Board Learning Session
SD 33 Learning Centre (Storefront) and Bridge

March 3, 2026
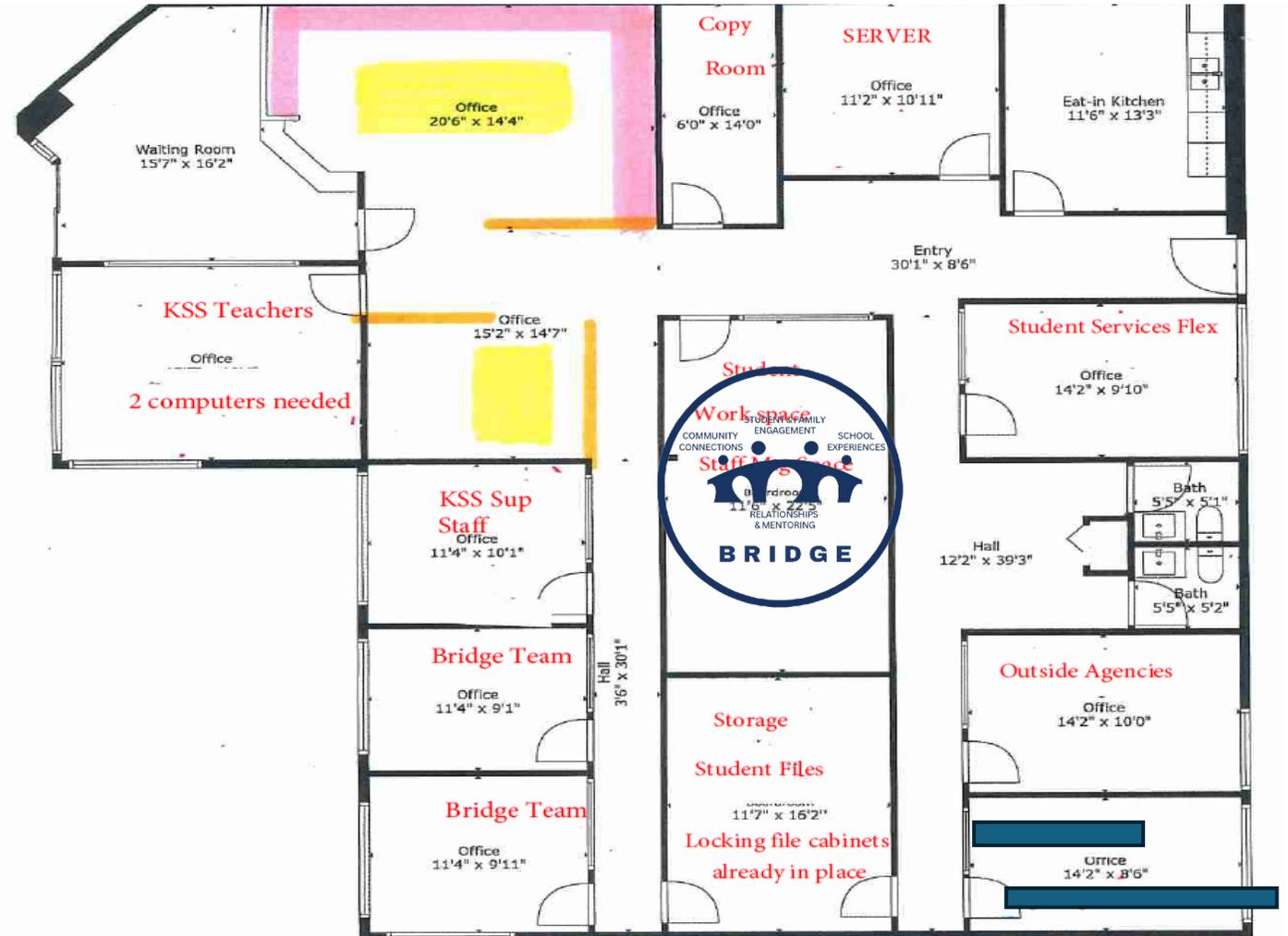
Land Acknowledgement

SD33 Learning Centre Storefront

103-45425 Luckakuck Way

The Space

The Why

- A community-based site designed to meet the need for students who are currently not being served by existing programs

