

“Every Day – On Time”

Helping Schools Invite, Support & Retain
Challenged Youth

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“A school that does not attend to this factor risks undermining all other efforts at school improvement.”

Robert Marzano

What Works In Schools



Impediments to Implementing NCLB in Juvenile Justice Education - 2006

Providing Effective Transition Services...

“Keeping students in school after they return... negative attitudes toward students when they return...”

It makes no sense to ignore internal school dynamics when trying to address truancy.



Why Are They Truant?

Disengagement:

Truancy = “Voting With My Feet”

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

1. Physiological
(biological needs)
2. Safety
3. Belonging
4. Status, Self-Esteem
5. Self Actualization



Inviting

Disinviting

Intentional

A

B

Unintentional

C

D

Sample Disinviting School Practices

- Physically unsafe
- Negative messages: “I wish you weren’ t in my school or classroom”
- Inconsistent expectations & consequences
- Over-reliance on punishment
- Boring, tedious, irrelevant instruction
- Placement of students in guaranteed failure situations
- Failure to partner with home

Sample Inviting School Practices

- Physically safe
- Positive messages: “I’m so glad you’re here! You have been missed.”
- Consistent expectations & consequences
- Emphasis on positive support and reinforcement
- Engaging, relevant instruction
- Placement of students in learning situations appropriate to skill/knowledge level
- Powerful partnerships with home

LBL' s Goal -

Help Schools:

- 1. Stop the “Blame Game”*
- 2. Understand Components of Powerful Attendance Systems*
- 3. Assess Their Own System*
- 4. Develop A Plan To Increase System Health*

**Step 1: Stopping the
Blame Game**

**Step 2: Understanding
the Components
of Powerful
Attendance
Systems**

A High School Teacher Speaks...

"I have 180 students going through my class in a day. This is not elementary where I have 25 kids to nurture and get to know. Therefore, I see myself as teaching math, not kids. Yes, I work to engage them in meaningful activities but some of the kids don't agree with my definition of meaningful. They opt out and I say good riddance. Frankly, class goes much more smoothly when they skip. That leaves the kids here who want to be here and want to be engaged and find class meaningful."

An Administrator Speaks:

"We have an attendance problem and the teachers need to fix it. I just wish they would do a better job of engaging these kids. If they would just be engaging and inviting and call parents when kids are gone and track the data and have connecting conversations with the at-risk kids in their rooms ...

... and fix the problem so the front office doesn't have to deal with it."

Teacher Response...

"This is an administrator and front office problem. They want to dump it on me but that's what they're paid for is to deal with these hard case kids. I'm going to do the minimal on this issue."

So...
The system gets *stuck*
in finger pointing.





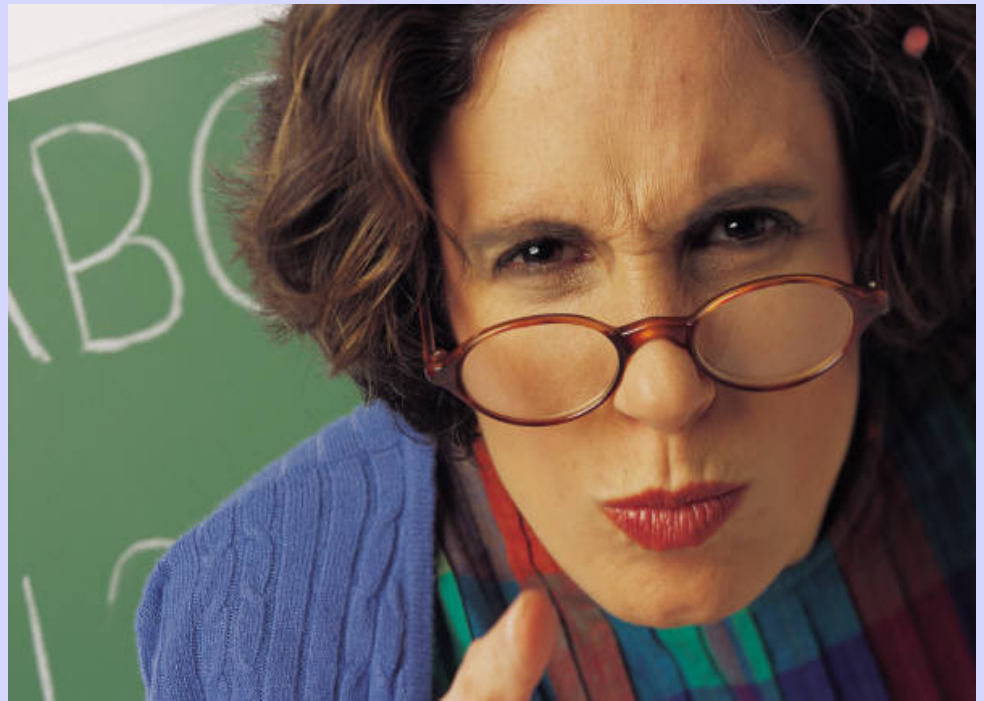
If there is an effective system in place designed to provide graduated supports – *and everyone can see all the parts and how they work together –*

