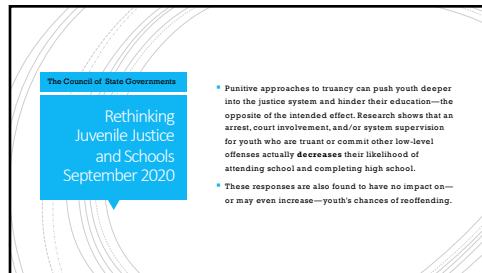
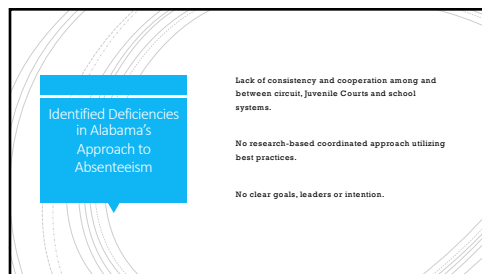




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2



3

There is no one right answer.

[Improving outcomes] is not about doing one thing 1,000% better, its about doing 1,000 things 1% better.


-Jan Carlzon, CEO
Scandinavian Airline, retired.

4

The Helping Families Initiative...
A School / Community Collaboration

The Helping Families Initiative brings together schools, law enforcement, criminal justice, and community efforts to deliver targeted services to families.

HFI focuses on improving family functioning and child functioning as a means to reduce problem behavior that leads to crime.

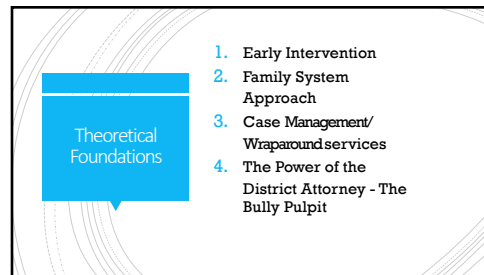


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Important Aspects of HFI

- No direct services
- Primary point of contact is parent/family
- Family assessment
- Family IIP
- No criminal (except for attached (w/exceptions))
- No direct services
- Independent from school or social services
- Partnerships across professions, jurisdictions and service providers
 - Public sector
 - Human Services Providers
 - Faith community
- Confidential
- Traveler/Guide or Coach relationship with parent.
- Intervention plan is problem focused, culturally sensitive and family driven.

6



Theoretical Foundations

1. Early Intervention
2. Family System Approach
3. Case Management/ Wraparound services
4. The Power of the District Attorney - The Bully Pulpit

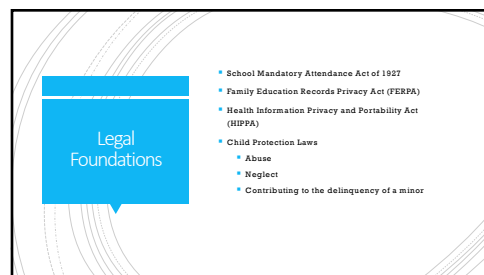
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Bringing the Solutions Together

- The District Attorney convenes the community conversation through the Interagency Team
 - Education
 - Social Services
 - City and County Government
 - Public Health
 - Local law enforcement
 - Faith Community

8



Legal Foundations

- School Mandatory Attendance Act of 1927
- Family Education Records Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Health Information Privacy and Portability Act (HIPPA)
- Child Protection Laws
 - Abuse
 - Neglect
 - Contributing to the delinquency of a minor

9

School
Responsibility
According to
ALSDE

- 1 UA absence notification plus copy of laws and school policy
- 5 UA parent conference with principal or Early Warning Truancy
- 7 UA Petition filed in Juvenile Court

*Any local education agency may adopt a policy more rigorous than the State policy.
Authority: Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-1-.02(7)(c)*

10

Source of
School
Responsibility
and Procedures

- State Board of Education's Rules and Regulations 2023
 - Defines Truancy as 7 or more unexcused absences.
- Department of Education Attendance Manual 2024
 - Defines Truancy as 7 or more UA
 - Petition in Juvenile Court as the ultimate intervention.

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District Attorney
Responsibilities

- 2023 Code of Alabama Title 16 – Education Chapter 28 - School Attendance.
- Statutory Responsibility to "vigorously enforce the Act."

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The Authority of the District Attorney

Top Law Enforcement Officer in the Circuit


The District Attorney is answerable to the citizens who elected him/her


The Attorney General of Alabama is not the District Attorney's "Boss" neither is the Governor.


It is the District Attorney's statutory authority that gives us our superpower.


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The Judicious Use of this Power


We must treat this as a power that is only "on loan" with care and intention.


Our decisions and actions must follow the ethical standards of our professions as well as the ethical standards of the District Attorney.


Never give your power away or fail to use it if needed.


You can tell folks from school systems and our community partners "NO."

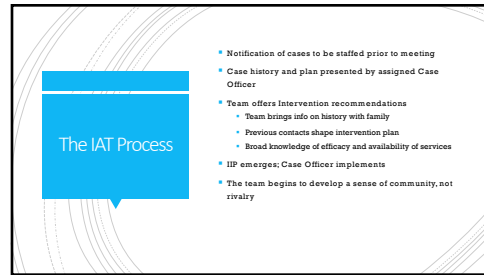

We ultimately answer only to the District Attorney for our decisions and actions.