- Students who do not attend based on:
  - Social conflict
  - No-contact orders
  - Trauma
  - Probation Restrictions
  - Young parenthood

The How

- Grounded in self-paced, supported learning, built around strong case management, academic drop-in services, counselling, and connection to school and community-based supports

- Partners (Connections to Foundry Conversation)
    - Chilliwack Community Services
    - Pacific Coastal Resources Society
    - Fraser Health (Youth Concurrent Disorders)
    - Fraser Health (START Program – pending)
    - Memiyelhtel

Staffing

- KSS Teachers – 1 full-time and 1 60%
- KSS Counsellor
- KSS Student Services – rotational
- KSS EA
- Student Services CYCW (just started)
- Community Outreach Coordinator, Bridge Team Teacher and CYCW
- SD33 Custodial

Student & Attendance Data

January Student Attendance

- **Total attendance**: 170 visits across 20 days
- 42 of 53 students attended a minimum of 1 day in the month
- **Average daily attendance**: 8.5 students/day (median 9)
- **Range**: 0 to 13 students/day
- **Highest days**: 13 students on Monday, January 5th and Friday, January 16th
- **Lowest days**: 0 on Tuesday, January 27th.

Student Story – PB

- Multiple Districts & Multiple Schools

- Staff & Student Conflict
    - Social Media
    - RCMP Involvement
    - Peer Conflict

- Has been on site 58 school days – various lengths

- 2 Course Completions – Math 11 & Science for Citizens 11

- Working close to the site

- Being supported with an online Science 12 course for academic upgrading for UFV Program

- Will graduate (80 credit)

Future Thoughts & Questions

Thank-you

Supporting School Attendance

What is Chronic Absenteeism?

Let's put a 'number' on it...

How many days absent constitute "Chronic Absenteeism"?

The 2025-26 school year is composed of 177 Instructional Days...Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% of the year (18 days out of 177) which is **less than 2 days a month**.

Since COVID, our threshold for determining chronic absenteeism has shifted closer to 20% **(almost one day a week)**
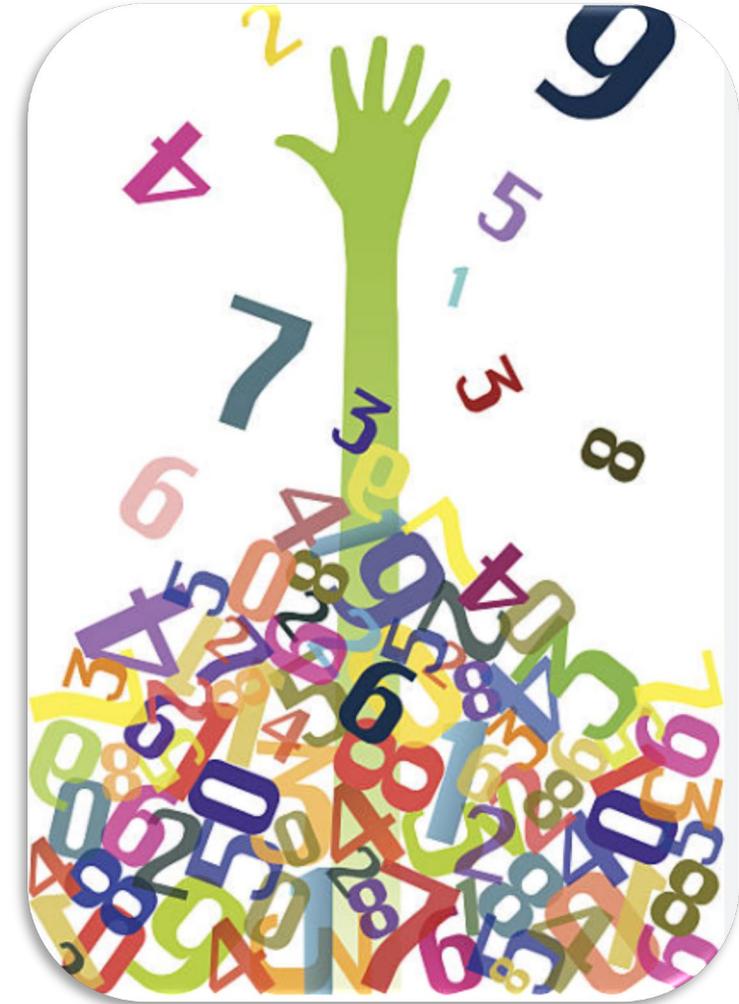
Why Attendance Matters…

What is the impact of Chronic Absenteeism?

