

Join the Attendance Conversation

[@RVSAffendance](#)



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Attendance Innovation Campaign

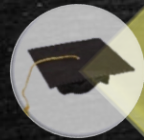
Improving Student Attendance Through Innovative Practices



Why does absenteeism matter?



Academic Failure



High School Drop-Out



Economic Disadvantage



Mental Health Challenges



Incarceration



Why does absenteeism matter?



School Act



Education Act



INAC Agreement



School Board Policy



What is absenteeism?

- Absenteeism refers to the *excused* or *unexcused* absences of students from school.





Why don't students come to school?

- Students do not come to school for many reasons and it is often helpful to categorize them into the following domains:

Barrier

Aversion

Engagement

Myth



What are the facts about attendance?

- Absences are a problem if they are excused or unexcused.
- Sporadic and consecutive absences negatively impact learning.
- Attendance patterns matter in all grades, including Kindergarten.
- Children often find it difficult to catch up on missed work.
- Parents who sign off on school absences does not minimize impact.
- Parents underestimate their child's absences by 50%.
- Attendance is critical for school success.



How many absences are too many?

- The empirical literature highlights that **missing 10%** of available instruction days has a significant consequence on the development of students.
- That means, **missing 18 days** (or one month) of instruction is all that it takes to become at-risk of negative academic, economic, mental health, and legal outcomes.



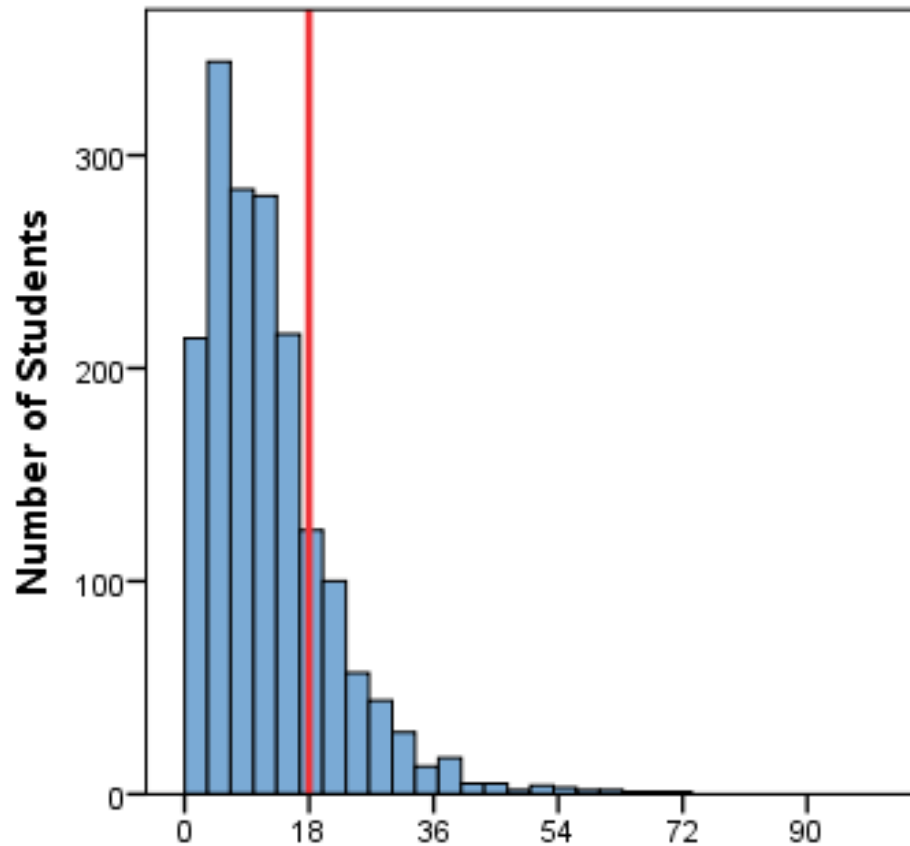
Prevalence of Chronic Absenteeism

- In Rocky View Schools, approximately **95%** of student are in school on any given day.
- According to data obtained from the 2015-2016 school year, approximately **4,400 students** demonstrate chronic absenteeism.
- This translates to **22% of students** within the Division have problematic attendance levels.
- If the prevalence of chronic absenteeism in Rocky View Schools is representative of the provincial landscape, this means that approximately **151,000 students** are having difficulty maintaining regular attendance.

