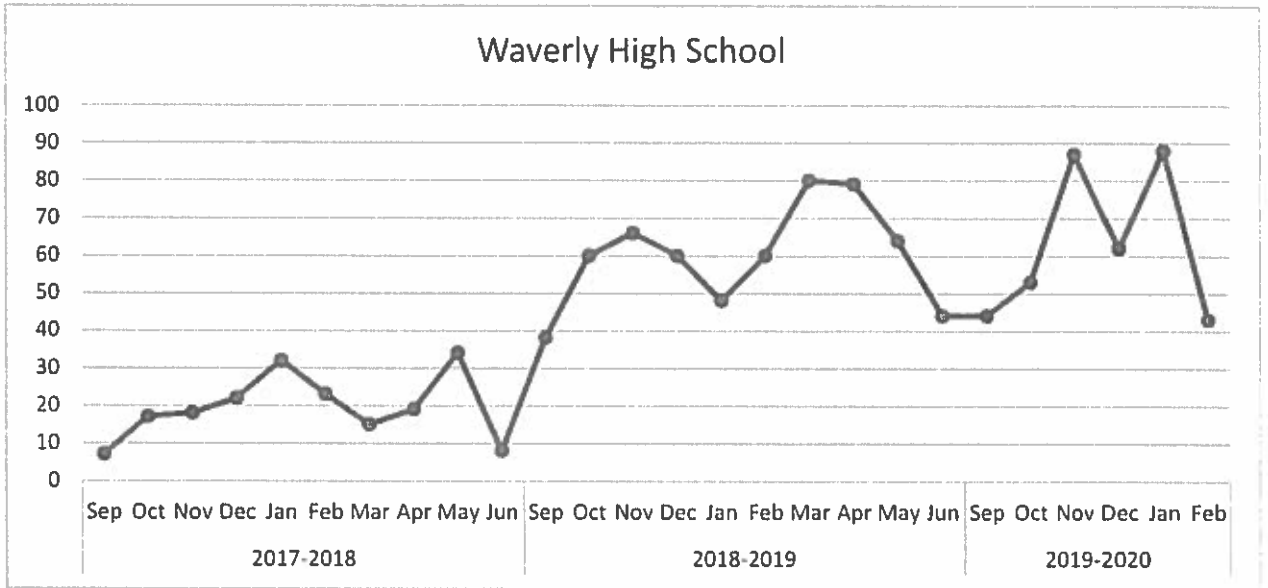
Note. 9th-11th grade student absences by month for poverty students who utilized in-town bus runs.
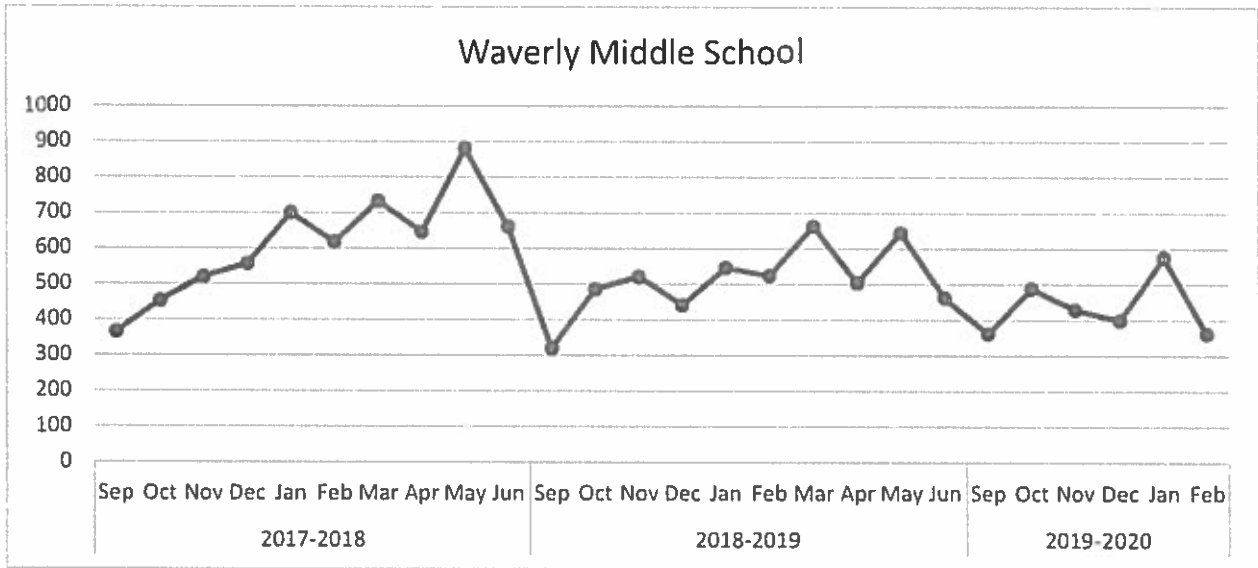
Figure 23
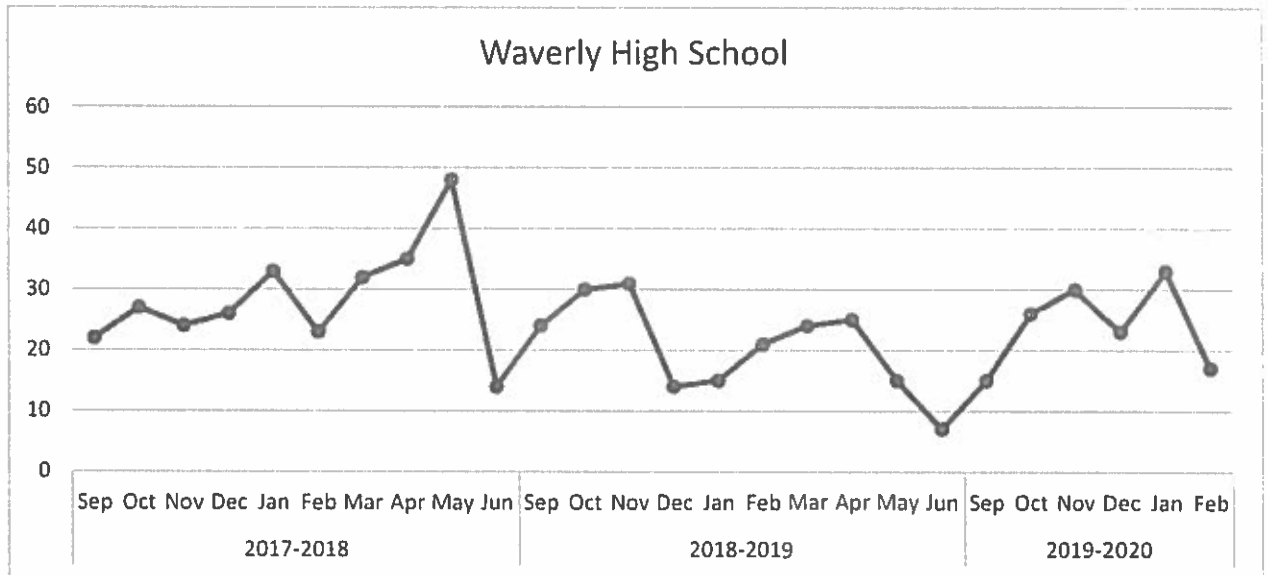
Note. 9th-11th grade student absences by month for IEP students who utilized in-town bus runs.
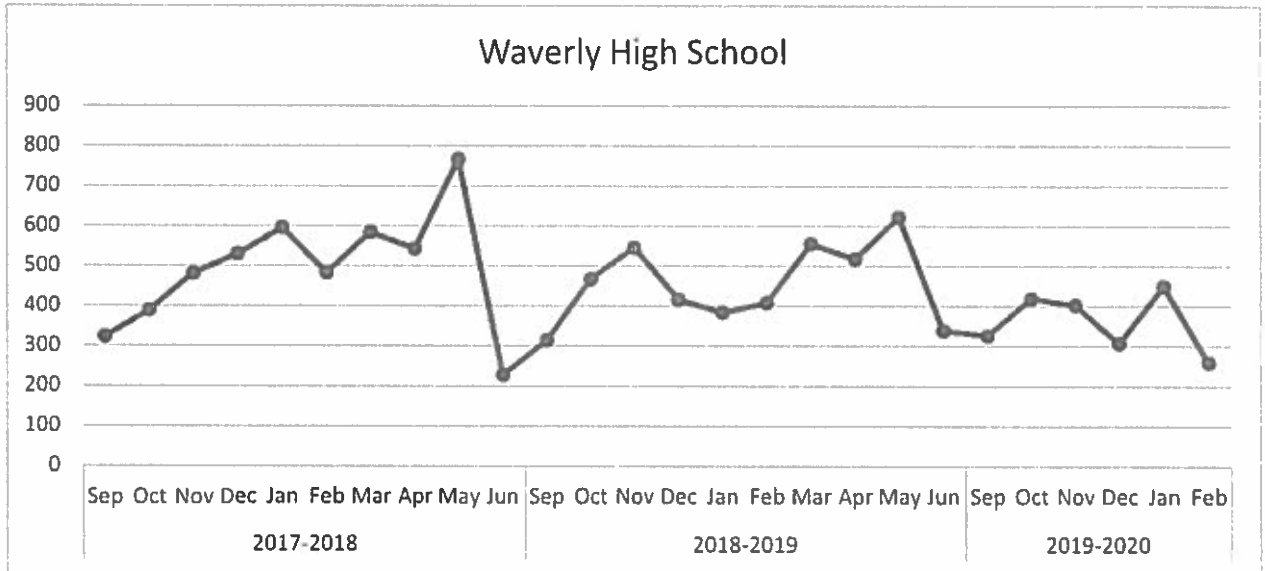
CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Climate Survey Results (EDSCLS)