Consider: Academic Outcomes, Social-Emotional Development, School Climate, Equity & Access, and Family and Community Partnerships

Consider: Learning, Well-being, Graduation

Video: Why are so many kids calling in sick for school?

Key Contributing Factors

What are some factors that contribute to Chronic Absenteeism?

Consider: Health, Mental Health, Family and Community Barriers, School Climate, Structural Barriers, Systemic Inequities, Challenges for students with Disabilities

Consider: Family Attitudes, Pandemic-Related health Caution and Disrupted Routines

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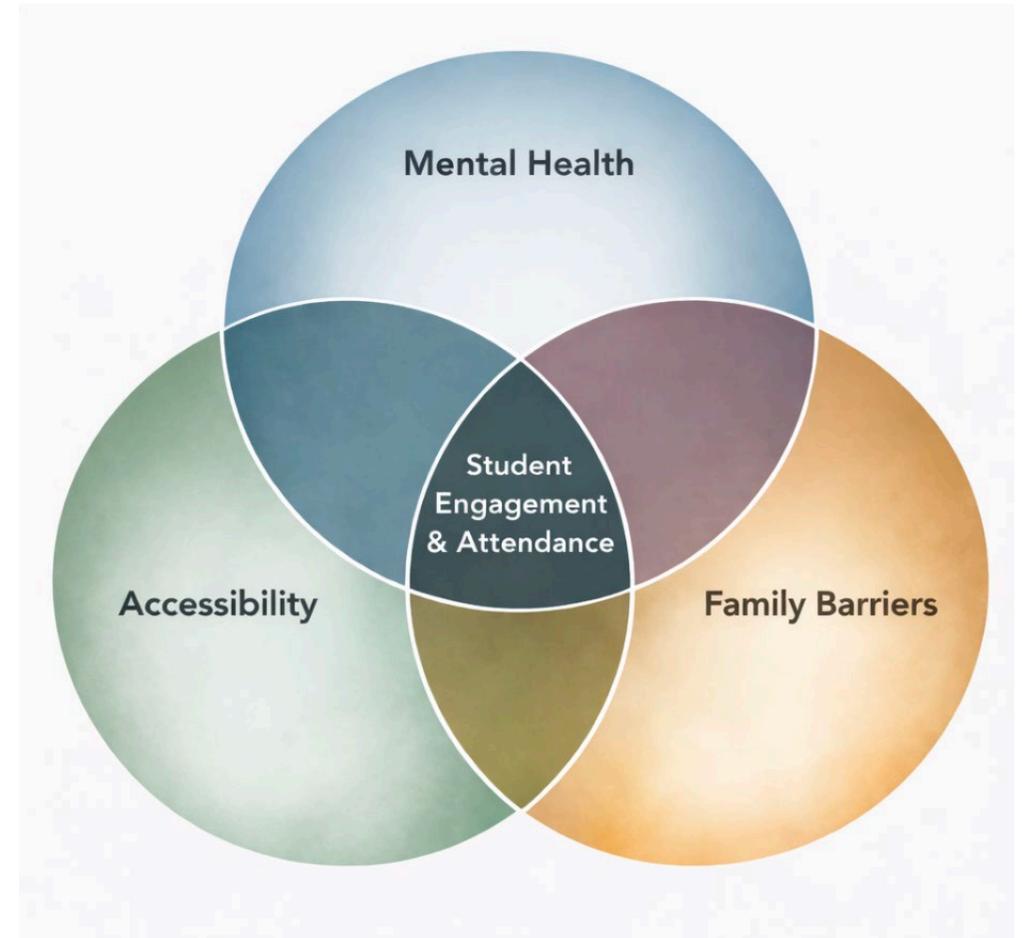
Attendance Tiers of Support & Interventions

Tier 3: Essential Individualized Attendance Support - Bridge Team Support

Coordination with district and community supports provides intensive help for students with severe absenteeism.

