




**Bullitt County Public Schools**  
Department of Pupil Personnel

**Steve Smallwood**  
Director of Pupil Personnel  
Steve.smallwood@bullitt.kyschools.us

Date: November 20, 2024  
To: Dr. Jesse Bacon, Superintendent  
Troy Wood, Chief Operations Officer  
From: Steve Smallwood, DPP   
Re: Request for Board Approval to participate in Free Pilot Program to help improve attendance

Dear Dr. Bacon,

I am requesting approval for BCPS to partner with Sherpa Inc. The representative of Sherpa is a graduate of Stanford University and he reached out to me to see if we would like to partner with Sherpa to help improve attendance within our schools as part of a FREE PILOT PROGRAM.

Sherpa is a chronic absenteeism platform that identifies and addresses root causes of chronic absenteeism. The platform has two-prongs, first it scales *personalized, two-way communication* with parents and families, and second, it hosts a digital dashboard to monitor student relationship's to help develop a continuous measure of student belonging.

Sherpa is working with districts in Nebraska, Iowa, and California and we would like to start working with them in December and January to improve attendance for the following 4 schools in the 2nd semester:

Bullitt Central High School

North Bullitt High School

BAC and ROC.

I have included their power point, Data Sharing Agreement, Data Privacy Policy for your review.

Respectfully,



Steve Smallwood  
DPP

DATA SHARING AGREEMENT BETWEEN  
BULLITT COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
AND  
SHERPA LABS INC.

This Data Sharing Agreement (“DSA”) is entered into between BULLITT COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT, a Kentucky municipal corporation (“District”) and Sherpa Labs Inc. (“Requestor”), a

Private organisation that provides communication services to District students to improve attendance outcomes. This contract has the following overriding goals:

- Preserving the privacy of student identities, including assurance that identifiable student data is not released to third parties;
- Enhancing the ability of the District and the Requestor to reduce chronic absenteeism for District administration by allowing access to student attendance data and family communication information; and
- Accurately measuring the District and the Requestor’s progress toward improving attendance outcomes and indicators, and meeting set targets and other goals.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE DISTRICT AND REQUESTOR AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

**OBLIGATIONS OF REQUESTOR**

The Requestor, representing all members of the organisation, shall ensure the confidentiality of student data through the following methods:

The Requestor’s data custodian(s) designated to protect the District’s Data Stewardship Training annually, if it exists.

- a. The Requestor shall strictly comply with the use and release of the data, including but not limited to FERPA, the Requestor shall provide necessary to comply with FERPA, the Requestor shall provide consent available to the District.
- b. The Requestor shall comply with FERPA. The Requestor shall restrict access to the data who have been tasked with the direct services to District students; or (ii) the person or agency who have been tasked with analysing the data; and make the terms set forth in this DSA.

*New Business or Consent?*

The Requestor shall not release or otherwise reveal, directly or indirectly, the data to any individual, agency, entity, or third party not included in this DSA, unless such disclosure is required by law or court order.



The Requestor shall not distribute, reprint, alter, sell, assign, edit, modify or create derivative works or any ancillary materials from or with the data, other than publications permitted under Sections I(m) and I(n).

The Requestor shall not use data shared under this DSA for any purpose other than the goals outlined in this DSA. Nothing in the DSA shall be construed to authorize Requestor to have access to additional data from the District that is not included in the scope of the DSA (or addenda). Requestor understands that the DSA does not convey ownership of the data to Requestor.

The Requestor shall take reasonable security precautions and protections to ensure that persons not authorised to view the data do not gain access to the data. Reasonable security precautions and protections include, but are not limited to:

Creating, distributing, and implementing data governance policies and procedures which protect District data through appropriate administrative, technical, and physical security safeguards, and outline staff responsibilities for maintaining data security;

Encrypting all District data carried on mobile computers/devices;

Encrypting District data before it is transmitted electronically;

Requiring that users be uniquely identified and authenticated before accessing District data;

5. Establish and enforce well-defined data privilege rights which restrict users 'access to the data necessary for them to perform their job functions;
6. Ensuring that all staff accessing District data sign an affidavit of nondisclosure, attached as Exhibit A, and maintain copies of signed affidavits;
7. Securing access to any physical areas/electronic devices where sensitive data are stored;
1. Installing a firewall to permit or deny network transmissions based upon a set of rules;

The Requestor shall report all known or suspected breaches of District data, in any format, to the District's Data Reporting team immediately, but no later than seventy-two hours. As soon as possible, but no later than three business days, a report will also need to be delivered that shall include (1) the name, job title, and contact information of the person reporting the incident; (2) the name, job title, and contact information of the

person who discovered the incident; (3) date and time the incident was discovered; (4) nature of the incident (e.g., system level electronic breach, an electronic breach of one computer or device, or a breach of hard copies of records; (5) a description of the information lost or compromised; (6) name of electronic system and possible interconnectivity with other systems; (7) storage medium from which information was lost or compromised; (8) controls in place to prevent unauthorised use of the lost or compromised information; (9) number of individuals potentially affected; and (10) whether law enforcement was contacted.