The school improvement team at Waverly Central School District implemented the 34-

question climate survey to student's grades 3-12. These questions were specifically chosen to

address concerns over safety, student-staff relationship and student's perceptions of the everyday

school environment in the Waverly Central School District. The first three questions are not in

the results as they pertain to census data. This data is applicable to the school improvement

teams and school climate teams but is not included in the survey results. The non-reported

questions relate to gender, grade in school and free-text responses.

Figure 24

| Waverly Schools Student Survey Results	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	Magnitude Change	Percentage Change
Q4. All students are treated the same.	57.61%	61.48%	3.87%	6.72%
Q5. Boys and girls are treated equally well.	57.58%	61.78%	4.20%	7.29%
Q6. Adults treat all students respectfully	55.73%	62.56%	6.83%	12.26%
Q7. My teachers care about me.	75.32%	77.00%	1.68%	2.23%
Q8. My teachers make me feel good about myself.	61.14%	64.92%	3.78%	6.18%
Q9. Students respect one another.	26.02%	33.50%	7.48%	28.75%
Q10. I go to school events.	72.07%	73.80%	1.73%	2.40%
Q11. I take part in extra-curricular activities.	67.20%	67.96%	0.76%	1.13%
Q13. I feel like I belong.	60.77%	66.71%	5.94%	9.77%
Q14. I am happy to be at this school.	56.34%	63.66%	7.32%	12.99%
Q15. I feel safe at this school.	65.62%	70.02%	4.40%	6.71%
Q16. Students at this school are often bullied.	53.03%	42.73%	-10.30%	19.42%
Q17. Students at this school try to stop bullying.	36.36%	40.05%	3.69%	10.15%
Q18. Students often spread mean internet rumors or lies.	57.21%	47.55%	-9.66%	16.89%
Q19. Students in this school know what to do if there is an emergency.	67.75%	72.28%	4.53%	6.69%
Q20. Students hearing about a threat to school safety would report it.	65.69%	73.30%	7.61%	11.58%
Q21. Students have pride in our school.	68.14%	71.65%	3.51%	5.15%
Q22. My teachers praise me when I work hard.	63.07%	67.05%	3.98%	6.31%
Q23. My teachers give me individual attention when I need it.	67.02%	70.23%	3.21%	4.79%
Q24. My teachers connect what I am learning to life outside the classroom.	47.89%	55.33%	7.44%	15.54%
Q25. The things I am learning are important to me.	60.23%	65.41%	5.18%	8.60%
Q26. My teachers expect me to do my best all the time.	86.12%	89.83%	3.71%	4.31%
Q27. My teachers really care about me.	62.55%	66.62%	4.07%	6.51%
Q28. I can talk to my teachers about the problems I am having in class.	67.37%	70.94%	3.57%	5.30%
Q29. I can talk to a teacher about something that is bothering me.	62.70%	65.04%	2.34%	3.73%
Q30. Students at this school work out their disagreements with other students.	31.26%	39.88%	8.62%	27.58%
Q31. My teachers make it clear to me when I have misbehaved.	78.23%	84.30%	6.07%	7.76%
Q32. Adults working in this school reward students for positive behavior.	60.45%	62.01%	1.56%	2.58%
Q33. School rules apply to everyone.	67.80%	71.77%	3.97%	5.86%
Q34. Discipline is fair.	53.03%	58.51%	5.48%	10.33%
Averages	60.38%	63.93%	3.55%	9.18%

Note. Waverly CSD full climate survey results.