Tier 2: Targeted School-Based Attendance Support

Mentorship, daily check-ins, and small group supports help students showing early attendance concerns.

Tier 1: Universal School-Based Attendance Support

Schools promote positive attendance with consistent messaging, engaging climates and policies focused on student well-being.

Tier 1: Universal School-Based Attendance Support

School Wide

Student Specific

Working with Parents

TIER 1: SCHOOL-BASED UNIVERSAL SUPPORTS

School-wide
- Create a welcoming, engaging environment that helps students feel connected to their school and teachers.
- Welcome all students and in particular the separation-anxious student when they arrive at school.
- Establish a Check-In area in the school and have connecting staff available.
- Address school safety issues through antibullying and antiviolence initiatives. Students need to know that adults will intervene when they feel unsafe or threatened
- Provide a safe harbor with the counselor or available support staff.
- Welcome and involve families in the school.

Student Specific
- Help the student become involved in getting organized for the day.
- Give the student special jobs, such as handing out papers or collecting books.
- Encourage the student and provide comfort to younger students when they are upset.
- Create a culture that recognizes and values attendance.
- Involve families in a positive attendance culture.
- Assign a peer buddy at recess or lunch.
- Provide academic adaptations like an alternate environment or supports for learning.
- Gradual re-entry may start with having the student arrive at school but not go inside on day one. They may enter and visit in the front office on day two, and then identify which class is most comfortable and stay just for that class on day three, etc. Exposure therapy.
- For older students or those with significant mental health concerns, allowing for progressive re-entry over a 1-2 week period may be effective.
- Teams might also consider part-time schooling, or they may temporarily allow a flexible school day for students with extended absences (e.g. over 2 years) due to significant mental health concerns.

Working with Parents
- Assist parents in bringing a reluctant child into the school.
- Work with parents to effectively respond to their child's concerns about school, while clearly ensuring that the child attends school.
- Encourage parents to set up regular evening and morning routines.
- Encourage parents to reinforce their child's positive behaviours (participation efforts), and ignore negative behaviours (crying, arguing).
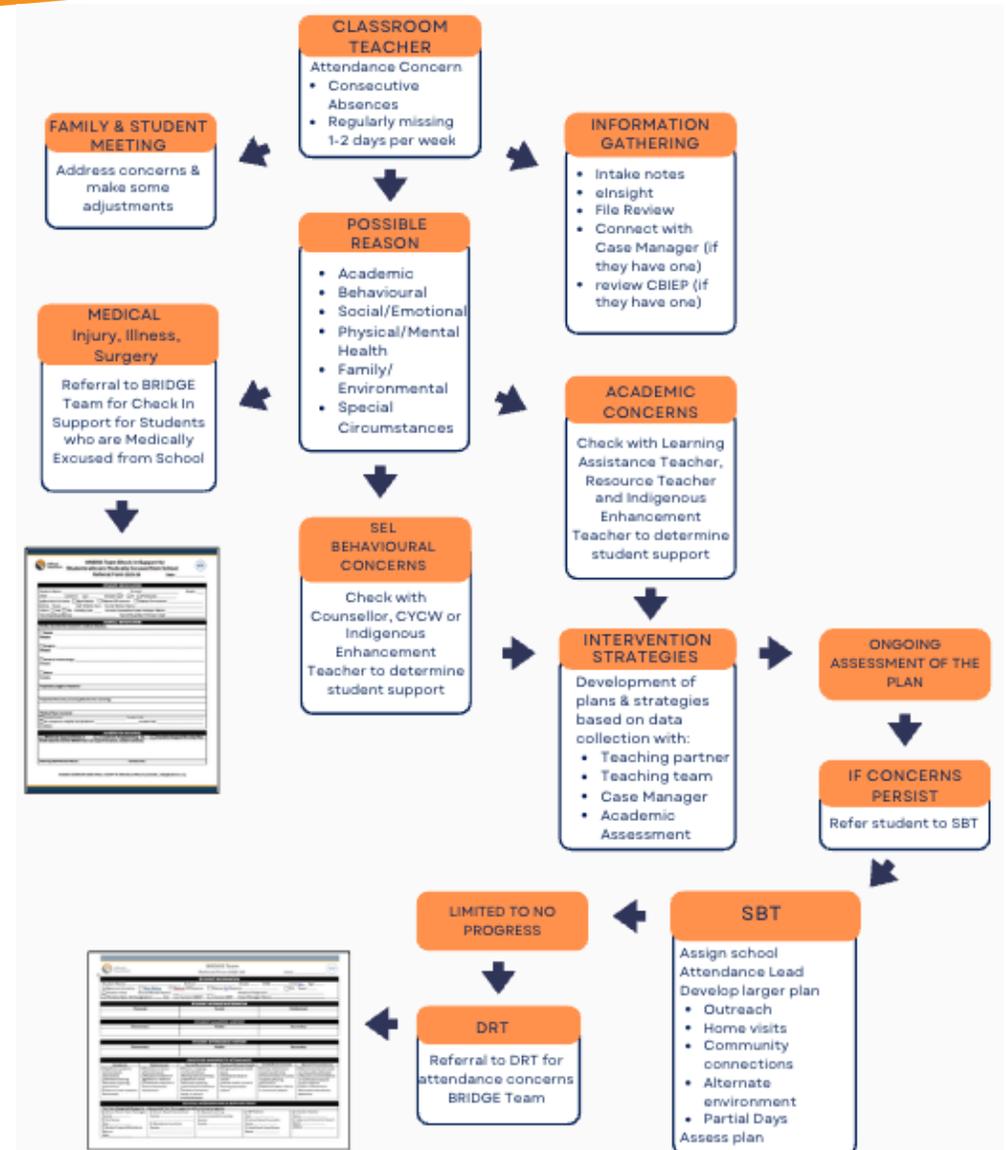- Encourage parents to monitor attendance, particularly for older students.