The Requestor shall securely and permanently destroy the data, and any and all hard and soft (electronic) copies thereof, upon the termination of this DSA. Requestor agrees to require all employees, contractors, or agents of any kind using the District data to comply with this provision. Requestor agrees to document the methods used to destroy the data, and upon request, provide certification to the District that the data has been destroyed.

For purposes of this DSA and ensuring Requestor's compliance with the terms of this DSA and all application of state and Federal laws, Requestor designates \_\_\_\_\_ (or an alternative designee specified in writing) the temporary custodian of the data that the District shares with the Requestor. The District will release all data and information under this DSA to said named temporary custodian.

\_\_\_\_\_ shall be responsible for transmitting all data requests and maintaining a log or other record of all data requested and received pursuant to the DSA, including confirmation of the return or destruction of data as described below. The District or its agents may, upon request, review the records the Requestor is required to keep under this DSA. The District designates its Partnership Data and Systems Manager (or an alternative designee specified in writing) as its liaison for all communications with the Requestor regarding this DSA;

The Requestor has the right consistent with scientific standards, to present, publish, or use student results it has gained in the course of its analysis, but only if the publication, presentation, or use does not include personally identifiable information of parents, students, or teachers, and is outside the bounds of a research study.

#### OBLIGATIONS OF DISTRICT

During the term of this DSA, the District shall:

Prepare and deliver student demographic, family contact information, and student attendance data

Provide Data Stewardship training for data custodian.



### III. PAYMENT

A payment of \$0 a student a year will be made under this agreement from the District to the Requestor.

### IV. INDEMNIFICATION

SHERPA LABS Inc. agrees that to the fullest extent permitted by law, SHERPA LABS Inc. will hold harmless, defend, and indemnify the District, its agents, employees and board members from any liability, cost or expense, including without limitation penalties, losses, damages, attorneys' fees, taxes, expenses of litigation, judgments, liens, and encumbrances, to the extent arising out of or resulting from any act or omission by SHERPA LABS Inc. under this DSA. The terms of this section shall survive termination of this DSA.

### NOTICES

All notices contemplated or required under this DSA shall be in writing and delivered by hand or U.S. Mail as follows:

This DSA will allow for the District to provide the Requestor with student demographic and attendance data, for the 2024-2025 school year and historical attendance data on records with the District. The DSA shall become effective on the date when the last party to sign has executed this DSA and shall remain in effect until December 31, 2025, unless terminated under the terms of Paragraph VII below.

### VII. TERMINATION

The District may terminate this DSA, with 30 days written notice to SHERPA LABS Inc, at any time, for any reason. In addition, District may terminate this DSA at any time if it determines such action is necessary for the health, safety or education of students or staff. SHERPA LABS Inc. may terminate this DSA, with 90 days written notice to the District, at any time, for any reason.

## MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Entire Agreement. This DSA constitutes the entire agreement between the parties, and supersedes all prior oral or written agreements, commitments, or understandings concerning the matters provided herein.

Amendment. Modifications to this DSA must be in writing and be signed by each party.

Governing Law. The terms of this DSA shall be interpreted according to and enforced under the laws of the State of Kentucky. The parties agree that any judicial proceedings filed by the parties regarding this DSA will take place in San Francisco, California.

Severability. If any provision of this DSA is held invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of the DSA will not be affected, but continue in full force.

Assignment. Neither party shall assign its rights or responsibilities under this DSA, unless it receives written permission from the other party.

Non-Waiver. Any express waiver or failure to exercise promptly any right under this DSA will not create a continuing waiver or any expectation of non-enforcement.

Counterparts. The parties agree that this DSA may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall constitute an enforceable original of the DSA, and that facsimile signatures shall be as effective and binding as original signatures.

Debarment. Requestor, by executing this contract, warrants that it is not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily

excluded from covered transactions (defined as not being eligible to receive federal funds) by any local, state or federal department or agency. Requestor agrees to be bound by the terms of School Board Policy, which provides additional requirements

applicable to debarment of contractors from receiving future contracts.

### Cooperation with District Auditor and State

Auditor: Requestor agrees to provide reasonable cooperation with any inquiry by either the district or State Auditor relating to the performance of this contract. The District has the right to annually audit records of the Requestor relating to performance under this contract. Failure to cooperate may be cause for debarment from award of future contracts.

By signing below, each signatory represents that it has the authority to execute this DSA.



