



It Takes a Village

ADDRESSING CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM WITHIN THE DUBUQUE
MARSHALLESE COMMUNITY



1. Background

2. The Causes of Absenteeism

3. The Path to Improving Attendance

4. Q&A



The Project Team

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Community Empowerment Law Project

- Part of the law school's clinical programs
- "Works to strengthen communities, create economic opportunity, and advance social justice in the State of Iowa"
- Led by Daria Fisher Page



The Community Foundation

LIST OF
RECOMMENDATIONS

IMMIGRATION
COMMUNITY
ASSESSMENT

DUBUQUE AND NORTHEAST IOWA

MARCH 2023

Community
Foundation
OF GREATER DUBUQUE

- Founded in 2003
- Completed Immigration Community Assessment in 2023
- Wanted to explore chronic absenteeism among Marshallese students more thoroughly

Community
Foundation
OF GREATER DUBUQUE

EDUCATION

Chronic absenteeism in U.S. classrooms is presenting unique challenges to teachers

MARCH 10, 2024 · 8:42 AM ET

HEARD ON WEEKEND EDITION SUNDAY

By Emily Files

4-Minute Listen + PLAYLIST   

About one of every four students in U.S. schools are working in empty classrooms, according to new research.

Two-thirds of schools struggle with high absenteeism after pandemic

The crisis is impeding attempts to reverse the learning loss students experienced

By Donna St. George
October 12, 2023 at 2:58 p.m. EDT

• Post-covid absenteeism is a national crisis

Why School Absences Have 'Exploded' Almost Everywhere

The pandemic changed families' lives and the culture of education: "Our relationship with school became optional."

 Share full article    2.3K

nteeism

SHARE THIS   

'Tangle of challenges': Dubuque district officials focus on chronic absenteeism

BY ELIZABETH KELSEY elizabeth.kelsey@thmedia.com Aug 11, 2023 Updated Aug 11, 2023



AP

MEDIA

Rates of skipping class alarmingly high in schools, with students missing 10 percent of the school year: study

A chronically absent student is out of school for at least 18 days, or 10% of the school year

By Jeffrey Clark · Fox News

Published January 20, 2024 6:00pm EST

The Pandemic's Missing Students

Millions of kids are missing weeks of school as attendance tanks across the US

are Missing School at an

EDUCATION

Why so many kids are still missing school

What it means to be "chronically absent" — and why it matters.

By Fabiola Cineas | Jan 9, 2024, 6:30am EST

The Latest

The academic achievement of millions of American students [faltered during the pandemic](#) — and in many cases, [has not recovered](#) three years later. The latest data on student attendance offers one explanation: Far more students are missing many days of school compared with before the pandemic.