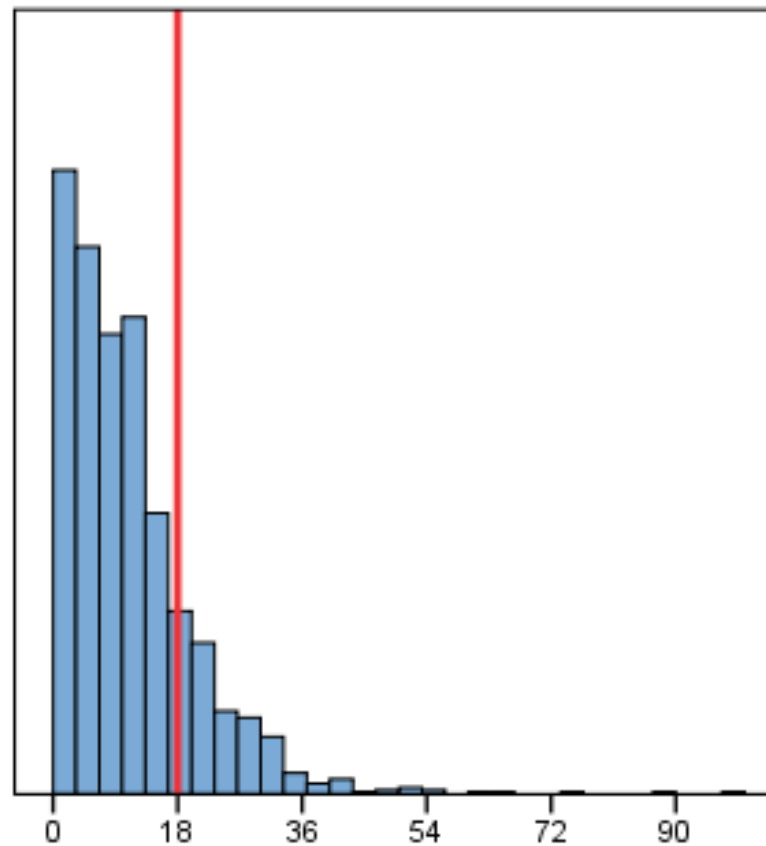


Attendance Trends in Rocky View Schools

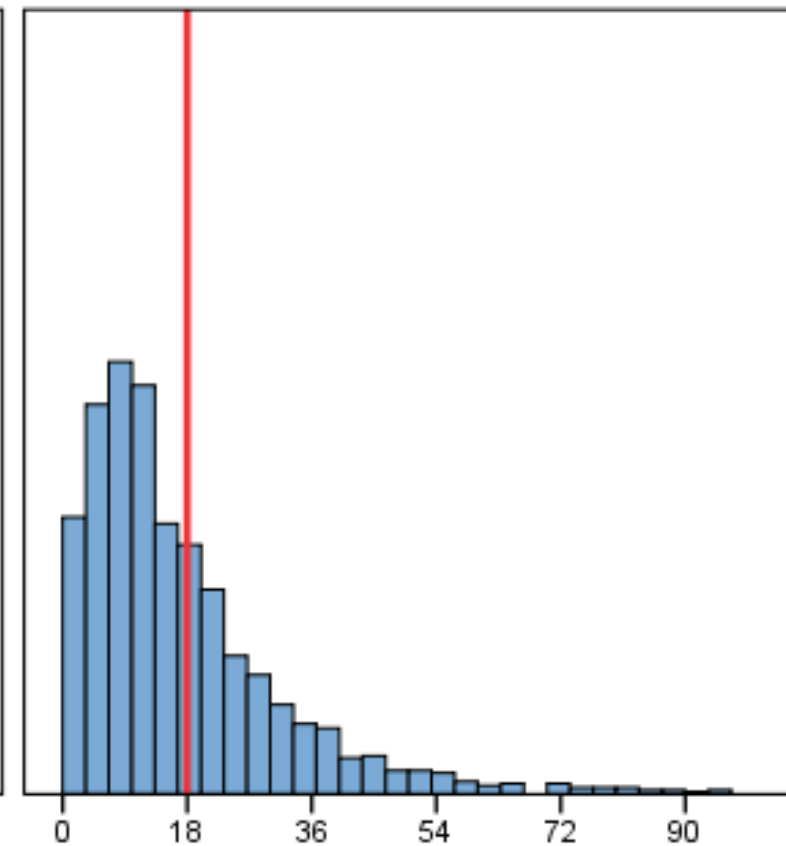
Grade 2



Grade 7



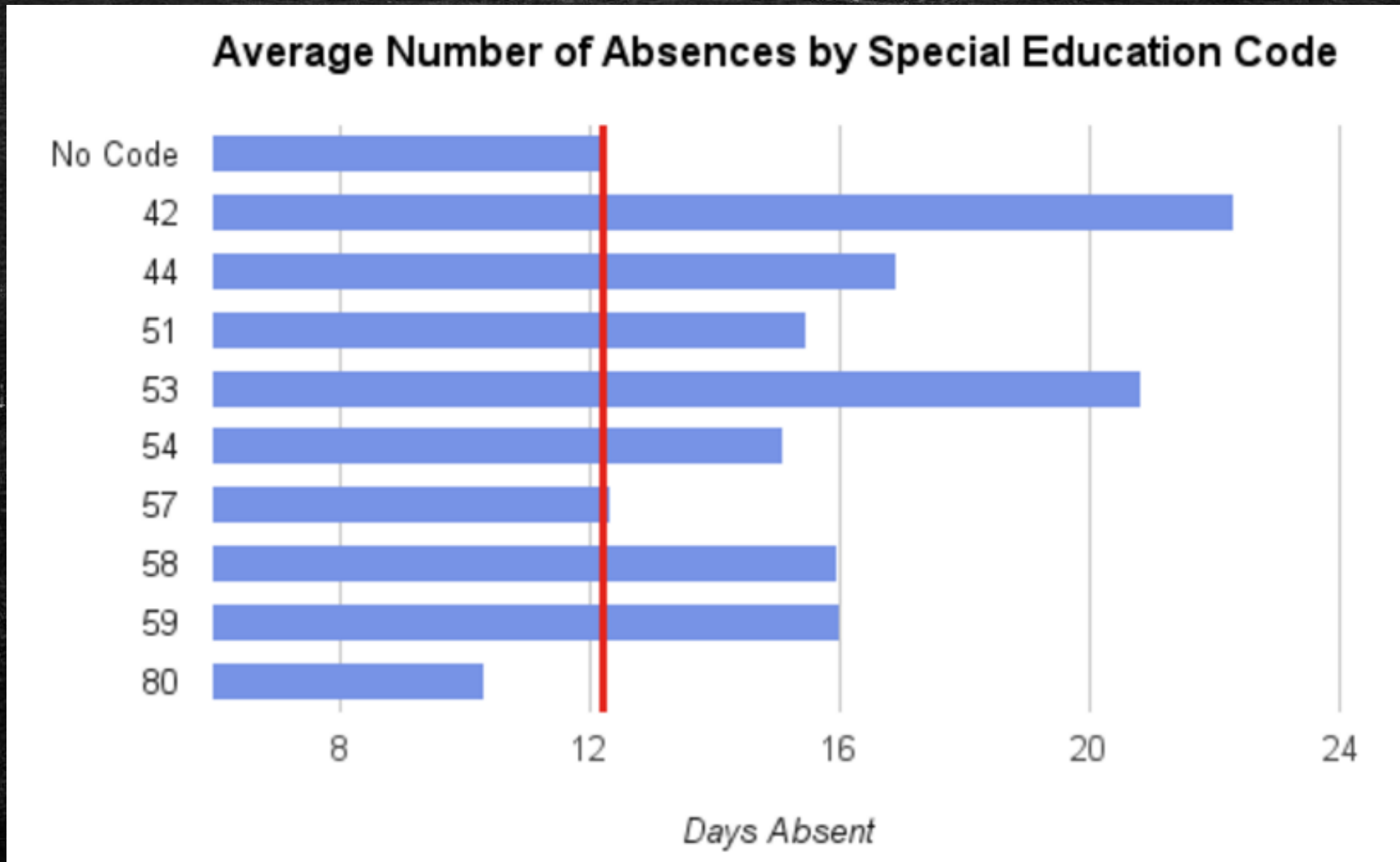
Grade 12



Absent Days

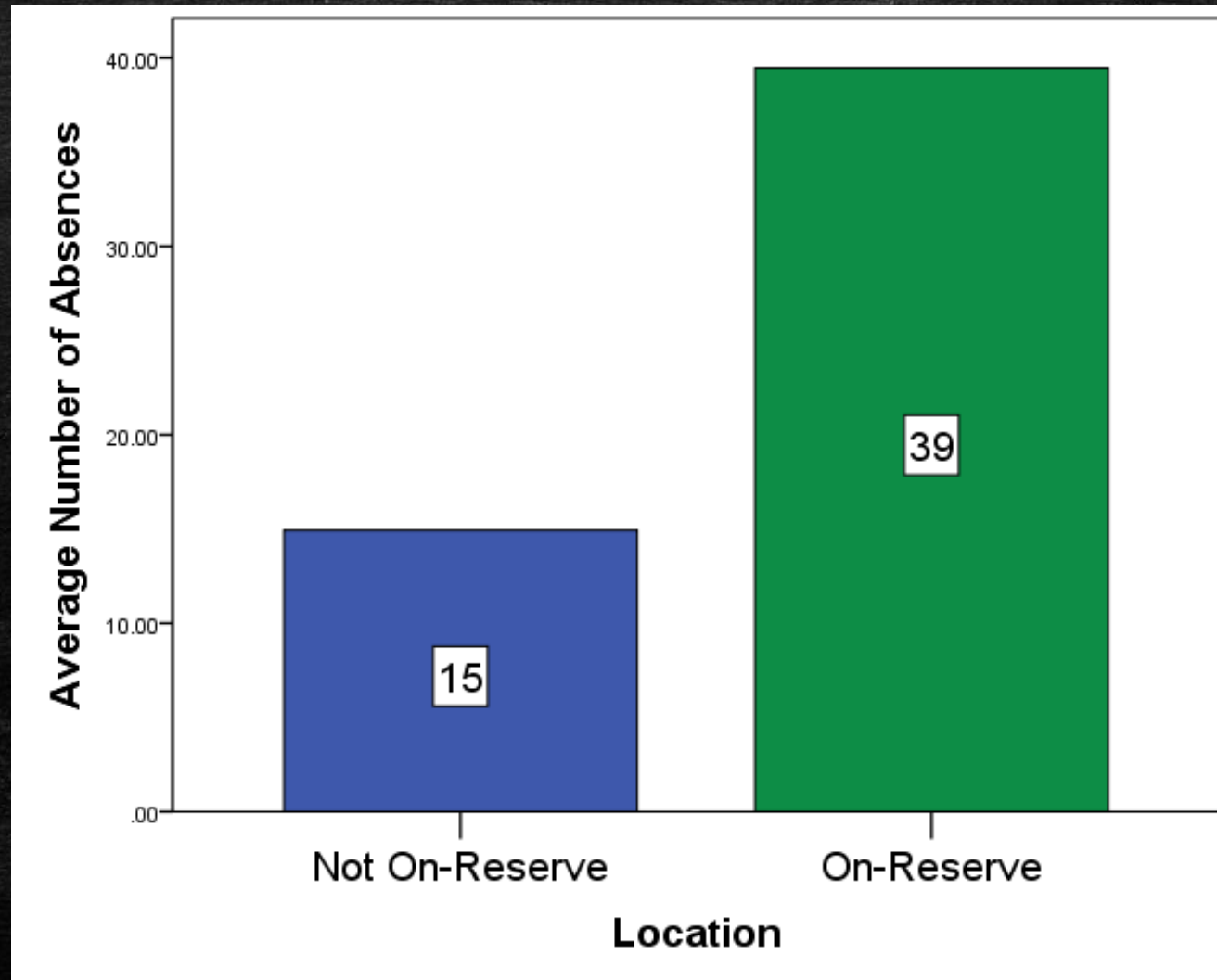


Attendance Trends in Rocky View Schools

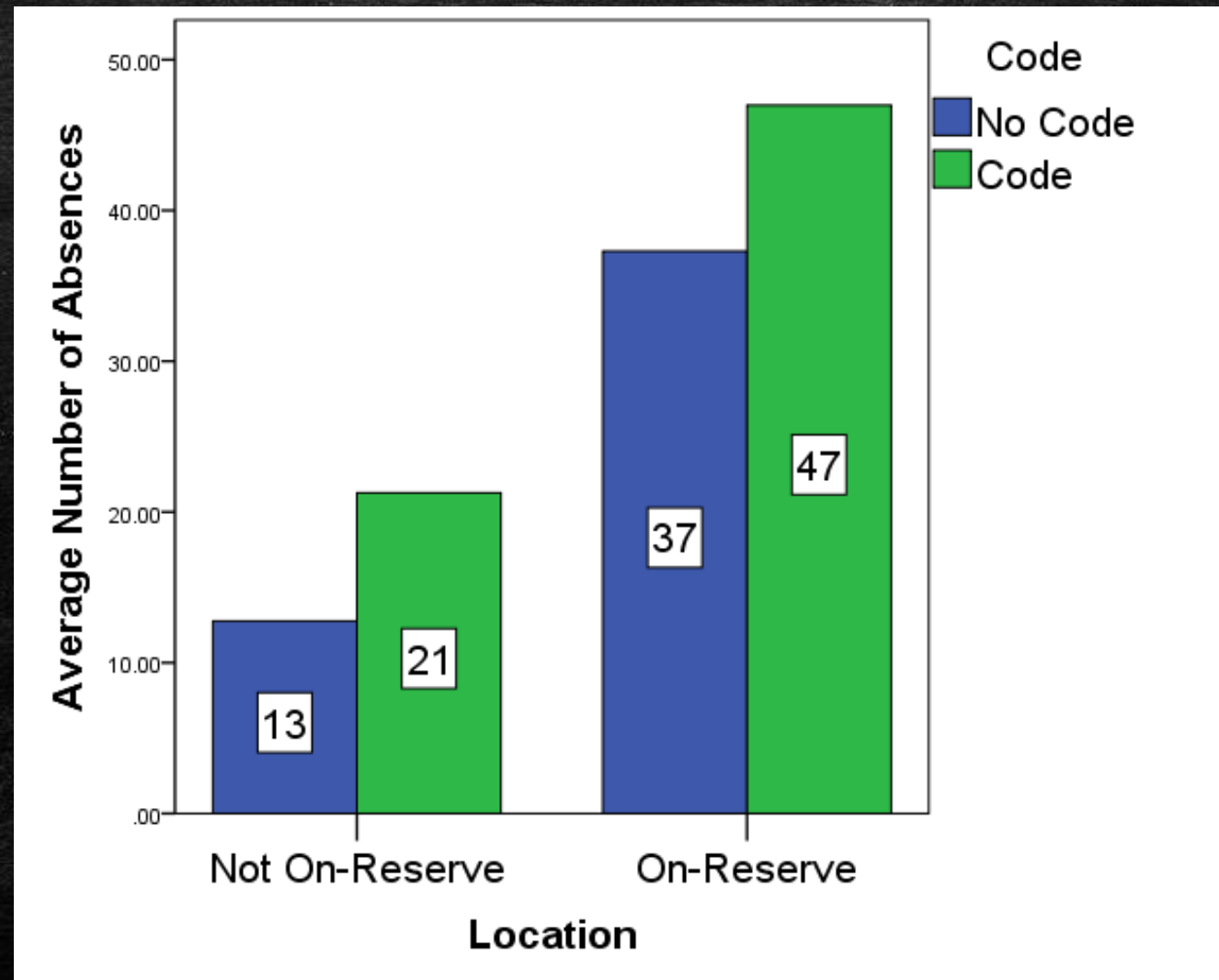




Indigenous Student Absences by Location