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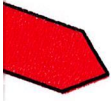
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Signature

Jesse Bacon

Signature

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Jesse Bacon

Printed Name

Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent

Title

Title

\_\_\_\_\_



11-25-24

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Date

Date

5

Standard DSA

v.24.25

**EXHIBIT A: BULLITT COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Affidavit of Nondisclosure**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Organization Employer

I, \_\_\_\_\_, an employee of \_\_\_\_\_,  
represent that I am authorized to access the District's data because I either provide direct  
services to District students or have been tasked with analyzing the data.  
I have been made aware of the governing Data Sharing Agreement between the District  
and my employer. As indicated by my signature below, I agree to abide by the Data  
Sharing Agreement's terms, including agreeing to:

Maintain confidentiality of student information and prevent disclosure, including  
complying with FERPA and its regulations;

Not release or otherwise reveal, directly or indirectly, the data to any individual, agency, entity,  
or third party not included in the Data Sharing Agreement, unless such disclosure is required by  
law or court order;

Take reasonable security precautions and protections to ensure that persons not authorized  
to view the data do not gain access to the data, as outlined in the Data Sharing Agreement;

Not use the data for any purpose other than the goals outlined in the Data Sharing  
Agreement;

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# DATA PRIVACY POLICY

Last updated September 5th, 2024

## Our Commitment to Protecting Your Privacy

Everyone at Sherpa Labs takes the privacy of students, parents, teachers, and district administration. We do not intentionally target our services to students or children of any kind.

Protecting your private information is our priority. Here's a summary of our commitments to you:

We never sell your data.

We never advertise on the platform.

We don't own the content you add to the platform.

We use the latest security industry best practices to protect you.

We are transparent about our practices and will notify you if things change.

We are compliant with FERPA and COPPA

This privacy notice for Sherpa Labs, Inc. ("**we**," "**us**," or "**our**"), describes how and why we might collect, store, use, and/or share ("**process**") your information when you use our services ("**Services**"), such as when you:

Visit our website at, or any website of ours that links to this privacy notice

Engage with us in other related ways, including any sales, marketing, or events

**Questions or concerns?** Reading this privacy notice will help you understand your privacy rights and choices. If you do not agree with our policies and practices, please do not use our Services. If you still have any questions or concerns, please contact us at [support@sherpalabs.co](mailto:support@sherpalabs.co).

## SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

*This summary provides key points from our privacy notice, but you can find out more details about any of these topics by clicking the link following each key point or by using our table of contents below to find the section you are looking for.*

**What personal information do we process?** When you visit, use, or navigate our Services, we may process personal information depending on how you interact with us and the Services, the choices you make, and the products and features you use.

**How do we process your information?** We process your information to provide, improve, and administer our Services, communicate with you, for security and fraud prevention, and to comply with law. We may also process your information for other purposes with your consent. We process your information only when we have a valid legal reason to do so.

**In what situations and with which parties do we share personal information?** We may share information in specific situations and with specific third parties.

**How do we keep your information safe?** We have organizational and technical processes and procedures in place to protect your personal information. However, no electronic transmission over the internet or information storage technology can be guaranteed to be 100% secure, so we cannot promise or guarantee that hackers, cybercriminals, or other unauthorized third parties will not be able to defeat our security and improperly collect, access, steal, or modify your information.

**What are your rights?** Depending on where you are located geographically, the applicable privacy law may mean you have certain rights regarding your personal information.

**How do you exercise your rights?** The easiest way to exercise your rights is by emailing support@sherpalabs.co, or by contacting us. We will consider and act upon any request in accordance with applicable data protection laws.



# 1. WHAT INFORMATION DO WE COLLECT?

## **Personal information you disclose to us**

*In Short:* We collect personal information that you provide to us.

We collect personal information that you voluntarily provide to us when you register on the Services, express an interest in obtaining information about us or our products and Services, when you participate in activities on the Services, or otherwise when you contact us.

**Personal Information Provided by You.** The personal information that we collect depends on the context of your interactions with us and the Services, the choices you make, and the products and features you use. The personal information we collect may include the following:

Names

Phone numbers

Email addresses

**Attendance Data.** We will collect data regarding your district's attendance in order to safely label and reach out to families whose children were unable to attend school. We collect this data by building an integration with your Student Information System.

All personal information that you provide to us must be true, complete, and accurate, and you must notify us of any changes to such personal information.

## 2. HOW DO WE PROCESS YOUR INFORMATION?

*In Short:* We process your information to provide, improve, and administer our Services, communicate with you, for security and fraud prevention, and to comply with law. We may also process your information for other purposes with your consent.

**We process your personal information for a variety of reasons, depending on how you interact with our Services, including:**

**To facilitate account creation and authentication and otherwise manage user accounts.**

We may process your information so you can create and log in to your account, as well as keep your account in working order.

**To evaluate and improve our Services, products, marketing, and your experience.** We may process your information when we believe it is necessary to identify usage trends, determine the effectiveness of our promotional campaigns, and to evaluate and improve our Services, products, marketing, and your experience.

## 3. WHEN AND WITH WHOM DO WE SHARE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION?

*In Short:* We may share information in specific situations described in this section and/or with the following third parties.

We may need to share your personal information in the following situations:

**Business Transfers.** We may share or transfer your information in connection with, or during negotiations of, any merger, sale of company assets, financing, or acquisition of all or a portion of our business to another company.