then those working within that system have an easier time accepting responsibility for their part.

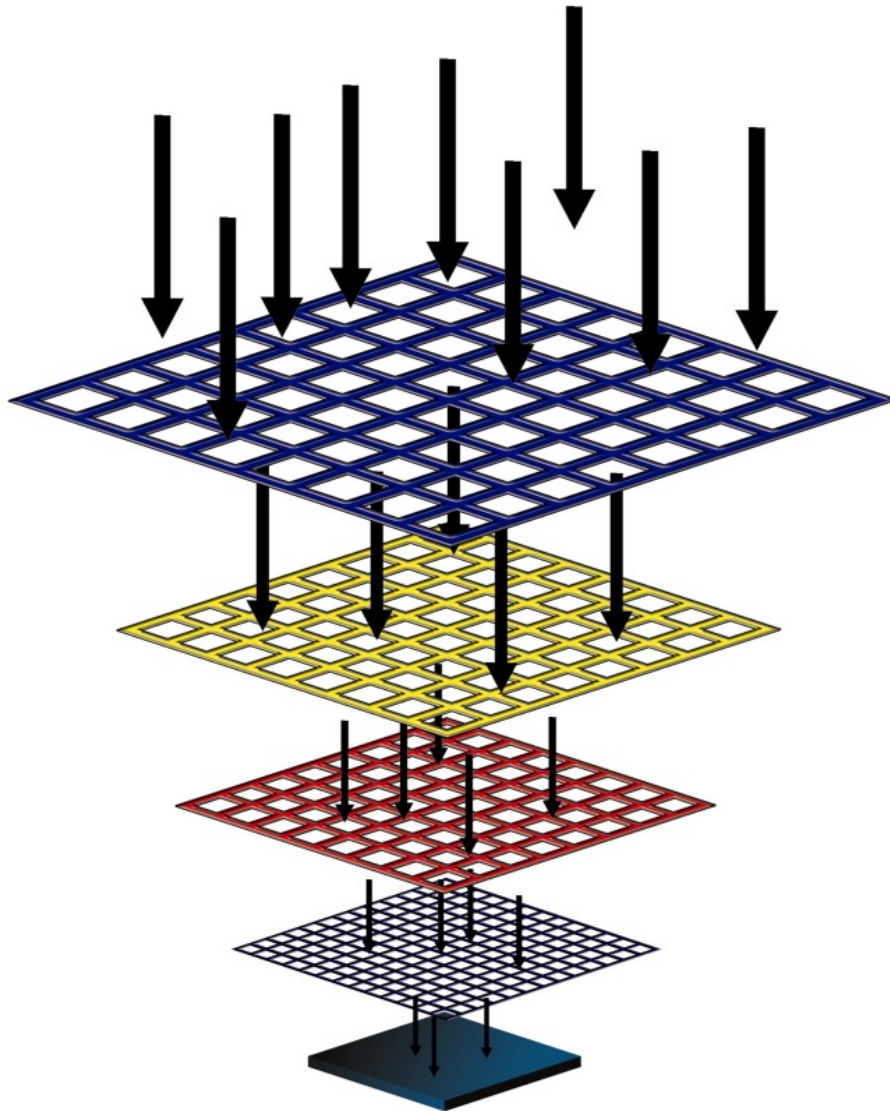
If teachers know there will be administrative support and understand how that support will kick in...