The overall results from the school climate survey show a 9.18% positive change in the climate indicators as evidenced by the percentage of students responding with Agree or Strongly Agree. Key results from the overall survey include a 10.30 percentage point decrease on the question Q16, "Students are often bullied at this school." The question Q18, "Students often spread mean internet rumors or lies." shows 9.66 percentage points less on the 2019-2020 survey. The safety question, Q15, "I feel safe at this school." Increased 4.40 percentage points from the year one survey to the year two survey. These survey results were shared with the different working groups in the district including extracurricular events and athletics, safety committee, climate and culture, and school policy committee.

Figure 25
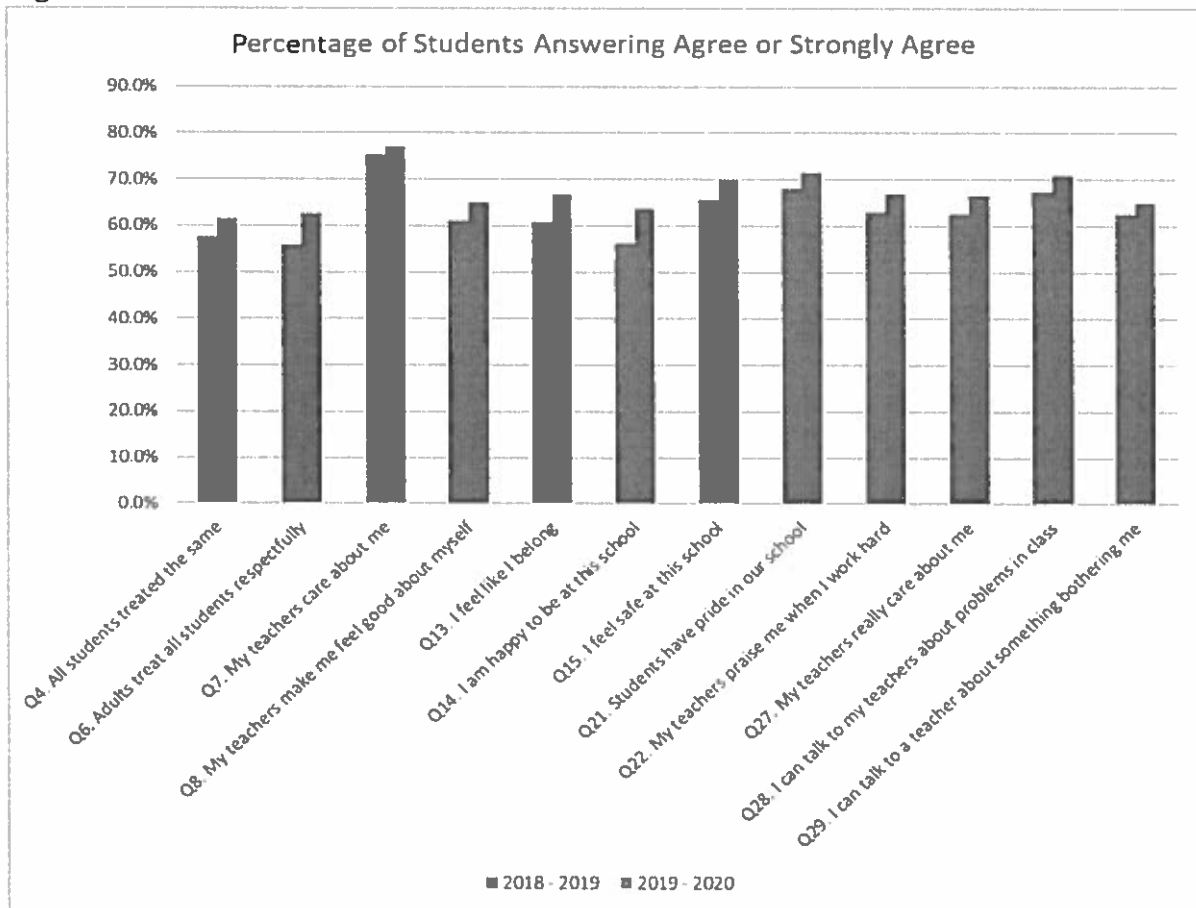
Note. Waverly CSD Climate Survey administrative team focus questions.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

The administrative team identified the above twelve questions from the climate survey to indicate if students feel better about the learning environment in the Waverly Central School District. The questions identified relate to student's personal feelings and the student's perceptions of how staff and others care about the surveyed student. It was important for the student to get the student voice. The sample size for the school district was significant including over 750 individual samples for both years (826 for 2018-2019 and 765 for 2019-2020).

The author of the study, the school data coordinator, and members of the administrative team conducted the analysis of our survey. The district used the positive responses versus the negative responses to establish the data set. For example, the research collated strongly agree and agree as a positive response and disagree and strongly disagree as a negative response. The results of the survey found growth on all twelve of the survey items identified by the school climate team. As shown below, the average growth for this question subset was a 6.99% increase in 2019-2020 over the results in 2018-2019.

Figure 26

Select Waverly Schools Student Survey Results	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	Magnitude Change	Percentage Change
Q4. All students treated the same	57.61%	61.48%	3.87%	6.72%
Q6. Adults treat all students respectfully	55.73%	62.56%	6.83%	12.26%
Q7. My teachers care about me	75.32%	77.00%	1.68%	2.23%
Q8. My teachers make me feel good about myself	61.14%	64.92%	3.78%	6.18%
Q13. I feel like I belong	60.77%	66.71%	5.94%	9.77%
Q14. I am happy to be at this school	56.34%	63.66%	7.32%	12.99%
Q15. I feel safe at this school	65.62%	70.02%	4.40%	6.71%
Q21. Students have pride in our school	68.14%	71.65%	3.51%	5.15%
Q22. My teachers praise me when I work hard	63.07%	67.05%	3.98%	6.31%
Q27. My teachers really care about me	62.55%	66.62%	4.07%	6.51%
Q28. I can talk to my teachers about problems in class	67.37%	70.94%	3.57%	5.30%
Q29. I can talk to a teacher about something bothering me	62.70%	65.04%	2.34%	3.73%
Averages	63.03%	67.30%	4.27%	6.99%

Note. Waverly CSD Climate Survey administrative team focused questions results.