Source: NASP

Attendance School Planning & Supports Overview

The process schools follow to support T1 and T2

Tier 2: Targeted School-Based Attendance Supports, Assessment & Interventions

1. Determining the Team

2. Antecedents and Consequences of School Avoidance/Refusal - Collect Current Data

- Hypothesis "The Why"
  - Can't Attend
  - Won't Attend
  - Don't Attend
- Won't Attend, Don't Attend "Why"
  - Negative Affect - makes them feel uncomfortable
  - Escape from Social or Evaluative Situations
  - Receive Attention
  - Positive Tangible Reinforcement (likes to be at home)

TIER 2: SCHOOL-BASED TARGETED SUPPORTS ASSESSMENT & INTERVENTIONS

1. Determining the Team
- Assign a school Attendance Lead if the student does not have a Case Manager
- A team approach to assessment and early intervention that involves family, educators, and community providers increases the probability of a successful solution
- The team can include the teacher, principal, school counsellor, school psychologist, social worker, and community members working with the child (therapist or physician), as well as the student's parents

2. Antecedents and Consequences of School Avoidance/Refusal - Collect Current Data
- Hypothesis "The Why"
  - Can't Attend - illness, family responsibilities
  - Won't Attend - avoidance, learning difficulties, social
  - Don't Attend - not seeing value in education, something rather do instead
- Won't Attend, Don't Attend Hypothesis "The Why"
  - Negative Affect - makes them feel uncomfortable
  - Escape from Social or Evaluative Situations
  - Receive Attention
  - Positive Tangible Reinforcement (likes to be at home)

3. Observations
- When the student is in attendance - What do you notice?

4. Detailed Review of School Records - Collect Historic Data
  - Strengths, Stretches
  - Academic Progress History
  - Attendance History

5. School Refusal Assessments - Optional
- School Refusal Assessment and District Screening to gain an understanding of the student's emotional and developmental status. (FBA-Attendance - Sharepoint - Bridge Team (Attendance) and DRT Folder)