## 4. HOW LONG DO WE KEEP YOUR INFORMATION?

***In Short:** We keep your information for as long as necessary to fulfill the purposes outlined in this privacy notice unless otherwise required by law.*

We will only keep your personal information for as long as it is necessary for the purposes set out in this privacy notice, unless a longer retention period is required or permitted by law (such as tax, accounting, or other legal requirements). No purpose in this notice will require us to keep your personal information for longer than three (3) months past the termination of the user's account.

When we have no ongoing legitimate business need to process your personal information, we will either delete or anonymize such information, or, if this is not possible (for example, because your personal information has been stored in backup archives), then we will securely store your personal information and isolate it from any further processing until deletion is possible.

## 5. HOW DO WE KEEP YOUR INFORMATION SAFE?

***In Short:** We aim to protect your personal information through a system of organizational and technical security measures.*

We have implemented appropriate and reasonable technical and organizational security measures designed to protect the security of any personal information we process. However, despite our safeguards and efforts to secure your information, no electronic transmission over the Internet or information storage technology can be guaranteed to be 100% secure, so we cannot promise or guarantee that hackers, cybercriminals, or other unauthorized third parties will not be able to defeat our security and improperly collect, access, steal, or modify your information. Although we will do our best to protect your personal information, transmission of personal information to and from our Services is at your own risk. You should only access the Services within a secure environment.

Breach Policy



In the unlikely event that Sherpa comes to suspect a breach of the robust protective measures we have in place with respect to the data we collect, we will carry out an expeditious assessment of whether someone has, in fact, obtained unauthorized access to your protected data. For purposes of this policy, a breach is any unauthorized acquisition of computerized data that compromises the security, confidentiality, or integrity of personal information that we maintain.

If we determine that a breach has occurred, or even if we conclude that it's reasonably likely to have taken place, we will immediately send you notice setting forth the following information:

- Date of the breach;
- Types of information subject to the breach;
- A description, in clear and plain language, of the nature of the breach, what occurred, and all reasonably likely consequences of the breach;
- Steps we are taking and those proposed to be taken to address the breach (including, where appropriate, any measures to mitigate its possible adverse effects).
- The name and contact information of a designated Sherpa representative that you can contact to discuss the matter further, ask questions, request further information, etc.

Should your use of Sherpa be part of a formal arrangement with a school district or other educational agency (regardless of whether your relationship with that institution is as a student, teacher, administrator, staff member, or something else), we will also provide the same notice via email and telephone to those person(s) designated by the district/agency for receipt of such information. In such an instance, you may receive notice of the breach described above directly from the district/agency on our behalf.

In either case, and regardless of whether we determine that a breach has actually occurred or not, we will adhere to all national, state and local data breach regulations applicable to the impacted user(s), which may include providing notice to legal authorities, as mandated by the laws of your country and/or regional/local jurisdiction.



## 6. DO WE COLLECT INFORMATION FROM MINORS?

*In Short:* We do not knowingly collect data from or market to children under 18 years of age.

We do not knowingly solicit data from or market to children under 18 years of age. By using the Services, you represent that you are at least 18 or that you are the parent or guardian of such a minor and consent to such minor dependent's use of the Services. If we learn that personal information from users less than 18 years of age has been collected, we will deactivate the account and take reasonable measures to promptly delete such data from our records. If you become aware of any data we may have collected from children under age 18, please contact us at [support@sherpalabs.co](mailto:support@sherpalabs.co).

## 7. WHAT ARE YOUR PRIVACY RIGHTS?

**Withdrawing your consent:** If we are relying on your consent to process your personal information, which may be express and/or implied consent depending on the applicable law, you have the right to withdraw your consent at any time.

However, please note that this will not affect the lawfulness of the processing before its withdrawal nor, when applicable law allows, will it affect the processing of your personal information conducted in reliance on lawful processing grounds other than consent.

**Opting out of marketing and promotional communications:** You can unsubscribe from our marketing and promotional communications at any time by clicking on the unsubscribe link in the emails that we send, replying "STOP" or "UNSUBSCRIBE" to the SMS messages that we send, or by contacting us. You will then be removed from the marketing lists. However, we may still communicate with you — for example, to send you service-related messages that are necessary for the administration and use of your account, to respond to service requests, or for other non-marketing purposes.

## Account Information

If you would at any time like to review or change the information in your account or terminate your account, you can:

Contact us using the contact information provided.

Upon your request to terminate your account, we will deactivate or delete your account and information from our active databases. However, we may retain some information in our files to prevent fraud, troubleshoot problems, assist with any investigations, enforce our legal terms and/or comply with applicable legal requirements.

## 8. CONTROLS FOR DO-NOT-TRACK FEATURES

Most web browsers and some mobile operating systems and mobile applications include a Do-Not-Track ("DNT") feature or setting you can activate to signal your privacy preference not to have data about your online browsing activities monitored and collected. At this stage no uniform technology standard for recognizing and implementing DNT signals has been finalized. As such, we do not currently respond to DNT browser signals or any other mechanism that automatically communicates your choice not to be tracked online. If a standard for online tracking is adopted that we must follow in the future, we will inform you about that practice in a revised version of this privacy notice.