The team focused this year on creating a social-emotional team with added staffing and intentional student contact. The survey results demonstrate a 12.26% yearly gain on the question "adults treats all students with respect." The team hypothesized that this increase is a result of student activities and the creation of the student-family advisor position in every school. The team identified the 12.99% gain on survey question, "I am happy to be at this school" as another affirmative indicator that the social-emotional program is finding success. Finally, the third survey question that the team focused on was the 9.77% growth in the "I feel like I belong" question for 2019-2020. The team attributed new activities from the SEL group including field days, group tee shirts and monthly student activities and celebrations of success.

The administrative team identified three questions to share with the staff of the Waverly Central School District. Survey item Q7, "My teachers care about me" garnered a 77% positive response in 2019-2020. Survey item Q6, "Adults treat all students respectfully" positive response growth of 12.26% from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020. Survey item Q28, "I can talk to my teachers about problems in class" a positive response rate of 70.94% and a growth of 5.30% from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020. The Waverly Central School District has made a commitment to train staff and faculty on social-emotional strategies and methods of engagement. These indicators demonstrate a positive correlation between the professional development work of the staff and the social emotional well-being of the student body. Additionally, security and wellbeing of the students is aligned to the drop in chronic absenteeism.

The overall results of the survey demonstrate a strong correlation with the decrease in elementary and middle school chronic absenteeism. The absentee rate dropped significantly from 2017-2018 to 2019-2020 in elementary/middle school data band (11.9%). The study climate focus was aimed at the elementary and middle school group more specifically than the high

school group. The school leadership team agrees that the emphasis on student belonging and the importance of positive staff/student relationships shows clearly through the educational school climate survey.

Conclusions

The results of the study are conclusive. The overall data supports the claim that additional school climate personnel and focus on school climate do increase student attendance. The study shows growth on 12 specifically-identified student responses from the US Department of Education Climate Survey. Each of these questions identify student voice on personal feeling or perceptions of the learning environment. The literature review identified student feeling about learning environment as a major factor in student success. A link has been established between the feelings of the student about climate to a student's willingness to attend. This is the causal relationship the hypothesis established between school climate and attendance. The school climate survey positives increased and the number of chronically absent students decreased.

The students in grades 1-8 are most positively impacted by social-emotional programming and increased climate-building resources. The 1-8 grade group showed an 11.9% drop in chronic absenteeism to 9.1% and below the New York State 10% threshold for the first time since the ESSA (2015) law has been in effect. The impact of student-family advisors to make personal phone calls to parents and create positive rewards systems was not quantified in this study. In a future survey, we will specifically identify these positions and create questions to measure the impact of the position specifically.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

1. Do you know your family student advisor (use specific name)?

2. How often do you communicate with your family student advisor?

3. What adult do you go to if you have a problem or concern in school?

4. List the reasons you are absent from school. Multiple choice.

In-town bus transportation is an additional expense on the Waverly Central School District. New York State Education Law exempts the school district from transport of residents within two miles of the school building of attendance. The in-town bus stops began with two locations in 2018-2019 and increased to six locations in 2019-2020. Student ridership shows a positive relationship between grade one through grade eight students who are in-town riders and the same students' attendance. The impact of the in-town bus stops and students in grades nine through twelve is negligible. The impact of busing on attendance is hard to quantify because students go in and out of the service depending on change of residence, parent transportation and weather issues.

The fact that the school district has made significant gains in attendance is easy to see, it could be – and likely is – a combination of all factors. It is also important to note that the New York State Education Department (NYSED) has been tracking chronic absenteeism (CA) as a component of their ESSA plan since the 2017-2018 school year. NYSED's ESSA plan groups attendance measures by Elementary-Middle (grades 1-8) and High School (grades 9-12). Waverly CSD has seen its Elementary-Middle CA rate drop from 21 percent in 2017-2018 to 9.1 percent in 2019-2020 and its High School CA rate from 24.2 percent to 21.4 percent for the same period.

Recommendations

The substantial decrease in chronic attendance based on school climate improvements at the elementary and middle school level must be sustained. Student-family advisor positions will continue to be funded through the 2020-2021 school year. Professional development programming (PBL, STEM, and PBIS) through GST BOCES will continue to focus on school climate and student-centered environments. The Social-emotional team established in 2018-2019 under the director of special services will continue to operate through the 2020-2021 school year. We will establish a survey that specifies the position of student-family advisor to collect data on the importance of the position to families and overall attendance.

In 2020-2021 the Waverly Central School District will continue to collect data on school climate. We will start to build the climate survey out to include all students, pre-K through twelve. District level meetings will rename the agenda item, "school spotlight" to "school climate activities" so the district can continue to intentionally focus on climate. The district will continue to share the climate data with all stakeholders in order to facilitate improvement and conversation around the learning environment. Parent surveys will be developed for all district parents to measure perception and gather feedback from community.

The Waverly Central School District is suspending all in-town bus access for the first two weeks of the 2020-2021 school year. The COVID-19 pandemic has created a social distancing issue for the district transportation department. The district is working to resolve the issue and reestablish the in-town stops in order to build upon the increased attendance of students in our housing developments and downtown rental properties. The recommendation to the Board of Education will be to return to in-town busing as soon as safely and fiscally possible. The district will work to reestablish busing by October 1, 2020.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

The final recommendation is to continue the district focus on attendance. Attendance has been the number one priority since the 2018-2019 school year. Because of the focus on attendance, climate has improved, morale (USDOE surveys on staff and student school climate) has improved and the perception and feeling of wellbeing has improved for our students and staff. The improvement on the ESSA chronic absenteeism numbers shows the power of the program and the progress that we can continue to make as we focus on getting our students in school.

Appendix 1. Tioga County Mental Health Preventive Needs Assessment Survey

Waverly School District: What are the PNA numbers telling you?

