



MAGIC STARTS BY SHOWING UP!



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Provo City School District is a suburban public school district serving approximately 13,000 students across 13 elementary schools, two middle schools, two traditional high schools and one alternative high school.



Welcome • Educate • Inspire

Synopsis: The Magic Starts by Showing Up

Attendance is more than a number. In Provo City School District, it had become a cultural signal. Teachers observed a growing perception that daily attendance was optional rather than essential, and district data confirmed rates had not returned to pre-pandemic norms. Educator voice and data aligned, prompting a collective effort to reset attendance as a shared community expectation.

During the first 100 instructional days of 2024–2025, students accumulated 433,176 absences district-wide. Superintendent listening tours underscored instructional strain caused by inconsistent attendance, including disrupted pacing, reteaching and weakened engagement. A readiness assessment revealed both challenge and opportunity: expectations had softened culturally, yet leadership alignment, data systems and communication capacity positioned the district to respond strategically.

In an effort to initiate a long-term cultural shift, the superintendent directed development of a comprehensive 2025–2026 attendance campaign. A clear objective was given to improve daily attendance rates and establish attendance as an essential component to student success.

The campaign aligned with the district theme “Believe in the Magic” and launched with the message “The Magic Starts by Showing Up.” The approach reframed attendance as access to belonging, growth, and opportunity rather than a matter of compliance. A comprehensive Attendance Toolkit provided staff with ready-to-use messaging, social media assets, outreach templates, and recognition materials to support consistent communication.

Implementation emphasized leadership visibility, school-level ownership and message saturation. Executive administrators modeled engagement through a 100% Classroom Attendance Magnet Program. Schools engaged in monthly thematic messaging and the district-wide Show Up Provo! day, while weekly content distribution and superintendent reinforcement sustained focus.

Evaluation demonstrated measurable progress. During the first 100 instructional days of 2025–2026, the district recorded more than 47,833 fewer absences than the same period the previous year, a nine percent reduction district-wide. Gains occurred across grade spans, with strong improvement in high-need schools. Cultural indicators followed: visible classroom recognition, full participation and organic adoption of campaign language.

The campaign reduced absences and repositioned attendance as a shared community value. The Magic Starts by Showing Up became not simply a slogan, but a district-wide expectation.



The “Magic Starts By Showing Up” Attendance Awareness Campaign achieved measurable behavioral improvement while demonstrating clear indicators of systemic and cultural change.

Research: Identifying the Attendance Challenge

Identifying the Attendance Challenge

District leaders began by examining attendance patterns and educator feedback to understand the scope and causes of declining attendance. Nationally, attendance rates had not fully returned to pre-pandemic levels, and daily presence was increasingly viewed as flexible rather than essential. Provo City School District observed the same trend in its own attendance data and educator feedback.


By the end of the 2024–2025 school year, district data showed students missing significant instructional time across grade levels. Superintendent Listening Tours reinforced the instructional strain behind the numbers. Teachers described disrupted learning momentum, routine reteaching and declining student engagement.

This insight aligned directly with the district’s newly adopted [2025–2030 Strategic Plan](#), which prioritizes student well-being and academic achievement. Because consistent

attendance is foundational to both priorities, positioning it as a strategic communication focus ensured the campaign advanced long-term, board-approved district goals rather than functioning as a stand-alone initiative.

These findings showed the challenge extended beyond absenteeism rates to a broader cultural shift in how daily attendance was valued and guided the development of a district-wide communication strategy.

Attendance Challenge Snapshot



Students served: **13,010**

Schools: **18**

2024-2025 Absences: **433,176**
(During first 100 school days)

Strategic Readiness Assessment - The SWOT Analysis

To clarify the district’s position and guide campaign design, the Communications Department conducted a Strategic Readiness Assessment using a SWOT framework.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Clear district data establishing urgency Direct educator insight from Listening Tours Strong executive leadership support Alignment with 2025–2030 Strategic Plan priorities	Cultural shift toward optional attendance Limited capacity for sustained messaging Variations in consistency of communication Time constraints for principals and teachers	Positive, connection-focused messaging Visible recognition systems to reinforce behaviors Coordinated to ensure message cohesion Potential equity impact in high-need schools	External family circumstance barriers Initiative fatigue without sustained structure Competing school priorities

Strategic Insight

This analysis revealed a defining implementation challenge. Attendance messaging would be most effective when delivered by trusted school-level leaders, particularly principals and teachers. However, those leaders lacked the time, infrastructure and communication capacity to sustain campaign-level messaging independently.