We have collected the following categories of personal information in the past twelve (12) months:

Category	Examples	Collected
A. Identifiers	Contact details, such as real name, alias, postal address, telephone or mobile contact number, unique personal identifier, online identifier, Internet Protocol address, email address, and account name	YES

B. Protected classification characteristics under state or federal law	Gender and date of birth	NO
C. Commercial information	Transaction information, purchase history, financial details, and payment information	NO
D. Biometric information	Fingerprints and voiceprints	NO
E. Internet or other similar network activity	Browsing history, search history, online behavior, interest data, and interactions with our and other websites, applications, systems, and advertisements	NO
F. Geolocation data	Device location	YES
G. Audio, electronic, visual, thermal, olfactory, or similar information	Images and audio, video or call recordings created in connection with our business activities	NO
H. Professional or employment-related information	Business contact details in order to provide you our Services at a business level or job title, work history, and professional qualifications if you apply for a job with us	NO
I. Education Information	Student records and directory information	YES

J. Inferences drawn from collected personal information	Inferences drawn from any of the collected personal information listed above to create a profile or summary about, for example, an individual's preferences and characteristics	NO
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## **12. DO WE MAKE UPDATES TO THIS NOTICE?**

*In Short:* Yes, we will update this notice as necessary to stay compliant with relevant laws.

We may update this privacy notice from time to time. The updated version will be indicated by an updated "Revised" date and the updated version will be effective as soon as it is accessible. If we make material changes to this privacy notice, we may notify you either by prominently posting a notice of such changes or by directly sending you a notification. We encourage you to review this privacy notice frequently to be informed of how we are protecting your information.

## **13. HOW CAN YOU CONTACT US ABOUT THIS NOTICE?**

If you have questions or comments about this notice, you may email us at [support@sherpalabs.co](mailto:support@sherpalabs.co) or contact us by post at:

Sherpa Labs, Inc.  
1035 Campus Drive  
Stanford, CA 94305  
United States

## **14. HOW CAN YOU REVIEW, UPDATE, OR DELETE THE DATA WE COLLECT FROM YOU?**

Based on the applicable laws of your country, you may have the right to request access to the personal information we collect from you, change that information, or delete it. To request to review, update, or delete your personal information, please reach out to: [support@sherpalabs.co](mailto:support@sherpalabs.co).





# Sherpa

Wielding AI to achieve Chronic Absenteeism  
reduction in Bullitt County by 2025



# What Is the Cost of Chronic Absenteeism?



## Most Research Emphasizes Impact on Chronically Absent Students...

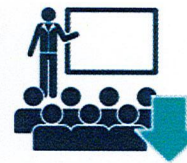


Less likely to read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade

4x

more likely to dropout of high school than their peers

## ...But Chronic Absenteeism Harms All Students



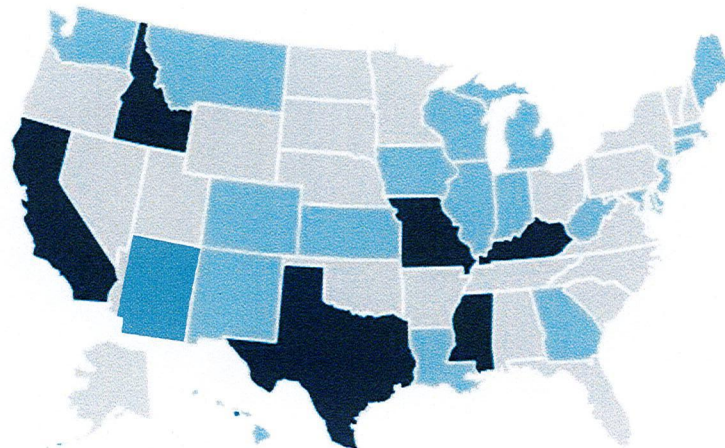
The percentage of chronically absent classmates predicts low reading and math achievement for all students

## Steep Funding Cuts Threaten District Resources

- States that fund schools based on Average Daily Attendance
- Non-ADA state where absenteeism may still impact funding<sup>1</sup>

-\$1M

funding due to 2% chronic absenteeism growth, TX district



### Funding Streams Tied to ADA in Various States:

- Special education
- Meal reimbursement
- Textbook purchases
- Transportation
- Summer programs

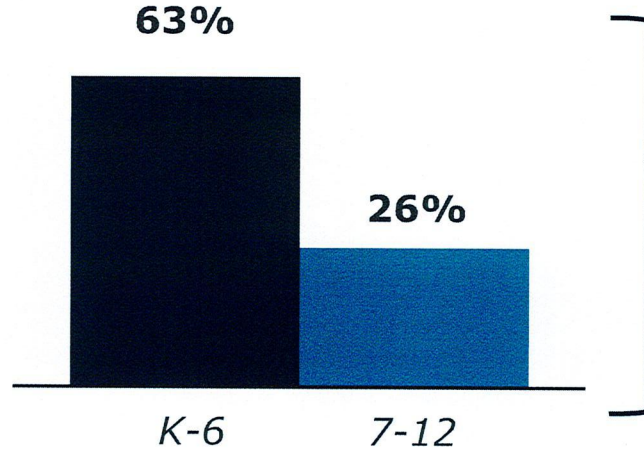
Source: Attendance Works, [Preventing Missed Opportunity: Taking Collective Action to Confront Chronic Absence](#), 2016; Everyone Graduates Center, [The Importance of Being in School: A Report on Absenteeism in the Nation's Public Schools](#), 2012; NCES, [Digest of Education Statistics](#), 2022. EAB interviews and analysis.