6. Interventions
The goal of intervention is to increase the student's school attendance.
- **Adult Connection** - Either the Case Manager, the Attendance Lead, or the student's preferred adult provides intentional connection and encouragement (phone calls, text, face to face in community).
- **Mental Health Services** - For students with mental health concerns, intervention provided by a mental health professional often includes cognitive-behavioral approaches that teach coping strategies such as relaxation, problem-solving, reducing negative self-talk, and increasing healthy self-talk.
- **Alternate Options within the School** - soft starts, check and connect, choices, schedule, courses, environment, start and end times.
- **Teaching** about mental health, recognition for school attendance, parent support, goal setting, and setting up plans.
- **Achievement Testing** - If the student is refusing because of academic difficulties.
- **Re-entry Plans** - A plan that addresses the data collected and identified concerns. The plan should contain timelines or conditions. If conditons are not met (ie: refusal to engage in the plan) pursue BRIDGE Referral.
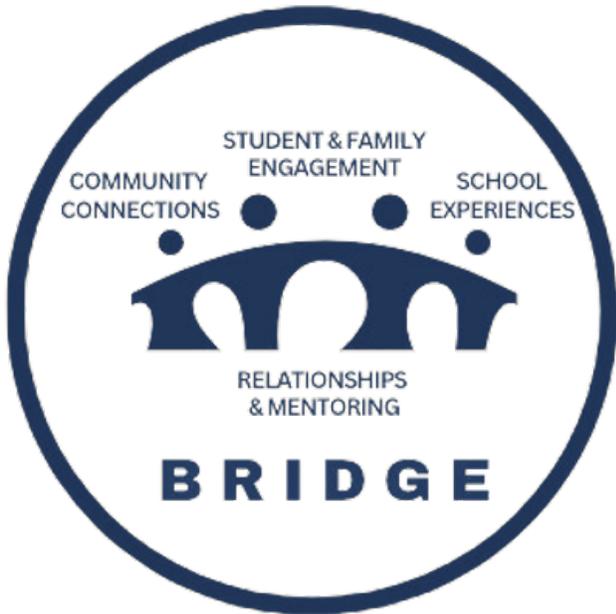
Team Members

Michelle Reilly, Coordinator of Alternate Education

Amber Mothus, Community Outreach Coordinator

Tasha Fedech, Child and Youth Care Worker

Flora Greenwood, Family Navigator

Karah Garden, Family Navigator, Bridge Class

Melchorita Toop, Family Navigator

Halim Demir, Bridge Class Teacher

Who we support: Student Profile...

Priority is given to those students who are experiencing Chronic Absenteeism

Definition: Chronic Absenteeism is defined, for the BRIDGE team, as:

➢ Students with a history of Chronic Absenteeism, defined as missing 80% or more of the current school year and having significant absenteeism in the previous year(s).

➢ Students from families who have stopped engaging with the school for an extended period of time, despite repeated attempts to connect.

What the Bridge Team Does…

The BRIDGE Team provides attendance support for non-attending students as well as check-in support for students who are medically excused from school.

➤ Act as a bridge between school, student, family and community

➤ Build relationship with the student and family to better understand and overcome barriers to school attendance and engagement

➤ Connect the student and family with school and community resources – sometimes this connection requires transportation support

➤ Facilitate collaboration between home, school and community

➤ Review and celebrate accomplishments and successes

BRIDGE

Bridge Class

➢ An additional element of attendance support specific to middle school

➢ Some students attend school but struggle to engage in their class work because they are struggling to manage behaviour expectations in a classroom

➢ Schools can refer students to the Bridge class for direct academic support as well as social emotional support. They stay enrolled at their school but attend for part of their day at Storefront. Access to community partners here (mental health, healthy community engagement, substance use).

➢ Another student who can be supported at Bridge class is students who are looking for a transitional step back into regular school attendance – they can attend a few blocks at Bridge class to get used to working with other students and with teachers

Bridge Supports & Referral Process...