However, if the district could provide structured communication support while preserving school-level voice and ownership, attendance expectations could be reset culturally and reinforced consistently.

The campaign design therefore prioritized:

- Reframing attendance as a shared community value
- Building infrastructure that empowered schools to lead the message

Planning: Strategy, Objectives & Campaign Design

Campaign Strategy Framework "The Magic Starts by Showing Up"

Coordinated Strategies to Shift Attendance Culture

Consistent Messaging



Deliver sustained, district-wide communication reinforcing attendance as essential to student success

Leadership Visibility



Engage district administrators and principals in visible attendance recognition and reinforcement efforts

Positive Reinforcement



Use recognition, belonging and future-focused messaging to encourage daily attendance behaviors

District-Wide Cultural Shift

Attendance becomes a shared expectation across schools and community

Campaign Identity

For the 2025–2026 school year, the district's annual theme was Believe in the Magic. The attendance initiative extended that theme into action through the message: "Magic Starts by Showing Up!" Attendance was reframed from compliance to belonging, growth, and future opportunity.

Primary SMART Objective

Reduce district-wide student absences by at least five percent during the first 100 instructional days of the 2025–2026 school year, compared with the 433,176 absences recorded during the same period in 2024–2025.

Supporting Objectives

- Implement the attendance campaign in 100 percent of district schools during the 2025–2026 school year through participation in monthly messaging themes and school-level recognition activities.
- Increase visible leadership participation in school attendance initiatives during the 2025–2026 school year, including executive administrator visits and participation in the 100 Percent Classroom Attendance Magnet Program.
- Deliver coordinated attendance messaging across district communication channels from August through May of the 2025–2026 school year.
- Reinforce the expectation that daily attendance is essential to student success among students and families during the 2025–2026 school year through positive, connection-focused messaging.



Target Audience

Primary

- Parents
- Students

Secondary

- Administrators
- Staff

Leadership Involvement

The 100% Classroom Attendance Magnet Program provides a simple, visible way to reinforce attendance. Classrooms display a magnet when every student is present, and visiting administrators recognize those classes with quick celebrations and small incentives.

Planning: Strategy, Objectives & Campaign Design

Core Messaging Framework

District Theme: ***Believe in the Magic***

Attendance Campaign Theme: ***The Magic Starts by Showing Up***

To sustain engagement throughout the year, the district implemented a series of monthly attendance reinforcement themes. Each theme built on the previous one, helping students and families understand the importance of consistent attendance through messages focused on habit formation, belonging, personal responsibility, and future success. The messaging remained positive and community-centered, reinforcing the idea that regular attendance helps unlock opportunities and supports long-term student success.

Monthly Reinforcement Themes

Month	Focus	Theme
August-September	Habit Formation and Strong Starts	<i>The Magic Starts by Showing Up</i>
October	Data Awareness and Cumulative Impact	<i>Every Day Counts</i>
November	Student Voice and Personal Ownership	<i>I Show Up Because...</i>
December	Personal Attendance Benefits	<i>The Gift You Give Yourself</i>
January	Resetting Expectations	<i>Every Day Counts — Restart Strong</i>
February	Belonging and Connection	<i>I Belong Here</i>
March	Persistence and Consistency	<i>Momentum Matters in March</i>
April	Future Motivation	<i>Preparing for the Future</i>
May	Completion and Pride	<i>Finish Strong</i>

Each monthly theme reinforced the central belief that attendance unlocks opportunity.

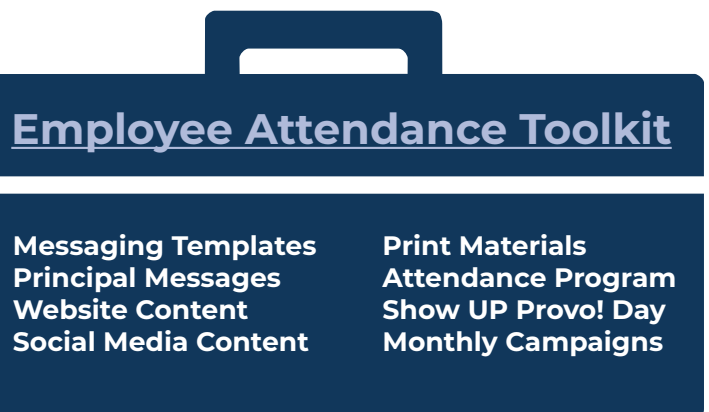
Infrastructure Design: Solving the Messenger Challenge

The SWOT analysis identified that attendance messaging would be most effective when delivered by trusted school-level leaders, particularly principals, content managers, and teachers. However, those leaders lacked the time and capacity to independently develop sustained, campaign-quality messaging.