Indigenous Student Absences by Code





Attendance Innovation Campaign



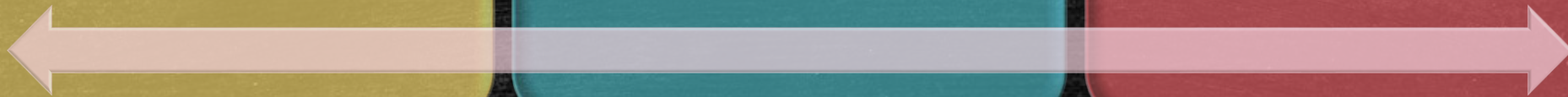
Educate



Empower



Eliminate





Educating Communities on Attendance





Empowering Schools to Use Data

- The research shows us that students who accrue ≥ 18 absences often have met one of the following criteria:
 - Absent ≥ 4 days in the first month of school
 - Absent ≥ 3 days over two weeks
 - Absent ≥ 5 days over three months
 - Absent ≥ 9 days over five months
- These early flags exemplify the need for building relationships with families early in the year and implementing an early warning system for absenteeism and tardiness.



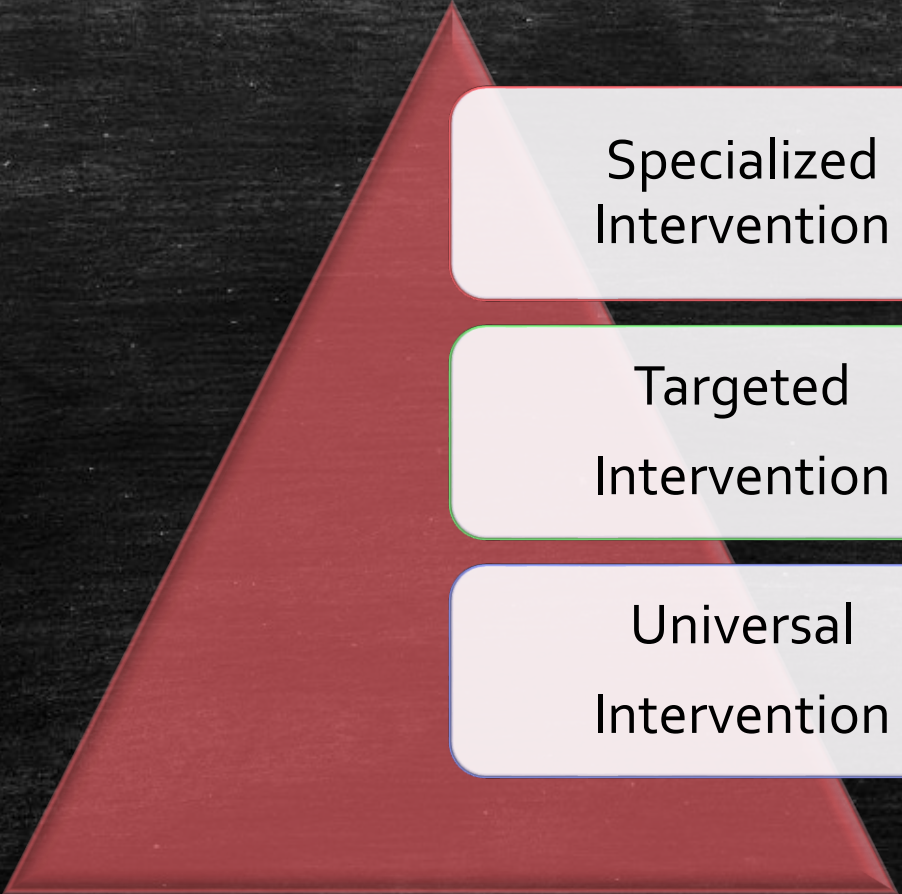
Accessing Attendance Information

Open PowerSchool™ *(if applicable)*

- Select your school and specific term.
- Select **System Reports** under the Reports heading on the left-hand column.
- Scroll halfway down the page and select **ADA/ADM by Student**.
- Modify the Begin Date and Ending Date to reflect the specific time range you intend to examine.
- At the bottom of the page, ensure the box that says Include Absent Column is selected.
- Click Submit.



