

Chehalis Shows Up: Attendance Matters Here

FRIDAY CONNECT

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In the Chehalis School District, student achievement is about helping our students find a passion and a purpose and become contributing members of the community. Attendance matters here because it is one of the contributing factors to students' ability to achieve their college and career goals.

When Chehalis students head back to their classrooms on April 8, there will be 51 days (about 28%) left of the 2023-2024 school year. According to data from the non-profit Attendance Works, the weeks before and after spring break are known as the Spring Attendance Slump because schools often see a dip in attendance. We want our students to take advantage of each and every one of the remaining days of this school year to keep up academically, gain opportunities for their future goals and create connections with their school community.

Why Attendance Matters

Did you know that if a student misses 10% of the school year - about 18-20 days or an average of 2 days per month - they are considered chronically absent? Did you also know:

- Even excused absences for legitimate reasons such as illness, appointments and school and sport activities contribute toward this total
- Students with chronic absences in preschool, kindergarten and first grade are much less likely to read at grade level by 3rd grade
- Students who cannot read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade are four times more likely than proficient readers to not graduate
- A student who is chronically absent in any two years between 8th and 12th grade has a more than 50% chance of not finishing high school



Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 8 million students in our nation were chronically absent and about 16 million are considered chronically absent today. Of the 306 school districts in Washington state: 17% have extreme chronic absenteeism; 22% have high chronic absenteeism; 45% have significant chronic absenteeism; 12% have modest chronic absenteeism; and 4% have low chronic absenteeism.

In Chehalis, our attendance numbers saw the same dip during the pandemic. In the 2022-2023 school year, 30.4% of Chehalis students were considered chronically absent. Those numbers are improving this year but we have not yet returned to pre-pandemic attendance levels. Our school board, staff and administrators have been working to understand the issue of chronic absenteeism and to engage students and families in finding ways to improve attendance levels.

"This is real and this is happening here in Chehalis. Our school administrators are anxious to partner with parents to improve attendance district wide," said Assistant Superintendent Trisha Smith.

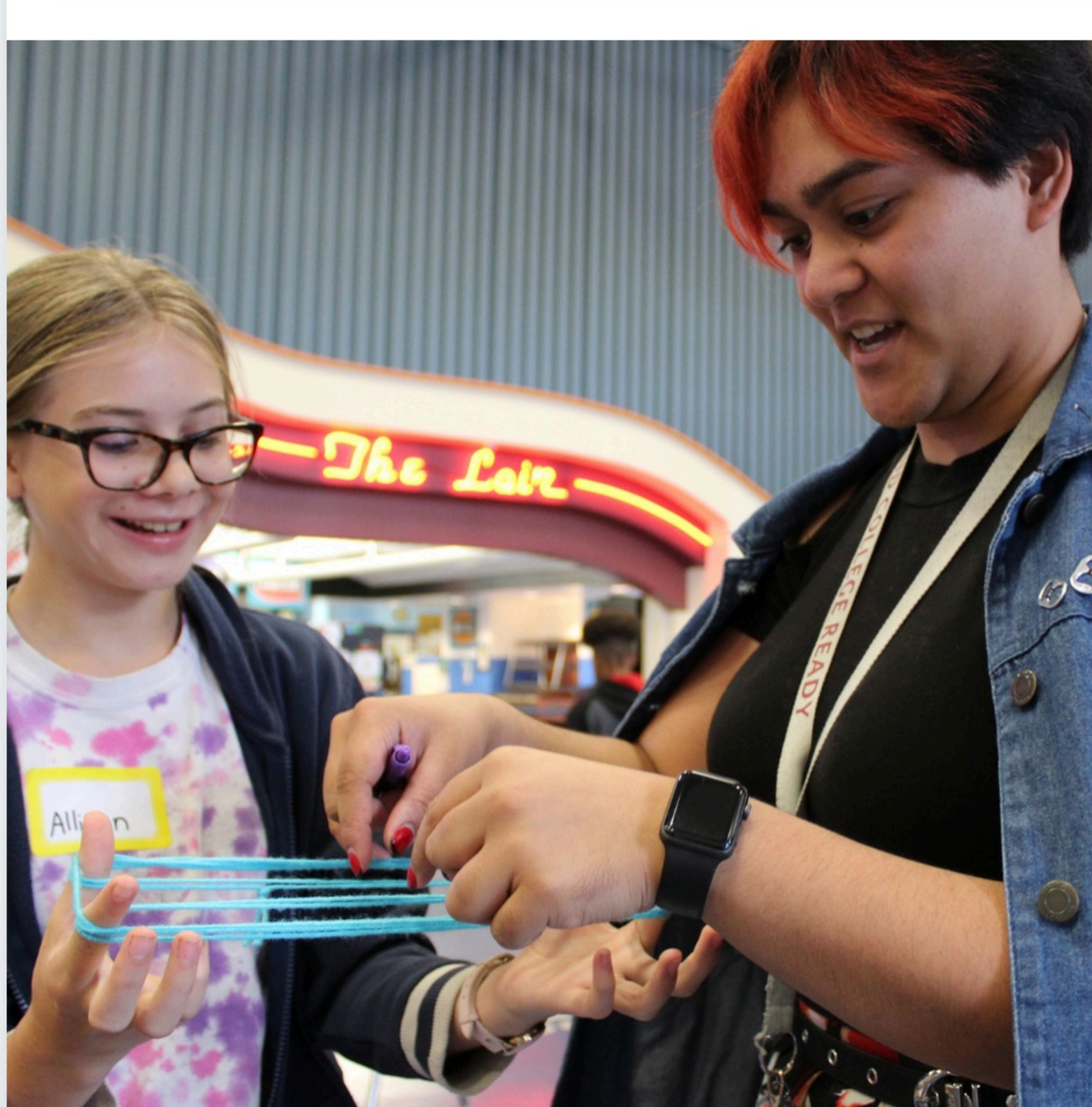


Why Chehalis Shows Up

We're launching the Chehalis Shows Up campaign to call awareness to this problem and ask for help from parents, students and our community get us back on track.

Chehalis Shows Up is about the many ways we in Chehalis show up, whether it be our physical attendance at work and school or how we show up for each other by supporting and showing care for one another. Chehalis Shows Up means we miss you when

you're not here and we want to help make sure you don't miss out on opportunities for learning and the fun and excitement of life in our school buildings.



How You Can Help

Families play an important role in helping students understand that absences from school add up. Here are some ways families can help their students:

- Show an interest in what your student is learning in school and use positive language to talk about school
- Show your student that you prioritize their school attendance by scheduling appointments and vacations outside school dates and hours
- Help your student create routines that make getting to school easier such as going to bed at a set time, having a designated place where they keep their school supplies and remembering to set an alarm for the morning
- Talk to your student's teacher or academic counselor if your student is falling behind academically
- Talk to your student's school administrators if your family is experiencing a barrier that makes it difficult for your student to be on time to school or to attend school for the entire day
- [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more from Attendance Works
- [CLICK HERE](#) to read truancy and absenteeism information from the Washington Ombuds Office



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Chehalis School District

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