# More Parents Doubt Value of In-Person Education

## Leaders Say Parents' Misconceptions Are Top New Cause for Chronic Absence

*% District Leaders Ranking Parent Misconceptions as #1 Cause, Feb-Mar 2023*



## Despite Grade Level Split, Almost All Agree Parents Value Attendance Less

**86%** of district leaders "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" parent value of attendance is lower today than in previous years

**91%** of leaders that ranked a different cause as #1 still agreed with this statement

“

*Coming off the pandemic, the perception of parents is, 'Well, my kid made it. They're okay. **They can miss – it's probably not as critical that they're there.**'*

Superintendent,  
Midwestern School District

”



# Bringing Families Back Requires Partnership, Not Punishment



**Preaching and prosecuting typically  
backfire in behaviour change”**

*Dr. Adam Grant,  
Organizational Psychologist*

The New York Times

## **The Science of Reasoning With Unreasonable People**

Don't try to change someone else's mind. Instead, help them find  
their own motivation to change.



# The Science of Motivating a Behavior Change



Our Research-Backed Solution Relies on Four Key Pillars



## Parent Partnership

Two-Way Channels with AI



## Teacher Empowerment

Teacher Tools to begin conversations



## Relationship Mapping

Helping students find a Trusted Adult



## Intervention Tracking

Real-time data to track effectiveness

*Practice #1:*



## Comprehensive Communication with AI

*Practice #2:*



## Student Relationship Mapping



# The Science of Motivating a Behavior Change



1

Our Research-Backed Solution Relies on Four Key Pillars



## Parent Partnership

Two-Way Channels  
with AI



## Teacher Empowerment

Teacher Tools to  
begin conversations

*Practice #1:*



## Comprehensive Communication with AI



# Truancy Letters Push Parents Away



## The Journey of the Traditional Absence Letter:



Student  
absent  
5 days

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The following notice is to **inform you of the number of absences** from school involving your child. Some of these identified absences may be excused and/or unexcused. This letter is a **review of our process for addressing attendance**.

Your child has 5 absences.

**State statute section 39.9 through 40.5** states all students 5-18 shall attend school daily. **Non-compliance will lead to disciplinary action** by the principal and/or the School Board it's designee.

- If attendance does not improve, a referral may be made to School Social Work Services. Social worker(s) will work with the family to address continuing challenges. Social worker(s) **may refer the case for court involvement through the county truancy court.**

**Support staff are available** to help if students encounter barriers to attendance. **Please contact school** staff before significant attendance difficulties develop.

Parent receives  
**state-mandated  
warning letter**

- *Informative, not actionable*
- *Punitive focus*
- *Riddled with legal jargon*



Parent  
reacts

- *Fear*
- *Denial*
- *Misunderstanding*
- *Silence*

**No change  
in behavior**



Phase I: October to December, 2024



**AI Platform  
to Promote Two Way Communication**

Choose the carrot, not the stick



# Sherpa AI's Two Way Texts Help Parents Communicate Back!



## How This Works:

- 1 Sherpa syncs with SIS system, and reaches out to absentee students' families
- 2 Our AI is personalized in its messaging and positive in its tone
- 3 Identify Root Cause of absence and inform Staff

