



“I don’t know where I would be today without the AVID

program. It helped me see that graduation is possible. I have mentors and tutors who push me to work hard and believe in myself.”



“I’m a science teacher and we’ve developed

hands on projects so that students find the curriculum relevant.”



“The bottom line is, students cannot learn when they are

not in their seats. My daughter says she comes to school for the music class.”



## STATE PRIORITY AREA: ENGAGEMENT

### Student Engagement

Student engagement means providing students with programs, course work and opportunities both in and out of the classroom that motivates them and keeps them in school. Research further shows that when students are healthy in mind and body, they are more engaged, miss less school, focus better in class, and are more likely to graduate. Different types of teaching methods can also keep more students engaged. Students look forward to attending school when they feel a community of caring adults and peers support their success.

#### Some ways schools can measure student engagement include assessing:

- School attendance rates.
- The number of students who are chronically absent (when students are absent for more than 10 percent of school year for any reason).
- Middle school dropout and graduation rates.
- High school dropout and graduation rates.
- The number and types of student leadership groups, on-campus clubs and extra-curricular activities available.
- The number of students participating in student leadership groups, on-campus clubs and extra-curricular activities available.
- The number of classes taught that provide students with multiple ways of learning.

#### Learn more – get engaged!

- Attendance Works: [www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org)
- Sierra Health Foundation “Engaging Youth Report”: [www.sierrahealth.org/assets/files/reach/engaging\\_youth\\_Report.pdf](http://www.sierrahealth.org/assets/files/reach/engaging_youth_Report.pdf)
- California Health Centers Association: [www.schoolhealthcenters.org](http://www.schoolhealthcenters.org)
- California Department of Education, School Attendance Improvement Strategies: [www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ai/cw/attendstrategy.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ai/cw/attendstrategy.asp)
- California State PTA: [www.capta.org/lcff](http://www.capta.org/lcff)
- Also, be sure to check out your local school district’s website.

## Key Questions to Ask About Student Engagement

- 1. What are we doing to ensure all students are interested in and motivated to come to school?** Have we tried establishing incentives for participation in school programs and for good or improved attendance?
- 2. How are we improving our graduation rates and reducing the number of drop outs among all student groups?** What are we doing to close the gap between those students who have the highest graduation rates and those students who are dropping out?
- 3. Is poor health a barrier to students attending school regularly?** What are the main health reasons in our community for students not attending their classes regularly? How are we measuring student health and its impact on attendance and learning?
- 4. How do we define an “absence” (e.g., more than 30 minutes tardy to class, missing one or more morning classes, missing the entire day)?** Do we currently collect and assess data on student absenteeism rates?
- 5. What is the target for reducing chronic absenteeism among all student groups?** How have we reached out to the families of chronically absent students to address barriers to attendance?