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Interagency Team -at a glance

- Team meets regularly - virtually or in person
- Frequency of meeting depends on number of cases, but should be at least semi-monthly. Avoid called meetings.
- HF's staff convene and manage the meeting
- Multi-county Circuits have special challenges
- Rural areas may have fewer resources. Creativity required!
- Beginning and end of school year meetings are an opportunity to show appreciation
- DA should visit regularly but is not required to attend.

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The IAT Process

- Notification of cases to be staffed prior to meeting
- Case history and plan presented by assigned Case Officer
- Team offers intervention recommendations
 - Team brings info on history with family
 - Previous contacts shape intervention plan
 - Broad knowledge of efficacy and availability of services
- IIP emerges; Case Officer implements
- The team begins to develop a sense of community, not rivalry

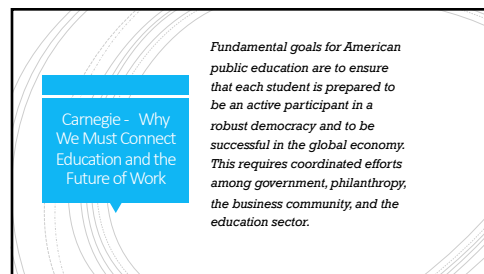
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Special Gifts an IAT Brings

- Different Perspectives from different professions
- Resource development
- Up to date community resources
- 1 Rolodex vs 12 rolodexes
- Mutual support
- Shared knowledge
- Early warning

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Carnegie - Why We Must Connect Education and the Future of Work

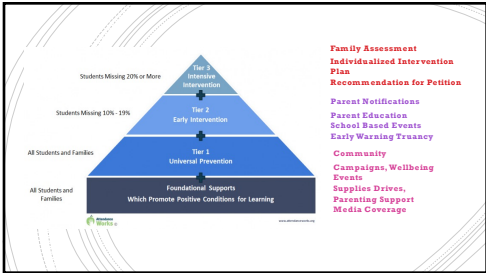
Fundamental goals for American public education are to ensure that each student is prepared to be an active participant in a robust democracy and to be successful in the global economy. This requires coordinated efforts among government, philanthropy, the business community, and the education sector.

18

Jon Carlsson, retired CEO of Scandinavian Airlines

[Improvement] is not about doing one thing 1,000% better. Its about doing 1,000 things 1% better.

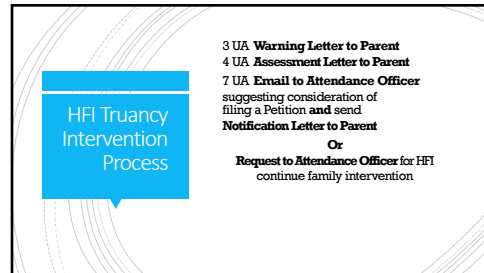
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20

Barriers	Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Chronic and acute illnessFamily responsibilities or home situationTraumaPoor transportationHousing and food insecurityInequitable access to needed servicesSystem involvementLack of gradeable schedules for learningLack of access to techCommunity violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Struggling academically and/or behaviorallyUnwelcoming school climateSocial and peer challengesAnxietyBiased disciplinary and suspension practicesUndiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodationsCaregivers had negative educational experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lack of challenging, culturally responsive instructionBoredNo meaningful relationships to adults in the school (especially given staff shortages)Lack of enrichment opportunitiesLack of academic and behavioral supportFailure to earn creditsNeed to work conflicts with being in high school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Absences are only a problem if they are unexcusedMaking 2 abs per month doesn't affect learningLow track and underestimate TOTAL absencesAssume students must stay home for any symptoms of illnessAssessments only matters in the older gradesSuspensions don't count as absence

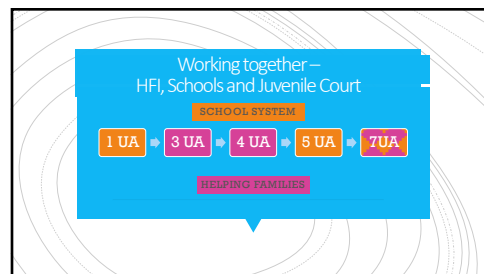
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HFI Truancy Intervention Process

3 UA **Warning Letter to Parent**
 4 UA **Assessment Letter to Parent**
 7 UA **Email to Attendance Officer** suggesting consideration of filing a Petition and send **Notification Letter to Parent**
Or
Request to Attendance Officer for HFI continue family intervention

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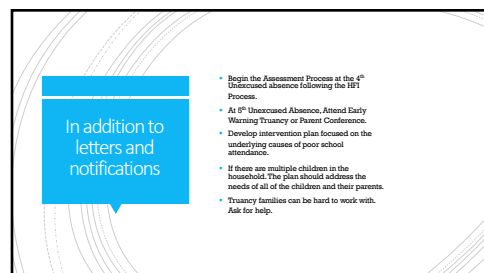
**Working together –
HFI, Schools and Juvenile Court**

SCHOOL SYSTEM

1 UA → 3 UA → 4 UA → 5 UA → 7 UA

HELPING FAMILIES

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In addition to letters and notifications

- Begin the Assessment Process at the 4th Unexcused absence following the HFI Process.
- At 6th Unexcused Absence, Attend Early Warning Truancy or Parent Conference.
- Develop intervention plan focused on the underlying causes of poor school attendance.
- If there are multiple children in the household. The plan should address the needs of all of the children and their parents.
- Truancy families can be hard to work with. Ask for help.

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