Eliminating Barriers to Attendance



Specialized
Intervention

Targeted
Intervention

Universal
Intervention



Universal Intervention (0-9% Absence)

- Any successful tiered model of service delivery relies on a comprehensive universal intervention system.
 - Recognize good and improved attendance.
 - Avoid “Perfect Attendance” Initiatives.
 - Educate and engage students, families, teachers, and local elders.
 - Monitor attendance data and set goals at the school and divisional level.
 - Establish positive and engaging school climates, including land acknowledgements and presentation of flags.
 - Identify and address common barriers to getting to school.
 - Collaborate with local community groups to align and magnify service impact.



Targeted Intervention (10-19% Absence)

- Students who have a past history of moderate chronic absence (missing 10% or more of school) or face a risk factor (e.g. a chronic illness like asthma) which makes attendance more tenuous and need a higher level of more individualized support in addition to benefiting from the universal supports.
 - Teachers provide personalized early outreach.
 - School team meets to develop tailored action plan.
 - Connect to a caring mentor at school or in community.



Teachers as Mentors

To build positive relationships with students and families, and identify the barriers that present for regular school attendance:

1. Make a positive in-person or phone connection, **at the beginning of September**, with the parents of students in their home room, focus group, or as otherwise indicated by their administrator.
2. Reach out and perform a positive phone call, letter home, email, or text with parents for students in their assigned group on a **monthly basis from October to June**. This connection should describe how the student is doing or something positive they observed.
3. Make a positive phone connection, **at end of each month**, with the parents of students in their assigned group who will be identified as at-risk using the attendance and tardiness early warning system. Please connect with the student as well if it is appropriate.