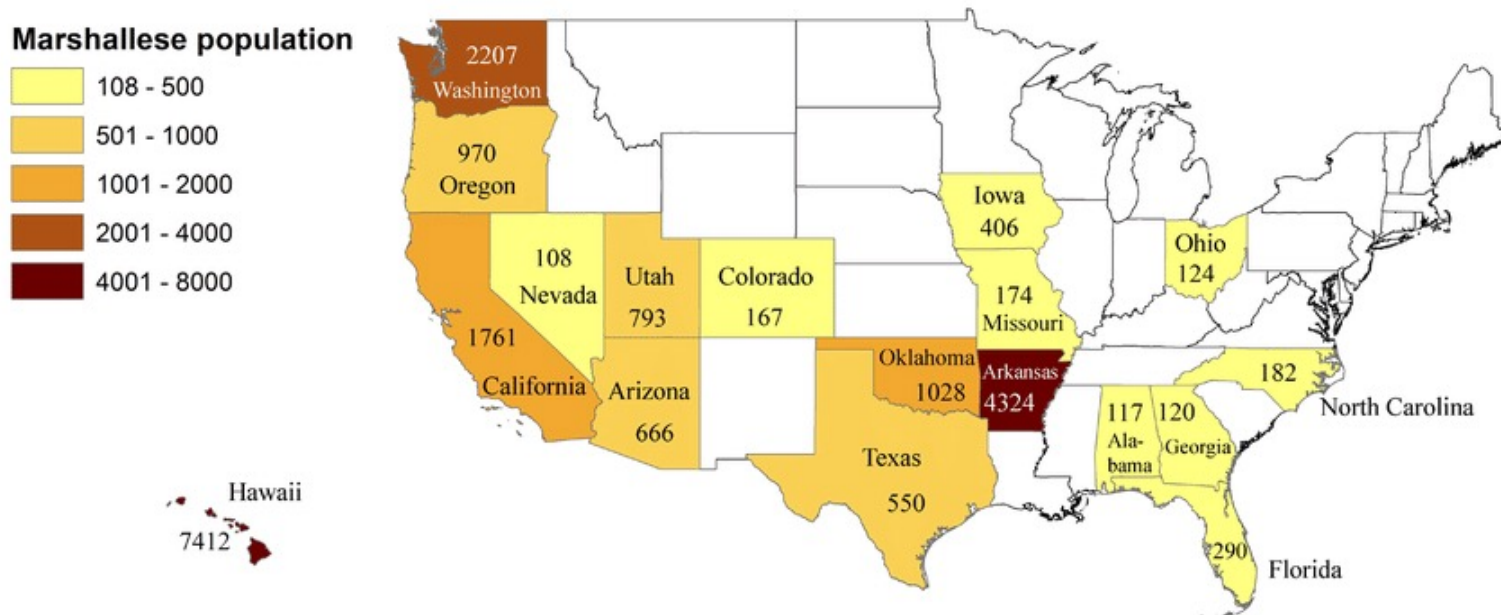
The Marshall Islands

- Chain of 29 atolls and 5 islands in the Northwest Pacific Ocean
- Colonized by Spain, Germany, Japan, and the US
- Used for nuclear testing in the 1950s
- Climate change has increased flooding and severe weather



The Marshallese

Dubuque has one of the largest Marshallese populations in the midwest



1. Background

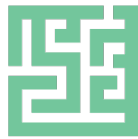
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Defining the Problem



Intersectional

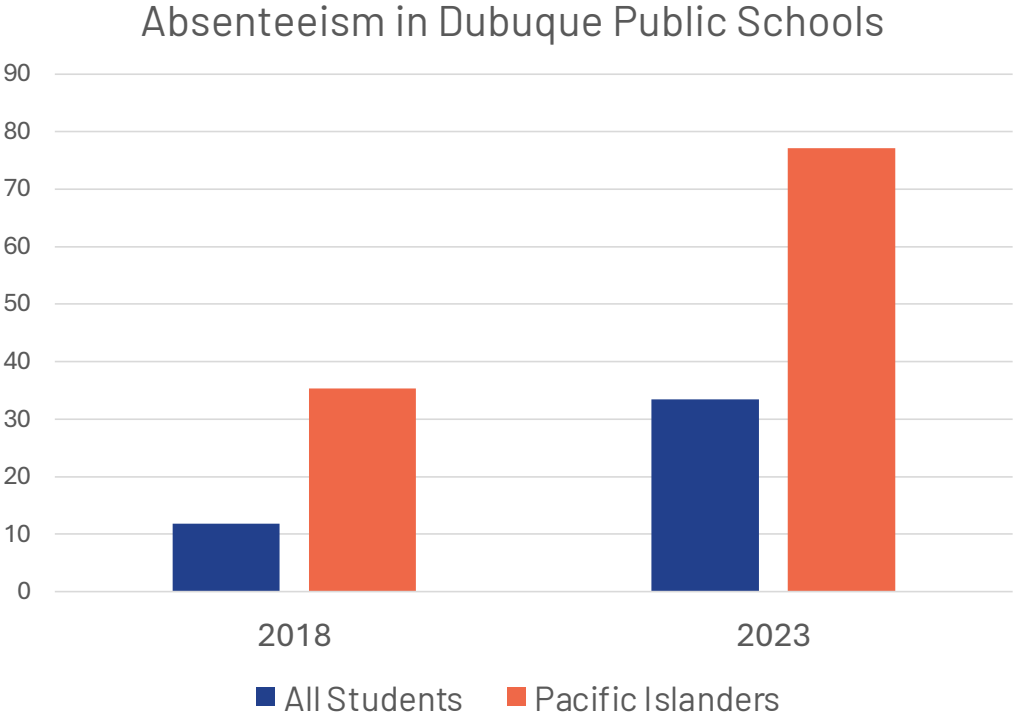


Holistic



Chronological

COVID-19's Impact on Absenteeism



Lack of Belonging

- Aspirations and post-secondary plans
- Bullying
- Large class sizes
- Lack of role models
- Generation gap between youth and parents



Understanding of Norms

- Differences from Marshallese school system
- Public health messaging during pandemic



Communication

- School materials aren't translated
- Shared phone
- Familiarity with Facebook and Facebook Messenger
- Home visits effective, but resource intensive



Systemic Barriers



Transportation



Sleep



Nutrition

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Guiding Principles



Primary objective:
increase attendance



Feasible, sustainable,
and holistic approach



Center and empower
the affected group



Use strengths and
positioning

Five Pillars

Student Engagement

Programming for Pacific Islander Clubs

Parental Engagement

Improved Communication Channels

Addressing Systemic Barriers to Education

Implementation

- Key actions include
 - Developing professional development for cultural competency in teachers
 - Leadership training for Pacific Islander Club students
 - Hosting parent support groups
 - Utilizing social media to communicate with parents
 - Improve access to information on public transportation



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Thank You!

Community Empowerment
Law Project