If the school has invested visible resources into those supports...

Then staff are much more likely to step up and shift attitudes, work at being more engaging, make connections, track data, and generally buy-in to the system.



Attendance Support Systems



- Universal Attendance Supports**
 - Effective Instruction
 - Schoolwide Staff Agreements
 - Systems of Reinforcement: School & Classroom
- Parent communication systems**
 - Same Day Response
 - Person-to-Person Contact
- Consequence Systems**
 - Clear
 - Consistent
- Individual assesment & support**
 - Barriers & Needed Supports
 - Mentoring
 - Alternative Education Options
- Community supports & legal consequences**
 - Interagency Staffing
 - Wraparound/Case Management
 - Attendance Officer Support

Step 3: Assessing the System

Process

1. Convene Representative Team
2. Gather Data
3. Review Data and Develop Tentative “Group Think”
Next Steps
4. Send All Documentation to LBL
5. Reconvene –
 1. LBL Synopsis and “Considerations”
 2. Refine Next Steps Plan
6. Convene Again
 1. Celebrate Successes
 2. Review and Strategize Barriers

Data Gathering

- Surveys



Universal Attendance Supports

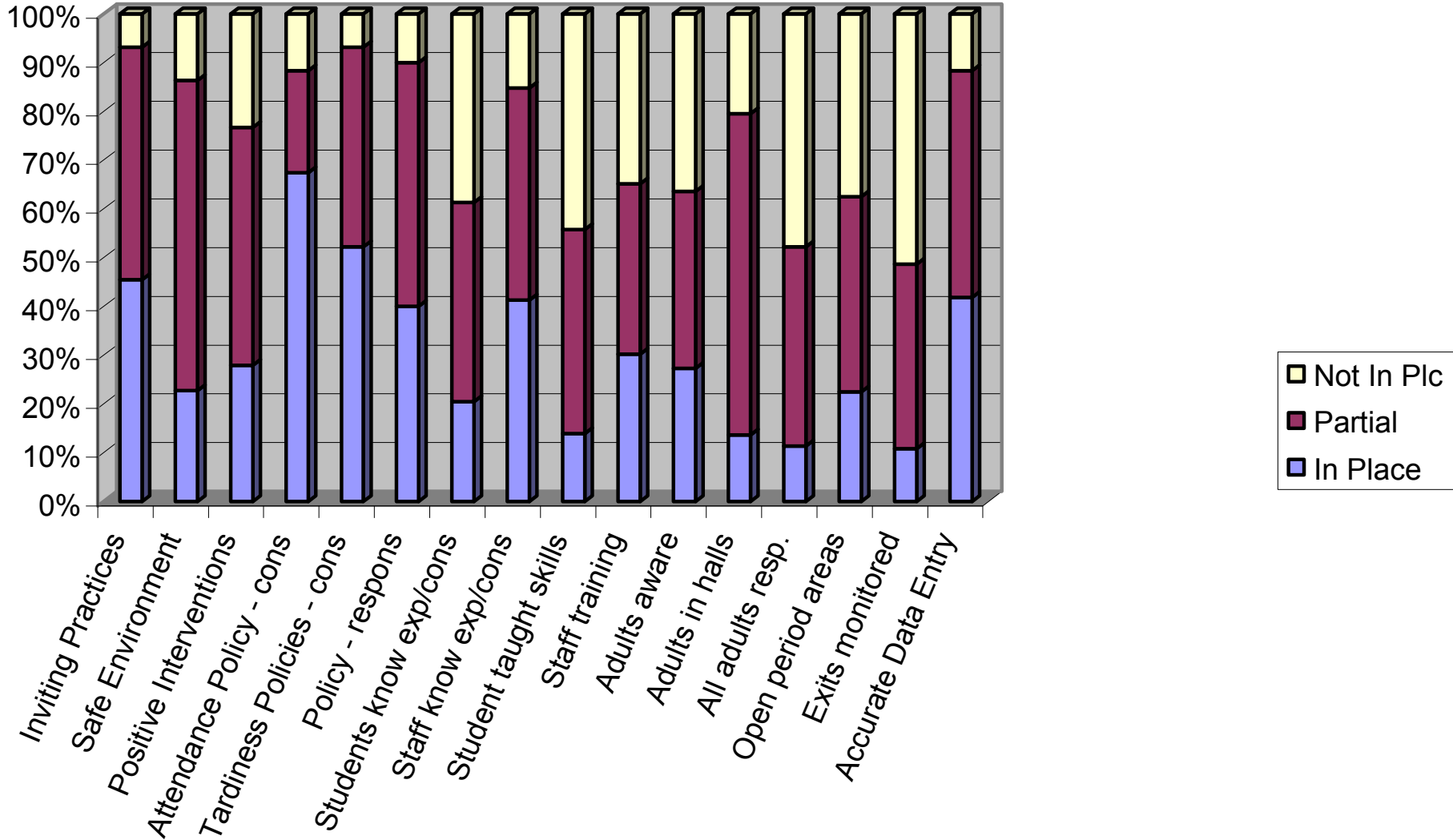
Current Status			Feature	Priority		
In place	Partial In place	Not in Place		High	Medium	Low
			1. The school systematically works to insure that classrooms are inviting, instructionally sound, and lessons are presented in a positive and engaging manner.			
			2. The school environment is generally perceived by students and staff as safe from verbal and physical threat.			
			3. Positive interventions (not just punitive consequences) are systematically used for students with attendance problems (e.g. verbal reinforcement, talking with student to problem solve, phone call home, development of attendance contract, etc.)			
			4. Policies and procedures are in place <u>and in practice</u> which clearly spell out expectations and consequences for student relative to attendance .			
			5. Policies and procedures are in place <u>and in practice</u> which clearly spell out expectations and consequences for students relative to tardiness .			
			6. Policies and practices delineate the attendance-related responsibilities of parents, school staff and administrators.			
			7. 90% or more of the students can clearly state the expectations and consequences for unexcused absences and tardies.			