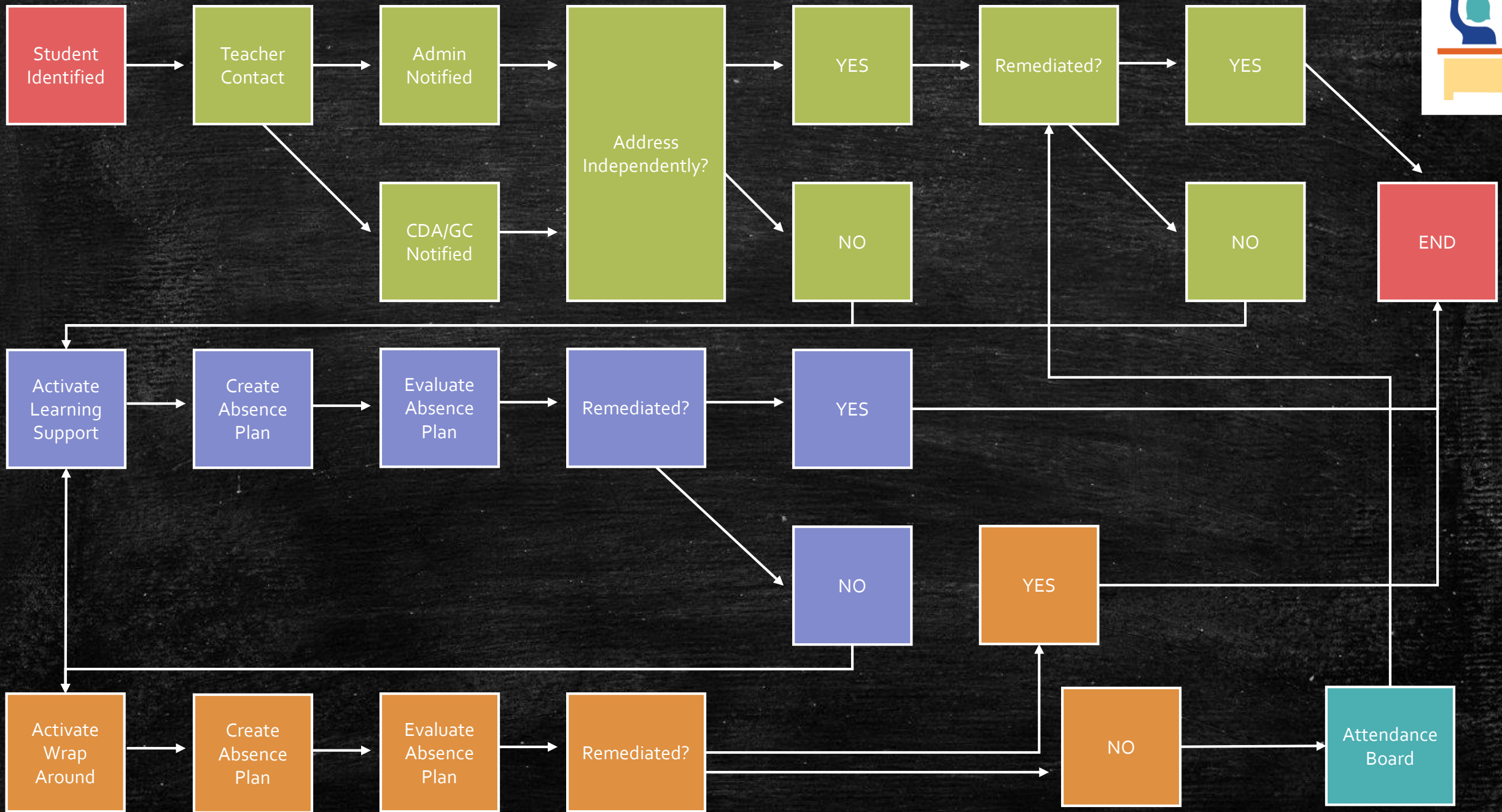
Quote from Michelle

*"I didn't think my teacher liked me,
but now I know they do"*

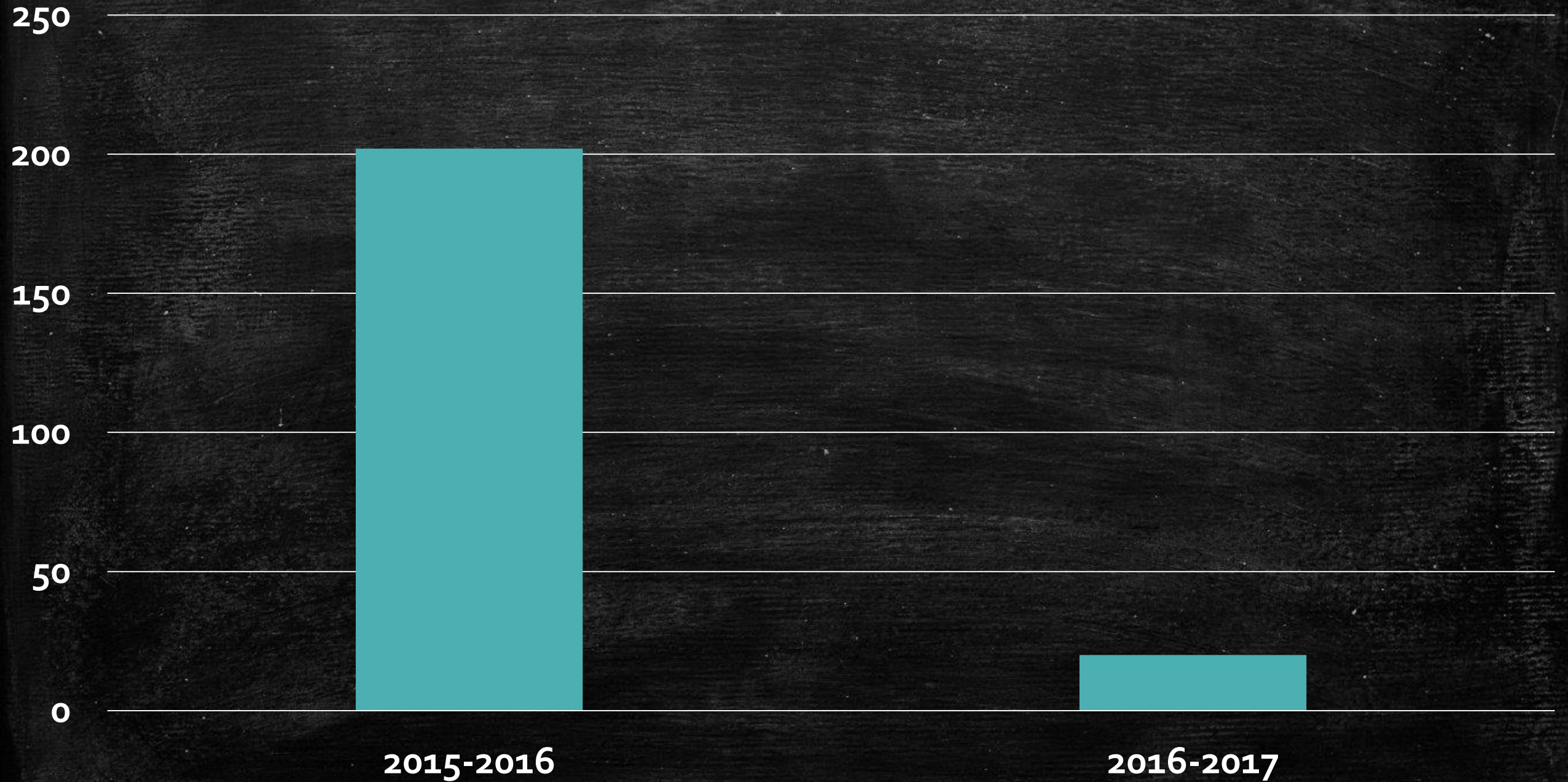


Specialized Intervention ($\geq 20\%$ Absence)