Questions/definitions for Risk and Protective Factors pages 18-21 of profile report
☑ Which 3-5 risk factors appear to be higher than you would want when compared to the Bach-Harrison Norm/ County Data?
  ○ Low Commitment to School (62%)
  ○ Depressive Symptoms (60%)
  ○ Low perceived risk for drug use (60%)
  ○ Family Conflict-(62%)
  ○ Interaction with antisocial peers- (30%)
☑ Which 3-5 protective factors appear to be lower than you would want when compared to the Bach-Harrison Norm/ County Data?
  ○ Opportunity for pro-social involvement (school domain, 45%), Interaction with pro-social peers, 40%, Rewards for Pro-social involvement (school domain, 55%)

ATOD
Questions on pages 24-25
Higher than county data for same County Average in ()
☑ Which levels of 30-day drug use are increasing and/or unacceptably high?
  ○ Alcohol 8th (17.7)% (14.6), 12th 40% (32.7)
  ○ Marijuana 10th 13.2% (12.6), 12th 21.7% (19.8)
  ○ E-cigs 8th 11.9% (13.2), Cigarettes 8th 5.1% (1.9), Cigarettes 10th 10.5% (7.6), Cigarettes 12th 13% (8.3)
  ○ Inhalants 8th 5.0% (2.9), Sedatives 8th 3.3% (1.3)
  ○ Hallucinogens 10th 2.6% (.3)
  ○ Heroin 8th 1.7% (.6), Heroin 12th 2.2% (.7)

☑ Which substances are your students using the most? At which grades do you see unacceptable usage levels?
  ○ Alcohol, binge drinking 12th 20.4% (18.1), Riding with Drinking Driver 8th 25% (17.5), 12th 23.6% (14.5)
☑ Which antisocial behaviors are increasing and/or unacceptably high? Which behaviors are your students exhibiting the most? At which grades do you see unacceptable behavior levels?
  ○ Drunk or High at School 8th 6.1 (3.4), Drunk or High at school 10th 15.2 (12.3),
  ○ Attacked Someone with the Idea of Seriously Hurting Them 8th grade 16.7% (7.1),
  ○ Gambled in the past year 8th 33.3% (24.9)
  ○ Been Arrested 12th 8.8% (2.6)
  ○ Gang Involvement 8th 14.1 (4.3), 10th 13.0 (3.9), 12th 3.6 (1.3)
☑ Note School Safety Questions

- o How many times in the past year (12 months) have you been suspended from school? reporting at least once 8th grade 12.1% (5.6), 10th 4.3, 12th grade 10.5% (7.5),
- o The school lets my parents know when I have done something well. NO! response 8th 14.5, 10th grade 31.1%, 12th grade 34.6%, total 27.1%
- o My teachers let me know when I have worked hard at school no or NO! response 8th 51.5, 10th 64.5, 12th 67.6
- o Sometimes I think I am no good at all. Yes or YES! response 8th 46.8% 10th grade 41.3% 12th grade 56.4%, total 48.4%
  - All in all I am inclined to think I feel like a failure: yes or YES! Response 8th 37.7, 10th 28.2, 12th 42.6, total 36.6%

Other Points to Consider:

- ☑ What concerns do staff, parents and the community have regarding youth behaviors?
- ☑ What current programming, strategies, and frameworks is your school currently implementing?
- ☑ What other resources are available for youth and families in your community and school?

Casa-Trinity Prevention Services in Tioga County, Tioga Allies in Substance Abuse Prevention (ASAP) Coalition

	Priority 1	**Priority 2**	**Priority 3**
Past 30 Day Use	Alcohol	Marijuana	E-cigarettes/Cigarettes
Anti-Social Behavior	Attacked Someone with the Idea of Seriously Hurting Them	Being Arrested	Gang Involvement/Suspension
Risk Factor	Low Commitment to School	Depressive Symptoms	Low perceived risk for drug use (60%)/Family Conflict-(62%)
Protective Factor	Opportunity for pro-social involvement (School)	Rewards for Pro-social involvement (School)	Interaction with Pro-social peers

Data: Past 30 Day Use:

Substance	2017	County 2017	MTF 2017	2017	County 2017	MTF 2017	2017	County 2017	MTF 2017	Total 2017	County Total 2017	MTF Total 2017
Alcohol	17.7	14.6	7.3	17.5	25.7	19.9	40.0	32.7	33.2	25.0	28.7	26.6%
Marijuana	1.7	3.8	5.4	13.2	12.6	14	21.7	19.8	22.5	13.7	15.8%	18.3%
E-Cig		11.9	7.7	16.2	8.3	13.2	11.0		17.4	18.1	12.5	
Inhalants		5.0	2.9	1.8								
Cigarettes		5.1	1.9	2.6	10.5	7.6	4.9		13.0	8.3	10.5	

Anti-Social Behaviors:

Table 7. Percentage of Students With Antisocial Behavior in the Past Year

How many times in the past year (12 months) have you: (One or more times)	Grade 8			Grade 10			Grade 12			Total		
	2017	County 2017	BH Norm	2017	County 2017	BH Norm	2017	County 2017	BH Norm	2017	County 2017	BH Norm
Been Suspended from School	12.1	5.6	13.4	4.3	5.8	11.2	10.5	7.5	8.5	9.5	6.2	11.1
Been Drunk or High at School	6.1	3.4	7.8	15.2	12.3	14.7	10.5	11.8	17.3	10.1	9.3	13.2
Sold Illegal Drugs	1.5	1.2	3.1	2.2	3.1	7.2	3.5	4.6	8.6	2.4	2.9	6.3
Stolen or Tried to Steal a Motor Vehicle	1.5	1.2	2.2	2.2	1.0	2.7	0.0	0.3	2.0	1.2	0.9	2.3
Been Arrested	1.5	2.5	4.8	2.2	1.3	6.0	8.8	2.6	5.8	4.1	2.1	5.5
Attacked Someone with the Idea of Seriously Hurting Them	10.7	7.1	12.9	8.7	7.7	11.8	5.3	4.9	9.6	10.7	6.7	11.5
Carried a Handgun	9.4	8.5	5.4	13.0	6.4	5.5	5.3	4.6	5.5	9.0	5.9	5.5
Carried a Handgun to School	1.5	0.6	0.9	0.0	0.8	1.2	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.6	0.5	1.1