How schools refer to T3
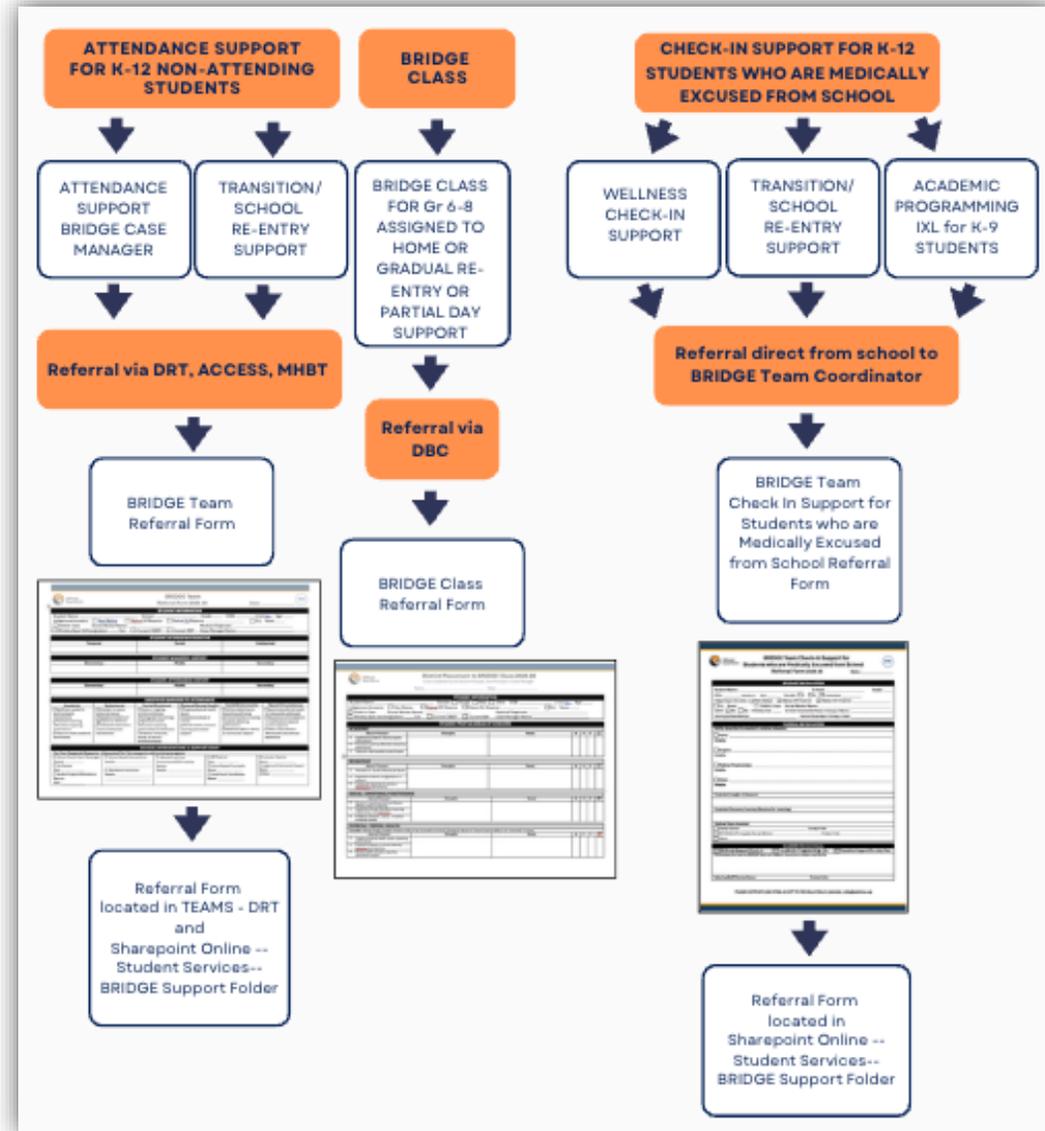
Key Takeaways – a new Lens

Complex Challenge of Absenteeism
Chronic non-attendance harms academic progress and emotional well-being, requiring early and collaborative interventions.

Equity and Inclusion Focus
Absenteeism disproportionately affects priority learners, highlighting the need for inclusive and accessible support.

Data-Driven Solutions
Improved data sharing and consistent definitions are essential for informed policies and coordinated attendance efforts.

Supportive Relationship-Based Interventions
Shift from punitive measures to supportive, holistic approaches that address underlying student needs.

Guiding Documents

- ✓ **FNESC: Raising the Attendance Rates of First Nation Students in B.C.**

- ✓ **Attendance Playbook – Smart Strategies for Reducing Student Absenteeism Post-Pandemic**

- ✓ **Every Student Counts – Make the Attendance Connection**