## Why This Works:

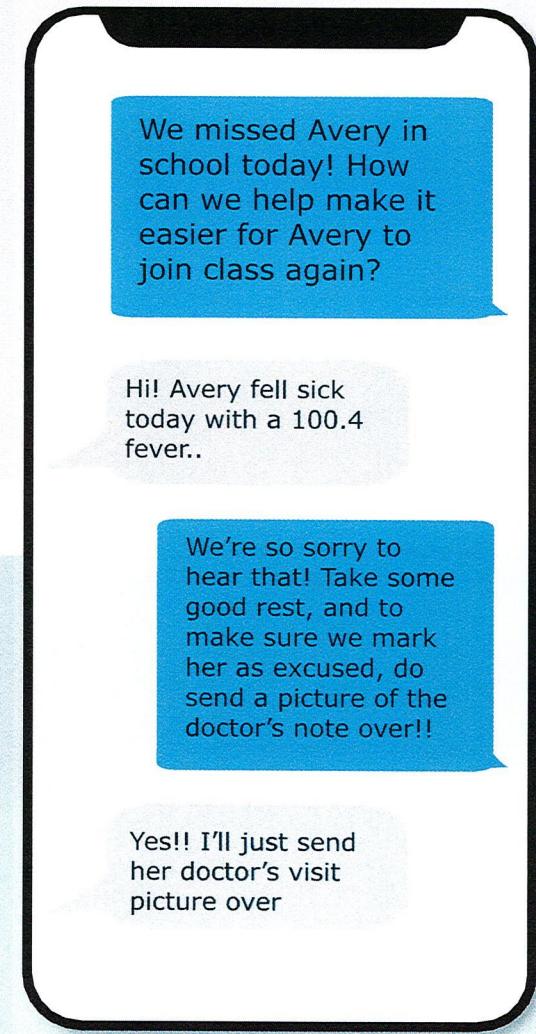


Two Way Communication instead of Traditional Automated RoboCalls



Text messages are proven to be more reliable and accepted than mail/email

*Example text message:*





# Sherpa AI's Labels Conversations to Reduce Fatigue



**Sherpa**
Palo Alto Unified School District | Crystal Springs Middle School

Attendance

Dashboard

Conversations

Students

Manage

Settings

## Conversations

In Progress Action Needed Completed

Recipient	Representative in Charge	Conversation Status	Recommended action	Reason for absence	Started
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;"><span>SS</span></div> <div> <p>Stacy Spencer &amp; Sherpa AI</p> <p>Thank you for letting me know and I'm really sorry to hear that. It's crucial that...</p> </div> <div style="margin-left: 10px; text-align: right;"> <p>2h</p> <p></p> </div> </div>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;"><span>SS</span></div> <div> <p>Stacy Spencer</p> <p>Jamie's mother</p> </div> <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <p></p> <p>Sherpa AI</p> </div> </div>	Action Needed	Pass to Representative	Excused - Bullying	Yesterday, 4:14pm
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;"><span>MA</span></div> <div> <p>Marcus Anthony &amp; Sherpa AI</p> <p>Hey Jamie! It's Crystal Springs Middle School. We noticed you weren't at scho...</p> </div> <div style="margin-left: 10px; text-align: right;"> <p>4h</p> <p></p> </div> </div>					
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;"><span>SW</span></div> <div> <p>Sarah Winslow &amp; Sherpa AI</p> <p>Hey Jamie! It's Crystal Springs Middle School. We noticed you weren't at scho...</p> </div> <div style="margin-left: 10px; text-align: right;"> <p>10h</p> <p></p> </div> </div>					

Yesterday 4:14pm

Crystal Springs Attendance

Crystal Springs Attendance
CA >

Hi Stacy! It's Crystal Springs Middle School. We noticed that Jamie was not at school today. Could you please let us know why he wasn't able to make it?

Hi, Jamie didn't come to school today because he's being bullied and does not feel safe there. This has been going on for a few weeks now.

Thank you for letting me know and I'm really sorry to hear that. It's crucial that Jamie is able to safely attend school every day. Let me check with the Attendance Officer to see how we can help.

Crystal Springs Attendance

Message Jamie

SS **Jamie Spencer**

Crystal Springs Middle School

### Conversation Summary

- SMS outreach message sent (AI)
- SMS discussion (AI)

Choose next action

Actions [View protocol](#)

- Pass to representative Call guardian
- Email guardian Schedule home visit

### Student Information

Homeroom teacher	Mr. Robinson
Grade	8th
Ethnicity	White
Preferred language	English
Pronouns	He/him

### Attendance Information

Absenteeism status	<span style="color: red;">At risk</span>
Unexcused absences	12
Excused absences	3
Ethnicity	White