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Risk Factors

Risk and Protective Factor Profiles

RISK PROFILE
2017 Waverly School District, All Grades
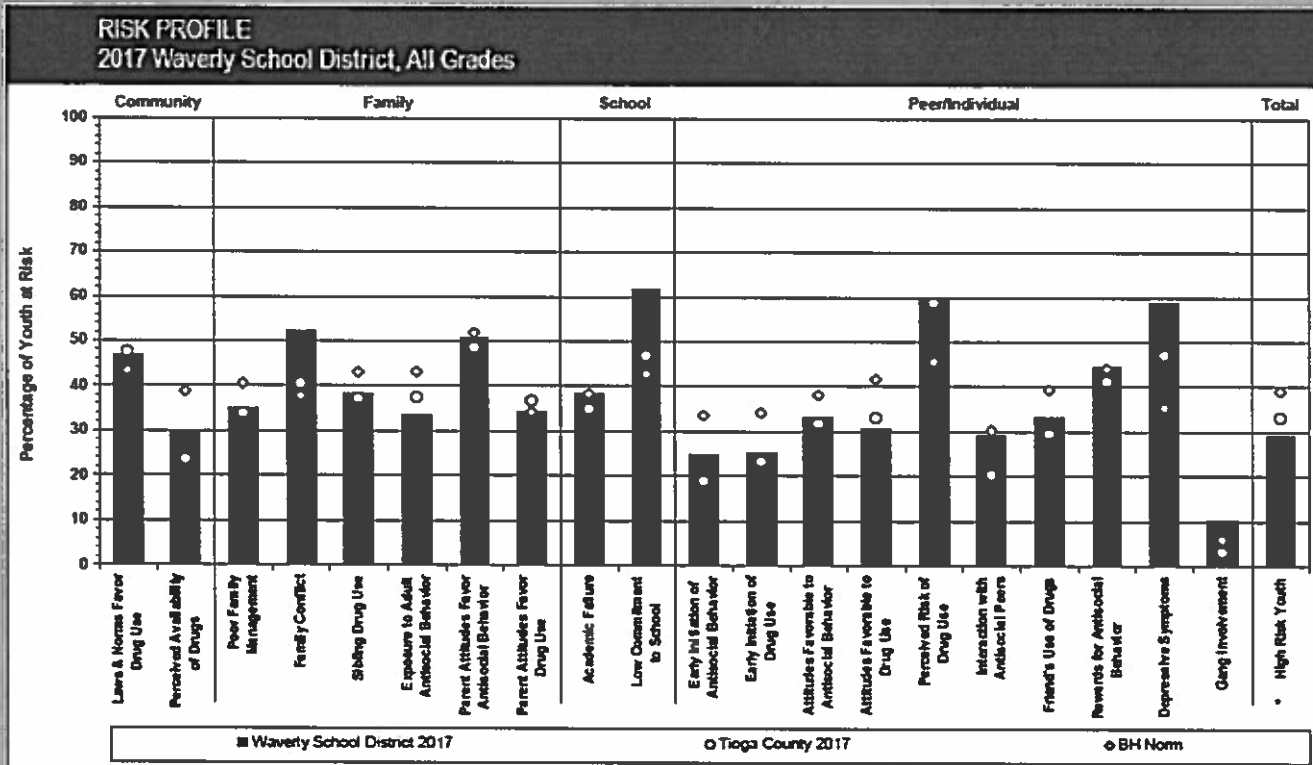
* High Risk Youth are defined as the percentage of students who have more than a specified number of risk factors operating in their lives. (6th grade: 5 or more risk factors, 7th-9th grades: 6 or more factors, 10th-12th grades: 7 or more factors).

CONCERNS:

- **Laws & Norms Favoring Drug Use**
- **Low Commitment to School**
- **Depressive Symptoms**
- **Family Conflict**
- **Low Perceived Risk of Drug Use**

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Protective Factors

PROTECTIVE PROFILE
2017 Waverly School District, All Grades

** High Protection Youth are defined as the percentage of students who have more than a specified number of protective factors operating in their lives.
(6th and 7th grades: 3 or more protective factors; 8th-12th grades: 4 or more factors).
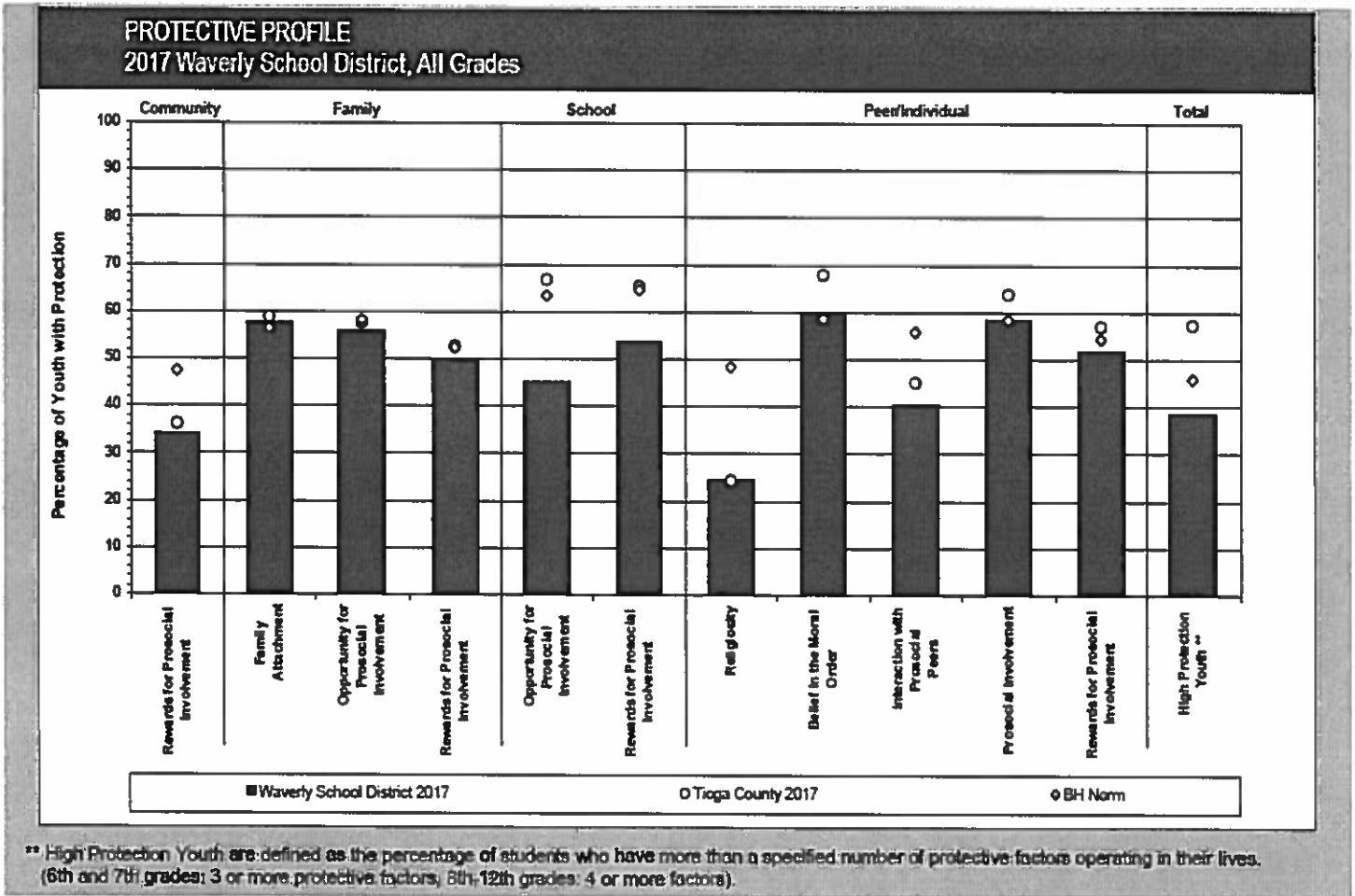
POSITIVES:

- ☝ **Opportunity for Pro-Social Involvement (Family)**
- ☝ **Family Attachment**
- ☝ **Rewards for Pro-social Involvement (Community)**

Casa-Trinity Prevention Services in Tioga County
Tioga Allies in Substance Abuse Prevention (ASAP) Coalition
Ideas & Suggestions

- ✓ Easy to address initially- Rewards for pro-social involvement School Domain
  - o Inserts in school programs with tips/suggestions for parents on praise, recognition, encouragement etc.
  - o School recognition of students publicly for grades, volunteer work, showing good character etc... could be newspaper, social media, parent newsletters etc.
  - o Teachers identify kids working hard, even if grades aren't in the honor roll category but student is putting forth effort, let parents know when kids are doing extra work/demonstrating good character, making better decisions
  - o Possibly announce weekly acknowledgement for doing something helpful/kind/handling a situation well – nominations or principal's pick
  - o Give kids not already involved in something a job or project opportunity ... could be as easy as a greeter in the morning to say hi at the door of homeroom
  - o Offer/Showcase opportunities for kids to get involved in positive work, community, service learning projects etc.
- ✓ Family Conflict
  - o Work with coalition on parent campaigns inserts, messages about talking to kids,
  - o Use data in a positive way, frame issues with marijuana use, alcohol use, providing alcohol which gives facts for parents
  - o Work with community to host a parent info night or family fun night, attend sports meetings with parents, little league with parents and hand out parent books with resources
- ✓ Past 30 Day Use/Perceived Harm of Drugs
  - o Work on norms campaigns in the school, highlighting the positive PNA data (most kids are NOT doing drugs, most kids DO NOT think it is cool to do drugs etc.)
  - o Use stall readers, poster contests, trivia games, lunch and learns, announcements to convey information about the different drugs of concern, art shows about positive choices vs. other choices

- o Have older kids get a younger kid "Pen Pal" write why they will stay drug free and young kid writes why they look up to them
- o Offer Teen Intervene when violation of drug policy occurs, Brief Intervention/Motivational Interviewing
- o Start Prevention messages early- Average age of onset is 12 so before 6th grade kids need to hear these messages.
- ✓ Depressive symptoms- Promote stress reduction by having yoga/mental health breaks, promote talking to someone, "You are not Alone", Promote positive school wide activities which are inclusive of everyone.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Appendix 2. USDOE Educational School Climate- Student Survey

ED School Climate Surveys

Student Survey

U.S. Department of Education

National Center for Educational Statistics

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

1. Are you male or female? Mark one response.   Sdemo148

   Male

   Female

2. What grade are you currently in at this school? Mark one response.   Sdemo151

   5th grade
   6th grade
   7th grade
   8th grade
   9th grade
   10th grade
   11th grade
   12th grade
   Not graded

   Which of the following grade groupings best describes the grade that you are currently in? Mark one response.
   Sdemo151b

   5th to 8th grade
   9th to 12th grade

4. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin? Mark one response.   Sdemo149

   Yes

   No

5. What is your race? You may mark one or more races.   Sdemo150

   White

   Black or African-American

   Asian

   American Indian or Alaska Native

   Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

6. All students are treated the same, regardless of whether their parents are rich or poor.   Sengclc1
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

7. Boys and girls are treated equally well.   Sengclc2
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

Throughout the survey, "This school" means activities happening in school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses, and at places that hold school-sponsored events or activities. Unless otherwise specified, this refers to normal school hours or to times when school activities/events were in session.

This school provides instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, handouts) that reflect my cultural background, ethnicity, and identity.   Sengclc3
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

9. Adults working at this school treat all students respectfully.   Sengclc4
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

10. People of different cultural backgrounds, races, or ethnicities get along well at this school.   Sengclc7
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

11. Teachers understand my problems.   Sengrel9

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

12. Teachers are available when I need to talk with them.   Sengrel11

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

13. It is easy to talk with teachers at this school.   Sengrel12

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

14. My teachers care about me.   Sengrel14

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

[High School Student Only] At this school, there is a teacher or some other adult who students can go to if they need help because of sexual assault or dating violence.   Sengrel153

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

16. My teachers make me feel good about myself.   Sengrel17

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

17. Students respect one another.   Sengrel20

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

18. Students like one another.   Sengrel21

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

19. If I am absent, there is a teacher or some other adult at school that will notice my absence.   Sengrel29

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

    I regularly attend school-sponsored events, such as school dances, sporting events, student performances, or other school activities.   Sengpar44

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

I regularly participate in extra-curricular activities offered through this school, such as, school clubs or organizations, musical groups, sports teams, student government, or any other extra-curricular activities.

Sengpar45

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

At this school, students have lots of chances to help decide things like class activities and rules. Sengpar46

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

There are lots of chances for students at this school to get involved in sports, clubs, and other school activities outside of class.   Sengpar47

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

24. I have lots of chances to be part of class discussions or activities.   Sengpar48

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

25. I feel like I belong.   Ssafemo18

[Not included in scale]

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

26. Students at this school get along well with each other.   Ssafemo49

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

    At this school, students talk about the importance of understanding their own feelings and the feelings of others.

                                                 Ssafemo52

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

    At this school, students work on listening to others to understand what they are trying to say. Ssafemo53

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

29. I am happy to be at this school.   Ssafemo54

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

30. I feel like I am part of this school.   Ssafemo56

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

31. I feel socially accepted.   Ssafemo57

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

32. I feel safe at this school.   Ssafpsaf59

   [Not included in scale]

   Strongly Agree

   Agree

   Disagree

   Strongly Disagree

33. I feel safe going to and from this school.   Ssafpsaf60

   Strongly Agree

   Agree

   Disagree

   Strongly Disagree

34. I sometimes stay home because I don't feel safe at this school.   Ssafpsaf63

   [Item is negatively valenced.]

   Strongly Agree

   Agree

   Disagree

   Strongly Disagree

35. Students at this school carry guns or knives to school.   Ssafpsaf65

   [Item is negatively valenced.]

   Strongly Agree

   Agree

   Disagree

   Strongly Disagree

36. Students at this school threaten to hurt other students.   Ssafpsaf67

   [Item is negatively valenced.]