To address both credibility and capacity, the Communications Department developed a comprehensive [Attendance Toolkit](#) designed to:

- Ensure consistent district-wide messaging
- Empower principals as primary messengers
- Reduce workload barriers
- Provide professionally developed, ready-to-use content
- Allow school-level flexibility within a unified framework

By building infrastructure before launch, the campaign positioned schools to lead the culture shift locally while maintaining district-wide cohesion.

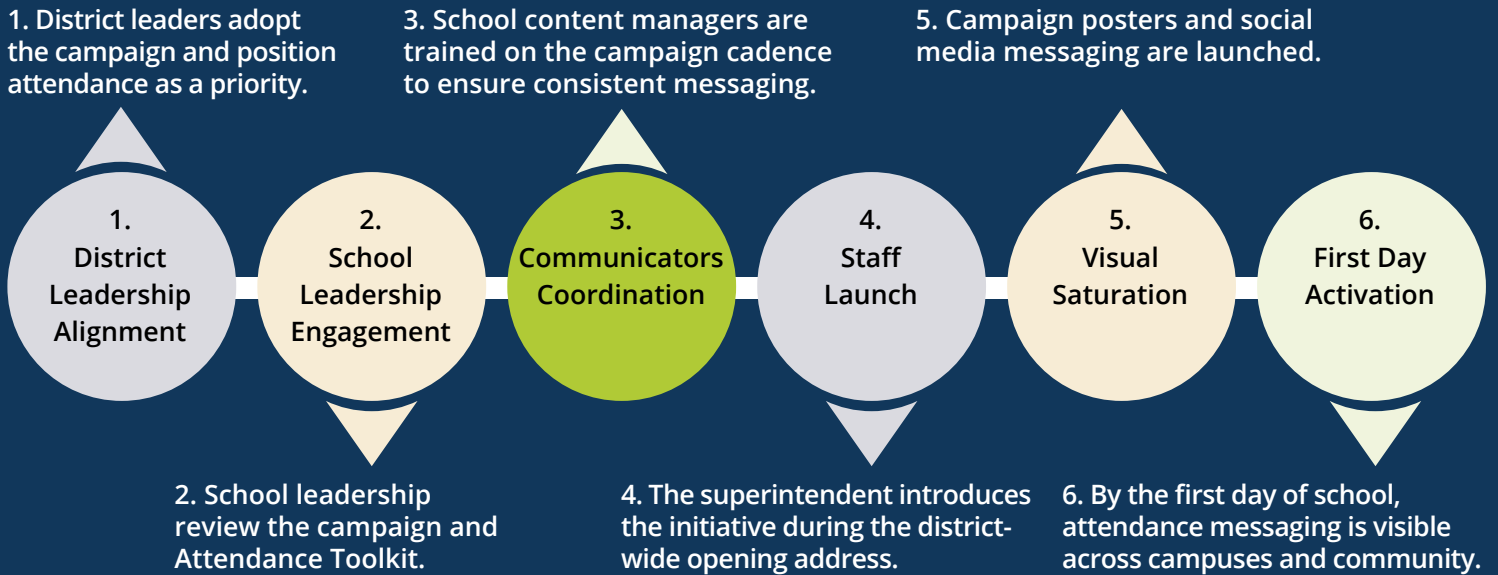


Implementation: Activation & Sustainability

Guided by the campaign's strategic pillars and SMART objectives, the Communications Department coordinated district-wide implementation designed to embed attendance messaging into daily school operations and community communication channels.

Phase 1: Leadership Activation and Structural Launch

Phase 1 focused on turning planning into coordinated action across the district before the first day of school. Leadership, campuses, staff and community channels aligned to establish attendance as a visible priority from day one.



