Publication Summary

Forum Guide to Collecting and Using Attendance Data

Every school day counts in a student's education. Regular attendance is essential to providing students with opportunities to learn, and research substantiates the relationship between attendance and achievement. Access to accurate, timely attendance data can guide the design of interventions intended to improve attendance and, in turn, promote positive student outcomes and increased student achievement.

The *Forum Guide to Collecting and Using Attendance Data* is designed to help state and local education agency staff improve their attendance data practices: the collection, reporting, and use of attendance data to improve student and school outcomes.

The guide is organized into the following chapters and appendices:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction** discusses why school attendance and attendance data matter and describes the relationship between attendance and student achievement and success.
- **Chapter 2: Attendance and Enrollment** describes the relationships between attendance, enrollment, and withdrawals.
- **Chapter 3: Attendance Taxonomy Category Descriptions** explains the importance of using an attendance taxonomy and provides an exhaustive, mutually exclusive attendance taxonomy.
- **Chapter 4: Common Challenges to Collecting Attendance Data and Best Practices for Addressing Challenges** discusses common challenges and effective practices related to collecting, reporting, and using quality attendance data.
- **Chapter 5: Acting on the Data – Tip Sheets for SEA and LEA Stakeholders** summarizes the key responsibilities, considerations, actions, outcomes, and motivations for a wide range of local and state stakeholders.
- **Appendix A: Sample Letter to Parents** features a customizable letter template that can be used to communicate the importance of attendance to parents, guardians, and families.
- **Appendix B: Recent Publications from the National Forum on Education Statistics**

The *Forum Guide to Collecting and Using Attendance Data* is intended for staff in federal, state, and local education agencies whose responsibilities include any aspect of collecting, reporting, or using attendance data. This audience includes program and data staff, researchers, administrators, policymakers, and others who are tasked with using attendance data to improve student and school outcomes.

This publication revises and expands the information included in *Every School Day Counts: The Forum Guide to Collecting and Using Attendance Data*, published in 2009. The *Forum Guide to Collecting and Using Attendance Data* is a product of the National Forum on Education Statistics and is available on the Forum website at https://nces.ed.gov/forum/pub_2017007.asp. The information and opinions published in the guide are the product of the National Forum on Education Statistics and do not necessarily represent the policies or views of the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, or the National Center for Education Statistics.

National Forum on Education Statistics