   Strongly Agree

   Agree

   Disagree

   Strongly Disagree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

37. Students at this school steal money, electronics, or other valuable things while at school.　　Ssafpsaf68

    [Item is negatively valenced.]

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

38. Students at this school damage or destroy other students' property.　　Ssafpsaf69

    [Item is negatively valenced.]

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

39. Students at this school fight a lot.　　Ssafpsaf71

    [Item is negatively valenced.]

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

40. Students at this school are teased or picked on about their race or ethnicity.　　Ssafbul74

    [Item is negatively valenced.]

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

41. Students at this school are teased or picked on about their cultural background or religion.　　Ssafbul75

    [Item is negatively valenced.]

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

Strongly Disagree

42. Students at this school are teased or picked on about their physical or mental disability.   Ssafbul76

[Item is negatively valenced.]

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

43. [High School Student Only] Students at this school are teased or picked on about their real or perceived sexual

orientation.   Ssafbul77b

[Item is negatively valenced.]

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

This question is about bullying. Bullying happens when one or more students tease, threaten, spread rumors about, hit, shove or hurt another student. It is not bullying when students of about the same strength or power argue or fight or tease each other in a friendly way. Bullies are usually stronger, or have more friends or more money, or some other power over the student being bullied. Usually, bullying happens over and over, or the student being bullied thinks it might happen over and over.

44. Students at this school are often bullied.   Ssafbul73

[Item is negatively valenced.]

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

45. Students at this school try to stop bullying.   Ssafbul80

[Not included in scale]

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

This question is about cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

46. Students often spread mean rumors or lies about others at this school on the internet (i.e., Facebook™, email, and instant message).   Ssafbul83

    [Item is negatively valenced.]

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

Drugs means any substance, including those used to get "high" or increase performance in school or sports, other than alcohol or tobacco. Examples include marijuana, illegal drugs, inhalants, synthetic drugs used to get high (K-2, bath salts, white lightning), or over-the-counter medicine. This does not include medications prescribed by doctor or nurse for the person, but includes prescription drugs that are NOT prescribed to the person by his/her doctor.

"Alcohol" means a full or part of a drink of alcohol. Examples include beer, wine, mixed drink, shot of liquor, or any combination of these alcoholic drinks. This does not include alcohol that you may drink for religious purposes.

47. Students use/try alcohol or drugs while at school or school-sponsored events.   Ssafsub88

    [Item is negatively valenced.]

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

It is easy for students to use/try alcohol or drugs at school or school-sponsored events without getting caught.

                                                                                                      Ssafsub91

    [Item is negatively valenced.]

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

49. Students at this school think it is okay to smoke one or more packs of cigarettes a day.   Ssafsub92

    [Item is negatively valenced.]

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

50. Students at this school think it is okay to get drunk.   Ssafsub93

    [Item is negatively valenced.]

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

51. Students at this school think it is okay to try drugs.   Ssafsub94

[Item is negatively valenced.]

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

52. Students know what to do if there is an emergency, natural disaster (tornado, flood) or a dangerous situation
(e.g. violent person on campus) during the school day.   Ssaferm97

[Not included in scale]

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

If students hear about a threat to school or student safety, they would report it to someone in authority.

Ssaferm98

[Not included in scale]

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

54. The bathrooms in this school are clean.   Senvpenv100

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

55. The temperature in this school is comfortable all year round.   Senvpenv102

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

56. The school grounds are kept clean.   Senvpenv105

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

57. I think that students are proud of how this school looks on the outside.   Senvpenv106

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

58. Broken things at this school get fixed quickly.   Senvpenv107

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

59. My teachers praise me when I work hard in school.   Senvins111

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

60. My teachers give me individual attention when I need it.   Senvins113

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

61. My teachers often connect what I am learning to life outside the classroom.   Senvins114

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

Strongly Disagree

62. The things I'm learning in school are important to me.   Senvins115

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

63. My teachers expect me to do my best all the time.   Senvins121

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

64. My teachers really care about me.   Senvmen130

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

65. I can talk to my teachers about problems I am having in class.   Senvmen132

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

66. I can talk to a teacher or other adult at this school about something that is bothering me.   Senvmen133

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

    Strongly Disagree

67. Students at this school stop and think before doing anything when they get angry.   Senvmen134

    Strongly Agree

    Agree

    Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Students at this school try to work out their disagreements with other students by talking to them. Senvmen137

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

69. My teachers make it clear to me when I have misbehaved in class.   Senvdis142

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

70. Adults working at this school reward students for positive behavior.   Senvdis143

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Adults working at this school help students develop strategies to understand and control their feelings and actions.   Senvdis146

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

72. School rules are applied equally to all students.   Senvdis147

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

73. Discipline is fair.   Senvdis147c

Strongly Agree

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

   O Strongly Disagree

68. Students at this school try to work out their disagreements with other students by talking to them.

                                      Senvmen137

   O Strongly Agree

   O Agree

   O Disagree

   O Strongly Disagree

69. My teachers make it clear to me when I have misbehaved in class.   Senvdis142

   O Strongly Agree

   O Agree

   O Disagree

   O Strongly Disagree

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this school? Mark One Response

70. Adults working at this school reward students for positive behavior.   Senvdis143

   O Strongly Agree

   O Agree

   O Disagree

   O Strongly Disagree

71. Adults working at this school help students develop strategies to understand and control their feelings and actions.   Senvdis146

   O Strongly Agree

   O Agree

   O Disagree

   O Strongly Disagree

72. School rules are applied equally to all students.   Senvdis147

   O Strongly Agree

   O Agree

   O Disagree

   O Strongly Disagree

73. Discipline is fair.   Senvdis147c

   O Strongly Agree

Appendix 3. Definitions

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent or more of a school year -- approximately 18 days a year, or just two days every month. Moreover, across the nation, 5 to 7.5 million students are chronically absent.

In-town stops are locations within two miles of the school buildings that the district is not legally responsible for transportation. Specifically stops located around apartment complexes and rental areas in the village of Waverly.

School climate is a broad, multifaceted concept that involves many aspects of the student's educational experience. A positive school climate is the product of a school's attention to fostering safety; promoting a supportive academic, disciplinary, and physical environment; and encouraging and maintaining respectful, trusting, and caring relationships throughout the school community no matter the setting—from Pre-K/Elementary School to higher education.

Student-Family Advisor is a civil service position in New York that is responsible for coordinating between families and school districts. In the Waverly District, the staff member is responsible for student attendance and student welfare. Waverly currently has one student-family advisor per building. They report to the director of special services and the building administrator.

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