Phase 2: Sustained Momentum and Community Activation

Monthly Cadence

The campaign followed a structured August–May cadence that evolved messaging while reinforcing a single core belief of **The Magic Starts by Showing Up**. Each monthly theme included ready-to-use digital content, templates and print materials that maintained consistent expectations across the district. This approach allowed schools to reinforce attendance in consistent but varied ways while keeping the message visible for students, staff and families.

Show Up Provo! Day

On October 8, 2025, all schools participated in Show Up Provo!, a district-wide attendance day designed to accelerate momentum. Schools set measurable goals, promoted them to families and celebrated achievement. The day prompted principals to analyze attendance data and rally their communities around shared targets, strengthening school-level ownership within a unified district framework.

Phase 3: Ongoing Management, Adaptation and Reinforcement

The Communications Department established reinforcement systems to keep attendance messaging active throughout the year and sustain impact beyond the launch. Weekly content aligned to each monthly theme was distributed to school content managers, with principals copied to reinforce alignment. Materials were centrally published for schools to adapt and monthly themes were highlighted in the district's Weekly Notification email.

[Materials available to view in the Attendance Toolkit.](#)

Executive engagement was reinforced through operational supports and continued visibility. Pre-assembled incentive bags distributed at weekly Operations Meetings supported administrator participation in the Magnet Program, while the superintendent reinforced attendance messaging in her weekly videocast. Feedback from principals, content managers and family liaisons informed ongoing updates to the toolkit, ensuring the campaign remained responsive and integrated into daily practice.

Evaluation: Measuring the Impact

The Attendance Awareness Campaign was designed to achieve more than improved attendance totals. Its purpose was to reset attendance expectations as a shared cultural norm across the district. Evaluation therefore examined both measurable behavioral outcomes and indicators of systemic and cultural change.

The first 100 days of school were used as an interim benchmark to measure directional progress within a yearlong initiative.

Behavioral Impact: Measurable Reduction in Absences

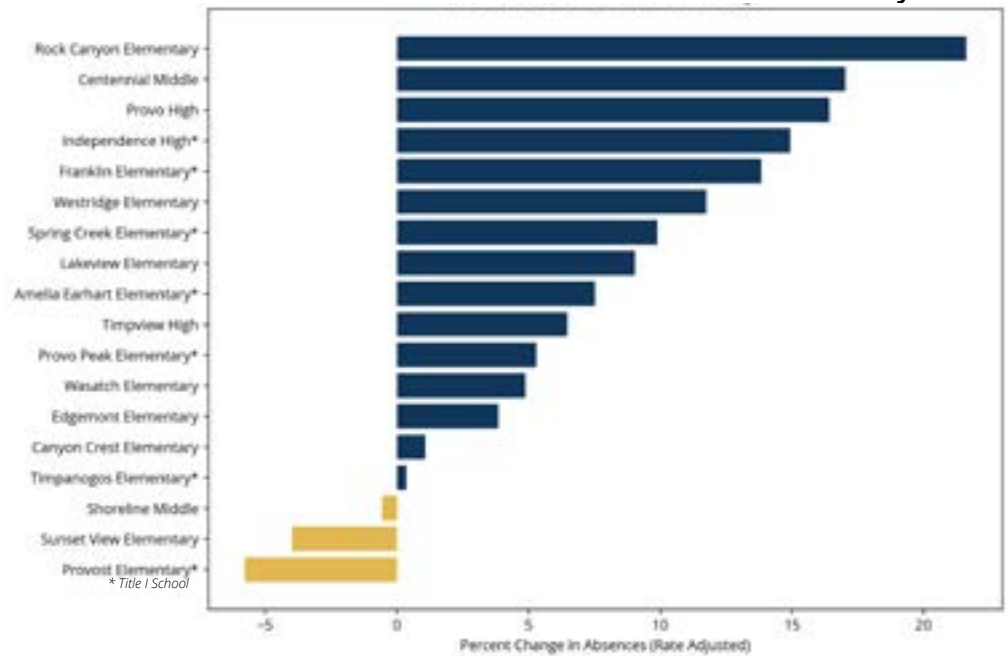
During the first 100 days of school, total absences decreased by 8.96% compared to the previous year. [View full data.](#)

Equity Impact

Attendance improved at several schools serving higher-needs student populations. Title I schools including Franklin, Spring Creek, Amelia Earhart, and Provo Peaks Elementary showed reductions in absences during the first 100 days. Independence High School, the district's alternative high school, also demonstrated notable improvement, suggesting attendance strategies are helping students who face greater barriers to consistent attendance.