### Past Conversations 4

- Monday, 9/26** →

Jamie skipped school to avoid being bullied
- Wednesday, 9/21** →

Jamie skipped school to avoid being bullied

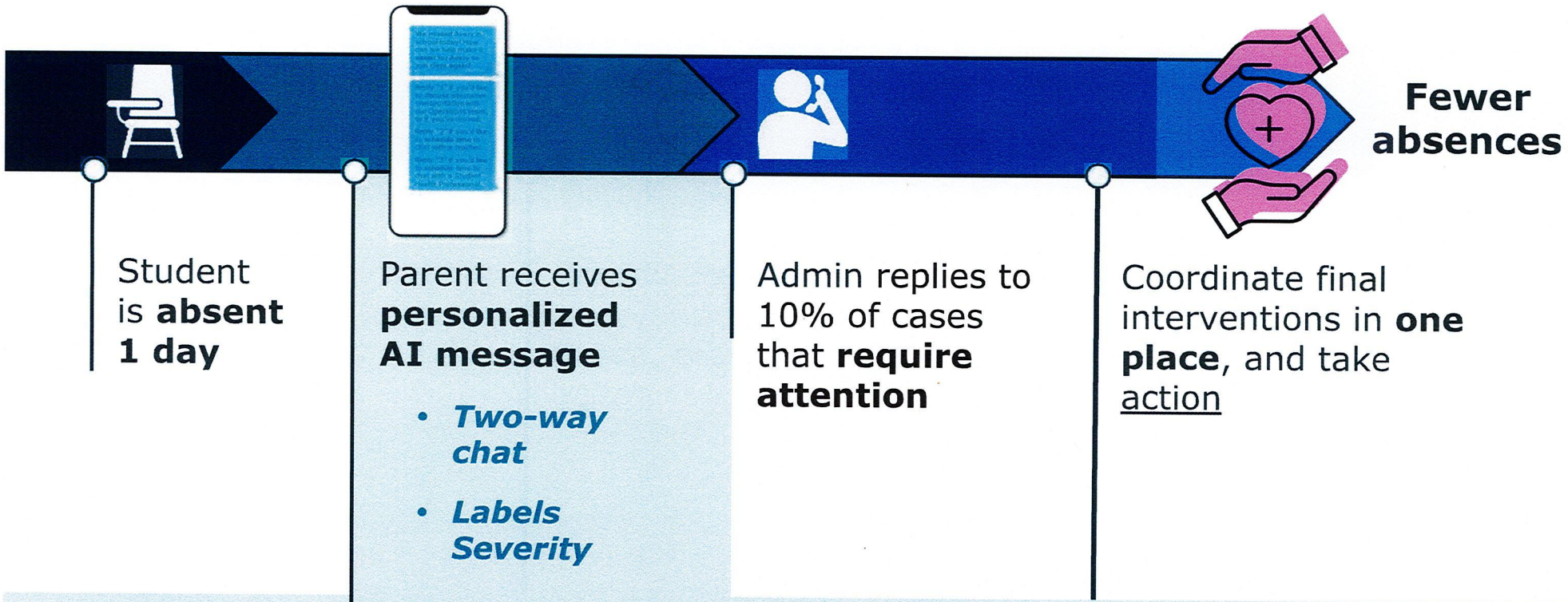
SS Sally Shellfish
▼



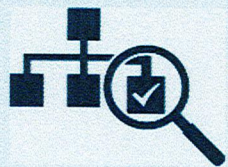


# Insert Moment of Empathy & Action Before Warning Letters

## The Journey of the Trust-Building:



### What Sherpa Provides to Make This Happen:



AI System for flagging and sorting messages to reduce Teacher Fatigue



Contacting the best person to take further action in **one place**



Phase II: January to June, 2025



**A Digital Platform to  
Track Student Relationships**

Everyone should have a trusted adult

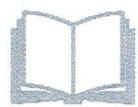


# Student Relationships lead to Improved Attendance



## Why Focus on In-School Relationships?

Controlling for all background characteristics, children with a caring adult outside of the home are:



10%

more likely to **show interest in learning**



21%

less likely to **bully another student** in the past month



28%

less likely to **feel sad or depressed**

## Connections with Trusted Adults Keep Kids in School

“Two big reasons students leave school: they have no meaningful connection to an adult in the building, and no one knows their name or how to pronounce it. This work isn’t just feel-good: **We know through research that relationships and connections keep kids in school.**”

*Administrator, Washoe County Public Schools*





# Capture the Social Health of your Students

## Excerpt from Relationship Mapping Exercise:

Indicate quality and depth of knowledge about each student, even if staff doesn't mark "trusted adult"

Mark staff as "Trusted Adult" if they have positively bonded with the student and believe student would come to them with a personal problem or concern

Student Name	Name/ Face	Academic Standing	Regular Positive Feedback	2 Non- Academic Facts	Family Story	Trusted Adult <i>Initials</i>	Absence Level
Dante B.	✓✓✓ ✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓ ✓✓	✓✓ ✓✓	✓✓ ✓	MS JN TB	Trending
Jenny D.	✓✓✓	✓	✓		✓✓	JN	Trending
Sara S.	✓✓ ✓✓	✓		✓			Chronic
Peter L.	✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓ ✓✓	✓✓✓ ✓✓	TB	-
Maria G.	✓✓	✓		✓	✓✓	MS TB	-

Show students at risk for chronic absenteeism according to attendance data (i.e., students trending toward chronic absence or students already chronic)



# Connect each Student with In-School Activities

**Complete  
Relationship Mapping**

**Connect Student  
with Trusted Adult**

**Connect Student  
with School Activity**

## Why Focus on Extracurriculars?

Students participating in an extracurricular activity are:

↓ **28%**

less likely to have an **unexcused absence**

↓ **16%**

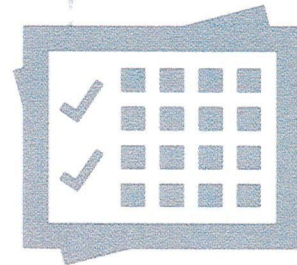
less likely to **skip a class**

**Ask Directly About Student Interests to Guide Students Toward an Activity:**

— · *Do you have any hobbies?*

— · *What do you do in your free time?*

— · *Did you know we have a student club for that?*



Keep a central **accountability report** to track which chronically absent students are participating in a club or extracurricular