Welcome to the blog for the Student Engagement and Attendance Center (SEAC). SEAC’s mission is to provide technical assistance (TA) support to State Education Agencies (SEAs) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) on issues related to chronic absenteeism and student engagement. This blog series will be used to discuss SEAC's work, highlight key takeaways from TA activities, and disseminate resources developed by SEAC staff. A primary goal of SEAC is to reach as wide an audience as possible, so please feel free to forward our link to colleagues in your SEA, LEA, and other community partners who will benefit from resources related to chronic absenteeism and student engagement.

SEAC TA efforts cover a wide range of topics related to chronic absenteeism and student engagement. Throughout all its work, SEAC places a special emphasis on addressing issues of equity for diverse student populations. In the past year, these have included:

- Root causes for chronic absence
- Social determinants of health in K-12 populations
- Comprehensive approaches to attendance supports during the COVID-19 pandemic in a remote learning environment
- Options for measuring school climate while examining the disproportionate effects that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on students from specific communities
- Youth and family engagement
- Incorporating chronic absenteeism into multi-tiered systems of support

This year, SEAC is providing a variety of TA supports to its constituents that build on its previous efforts. It is holding ten Peer-to-Peer meetings of seven state teams composed of SEAs and LEAs to discuss high-priority topics and provide opportunities for state teams to discuss problems of practice related to their work. Topics covered in this series include:

- An overview of the current state of attendance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Family and student engagement
- Collecting and analyzing attendance data
- Trauma-informed social and emotional learning supports

SEAC also convenes a Learning Series open to teams of SEA and LEA partners. This year, each Learning Series consists of three one-hour meetings to enable a deep dive into the topics covered. The three series focus on integrating attendance into multi-tiered systems of support, strategies to enhance student and family engagement policies and practices, and strategies to support non-punitive practices to help address truancy.

SEAC also hosts national webinars and develops written TA for SEA and LEAs (please see the “Resources” section of this page for current products). Its first webinar held on March 10, 2022 focused on an analysis of first semester attendance data which included presentations from Connecticut and Ohio. Future TA activities will include resources and webinars related to applying principles of equity to
address chronic absenteeism, strategies for using excused mental health days, and tools to strengthen family and youth engagement policies and practices. SEAC also offers just-in-time TA to SEAs on issues related to chronic absenteeism and student engagement. Please contact seacenter@insightpolicyresearch.com for additional information. Watch this space for updates on SEAC’s work every month!