The 100 day benchmark was not positioned as an endpoint, but as evidence of meaningful movement within a sustained, yearlong strategy.

Percent Improvement in Attendance by School
2024-2025 vs 2025-2026 First 100 Days



Sustainability and Direction

While overall absences declined significantly, improvement was not uniform across all campuses. A small number of schools showed minimal change or slight increases during the interim measurement period. In some communities, family travel during the school year, or frequent late arrivals are not always viewed as academic risks, highlighting the need for continued family engagement around attendance expectations.

This variation helps identify where targeted support is needed. The campaign continues through monthly messaging, executive modeling and operational support, while the Attendance Toolkit provides sustainable resources that can be refined and reused each year, keeping attendance embedded in school culture.

System Wide Activation

Behavioral improvement at scale requires broad participation and operational alignment. Attendance messaging became visible across digital platforms, physical campuses, leadership meetings and classroom routines. Evidence of system activation included:

- 100 percent participation in Show Up Provo! day
- Consistent implementation of Attendance Toolkit resources across schools
- Weekly distribution of ready-to-use content to every campus
- Sustained superintendent reinforcement through weekly videocasts
- Ongoing administrator participation in the 100 Percent Classroom Attendance Magnet Program

Evaluation: Measuring the Impact

Community Ownership

The October 8, 2025 Show Up Provo! day demonstrated authentic school-level engagement. Schools did not passively implement the campaign. All schools created assemblies, hallway displays and social media content to amplify participation. They adapted and elevated it within their own cultures. Here are some highlights:

- Canyon Crest and Edgemont conducted a [month-long attendance duel](#), publicly tracking progress and awarding a traveling trophy.
- [Provo High school extended the activation into multiple themed days, branding the event with “67” messaging and distributing 67 attendance prizes.](#)
- Centennial Middle school implemented a classroom challenge culminating in a pizza celebration.

Cultural Shift Indicators

Monthly Thematic Activation

Messaging progressed from habit formation to intrinsic motivation to relational belonging and future readiness, reinforcing attendance as both behavioral and cultural.

Evidence of cultural integration included:

- October: Under “Every Day Counts,” principals began actively requesting attendance data and analyzing building-level trends, signaling a shift from passive reporting to operational focus.
- November: “I Show Up Because…” elevated student voice through [whiteboards](#), [hallway interviews](#) and [student-feature reels](#) across grade levels.
- February: “I Belong Here” prompted belonging-centered bulletin boards and [teacher-created video messages](#) affirming student value.

Overall Impact

The Attendance Awareness Campaign achieved measurable behavioral improvement and clear indicators of systemic and cultural change:

- [Absences decreased by 8.96% during the first 100 school days](#)
- [Full district participation in campaign efforts](#)
- [School-created content aligned to district messaging](#)
- [Visible reinforcement in classrooms and hallways](#)
- [Widespread adoption of campaign language](#)

The campaign did not simply promote attendance. It repositioned attendance as a shared community value. The tools and messaging framework now in place allow this work to continue and strengthen in the years ahead. The Magic Starts by Showing Up is no longer a slogan. It is an expectation embedded across the district.



[Principal's competing for attendance prize on social media.](#)

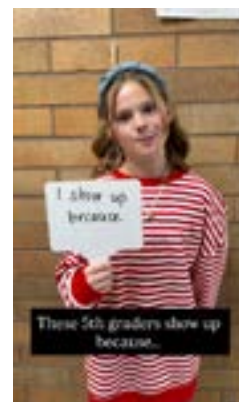
Visible Reinforcement: The Magnet Program

The 100 Percent Classroom Attendance Magnet Program became a tangible symbol of integration. Classrooms displayed magnets when all students were present, and [students understood and celebrated the recognition.](#) Teachers reported increased pride and accountability, noticing when recognition dipped and reflecting internalized expectations. Attendance moved from an abstract metric to a visible, celebrated norm.