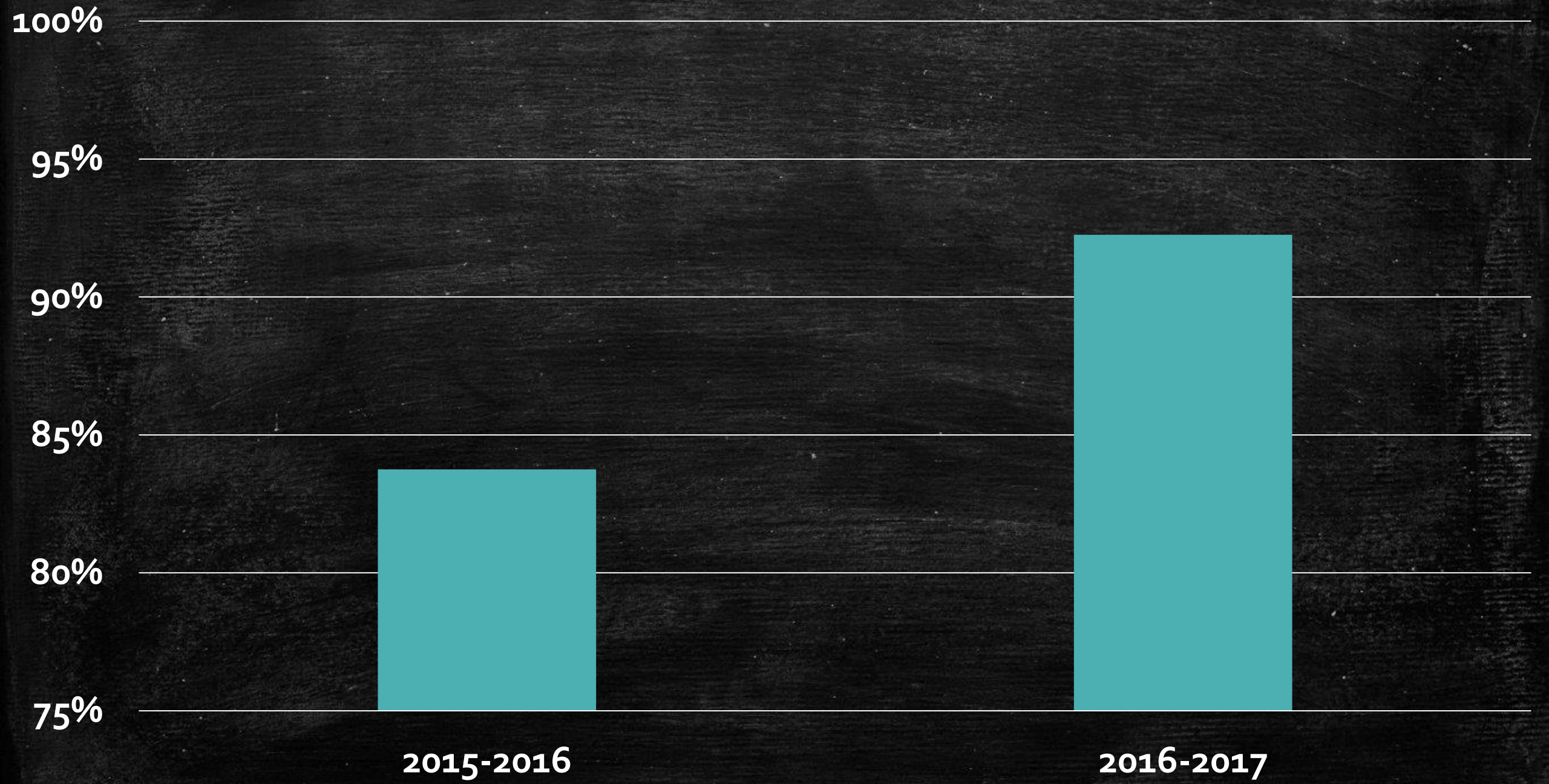
- Students with several levels of chronic absence (missing 20% or more of school in the past year or during the first month of school) and/or face a risk factor (like involvement in the child welfare or juvenile justice system).
 - Intensive case management with coordination of public agency and legal response as necessary.



Number of Chronically Absent Students



Percentage of Students with Good Attendance





Reflection for Educators

- Educate
 - Communicate the importance of attendance and eliminate myths by disseminating attendance facts.
- Empower
 - Investigate if your student information system can help your team to identify and address attendance concerns.
- Eliminate
 - Consider how you can work collaboratively with school staff to flag students with problematic attendance and support them.

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