Linguistic Adoption

Perhaps the strongest indicator of cultural shift has been the organic adoption of campaign language. “The Magic Starts by Showing Up” and “Show Up Provo” are now used consistently by students, teachers, parents, administrators, and board members in emails, conversations, meetings, and school marquees. Schools have even begun adapting the message for their own communities—using versions such as [“Show Up Kindergarten”](#) and school-specific variations. When campaign language becomes everyday language, cultural integration is underway.

Support Materials: Social Media



Links to a Social Media Favorites From Each School

- [Amelia Earhart Elementary](#)
- [Canyon Crest Elementary](#)
- [Edgemont Elementary](#)
- [Franklin Elementary](#)
- [Lakeview Elementary](#)
- [Provo Peaks Elementary](#)
- [Provost Elementary](#)
- [Rock Canyon Elementary](#)
- [Spring Creek Elementary](#)
- [Sunset View Elementary](#)
- [Timpanogos Elementary](#)
- [Wasatch Elementary](#)
- [Westridge Elementary](#)
- [Centennial Middle School](#)
- [Shoreline Middle School](#)
- [Independence High School](#)
- [Provo High School](#)
- [Timpview High School](#)

[District Magic Moment Reel about Westridge](#)


Support Materials: Posters, Magnet & Prizes

Believe

Be There

Magic Starts by Showing Up

Belong



EVERY DAY COUNTS!

The magic of success is good attendance.



100% OUTSTANDING	0	0
98% IMPROVING	4 DAYS MISSED	20 HOURS OF LEARNING LOST
96% GOOD	6 DAYS MISSED	30 HOURS OF LEARNING LOST
93% NEED TO IMPROVE	13 DAYS MISSED	65 HOURS OF LEARNING LOST
90% CONCERNING	19 DAYS MISSED	95 HOURS OF LEARNING LOST
80% SERIOUS CONCERN	29 DAYS MISSED	145 HOURS OF LEARNING LOST

Remember - your education is important - don't miss out!



EVERY DAY COUNTS!

Missing a day of school here and there may not seem like much, but absences add up!

When a student misses **2** days a month...

They will miss 20 days a year.

They will miss 30 hours of math over a school year.

They will miss 60 hours of reading & writing over a school year.

They will over **ONE YEAR** of school by graduation.

When a student misses **4** days a month...


They will miss 40 days a year.

They will miss 60 hours of math over a school year.

They will miss 120 hours of reading & writing over a school year.

They will over **TWO YEAR** of school by graduation.

The magic of success is good attendance.



Confía

Asiste

¡La magia empieza con la asistencia!

Intégrate



¡CADA DÍA CUENTA!

La magia del éxito radica en una buena asistencia.



100% DOMINANTE	0	0
98% MEJORANDO	4 DÍAS DE ASISTENCIA PERDIDA	20 HORAS DE APRENDIZAJE PERDIDAS
96% BUENO	6 DÍAS DE ASISTENCIA PERDIDA	30 HORAS DE APRENDIZAJE PERDIDAS
93% NECESITA MEJORAR	13 DÍAS DE ASISTENCIA PERDIDA	65 HORAS DE APRENDIZAJE PERDIDAS
90% PREOCUPANTE	19 DÍAS DE ASISTENCIA PERDIDA	95 HORAS DE APRENDIZAJE PERDIDAS
80% PREOCUPADO MUY	29 DÍAS DE ASISTENCIA PERDIDA	145 HORAS DE APRENDIZAJE PERDIDAS

¡La magia empieza con la asistencia!



¡CADA DÍA CUENTA!

Perder un día de clases de vez en cuando puede no parecer mucho, ¡pero las ausencias se acumulan!

Cuando un estudiante falta **2** días al mes...

Pierde 20 días al año.

Pierde 30 horas de matemáticas a lo largo del año escolar.

Pierde más de 60 horas de lectura y escritura a lo largo del año escolar.

Pierde más de **UN AÑO** de clases al graduarse.

Cuando un estudiante falta **4** días al mes...

Pierde 40 días al año.

Pierde 60 horas de matemáticas a lo largo del año escolar.

Pierde más de 120 horas de lectura y escritura a lo largo del año escolar.

Pierde más de **UN AÑO** de clases al graduarse.

¡La magia empieza con la asistencia!




Support Materials: visibility in Schools



Superintendent Visiting 100% Classroom



Board Member Visiting 100% Classroom



Admin. Visiting 100% Classroom