			8. 90% or more of the staff can clearly state the expectations and consequences for unexcused absences and tardies.			
			9. Students are taught skills related to attendance and punctuality at the beginning of the school year and periodically throughout the school year.			
			10. Over the past 12 months there have been several significant staff discussions or training opportunities re: both attendance and tardies.			
			11. Systems are in place whereby a responsible adult is aware of each student's whereabouts at all times during the school day.			
			12. Adults, including teachers and administrators, are regularly in the hallways during passing periods and as classes begin; reminding and encouraging students to be to class on time.			

Parent Communication Systems

Current Status			Feature	Priority		
In place	Partial In place	Not in Place		High	Medium	Low
			1. Parents are informed of policies at the beginning of the year and at appropriate times throughout the year. The school has a mechanism in place to assure that parents have reviewed policies and procedures.			
			2. Parents are contacted via person-to-person contact within two class periods of a report that a student is absent without substantiated explanation (parent note, parent phone call, pre-authorization, etc.).			
			3. Parents of chronically truant students receive occasional positive phone calls when their student is beginning to show a pattern of improved attendance.			

			Consequence Systems			
			1. Policies and procedures are in place <u>and in practice</u> which clearly spell out expectations and consequences for student relative to attendance .			
			2. Policies and procedures are in place <u>and in practice</u> which clearly spell out expectations and consequences for students relative to tardiness .			
			3. 90% or more of the staff can clearly state the expectations and consequences for unexcused absences and tardies.			
			4. 90% or more of the students can clearly state the expectations and consequences for unexcused absences and tardies.			
			5. Consequences for truancy and tardiness occur within 24 hours of the student behavior.			
			6. Consequences for truancy and tardiness are coupled with problem-solving/instruction relative to attendance expectations.			

XYZ High - Universal Systems - Current Status 84 responses



Data Gathering

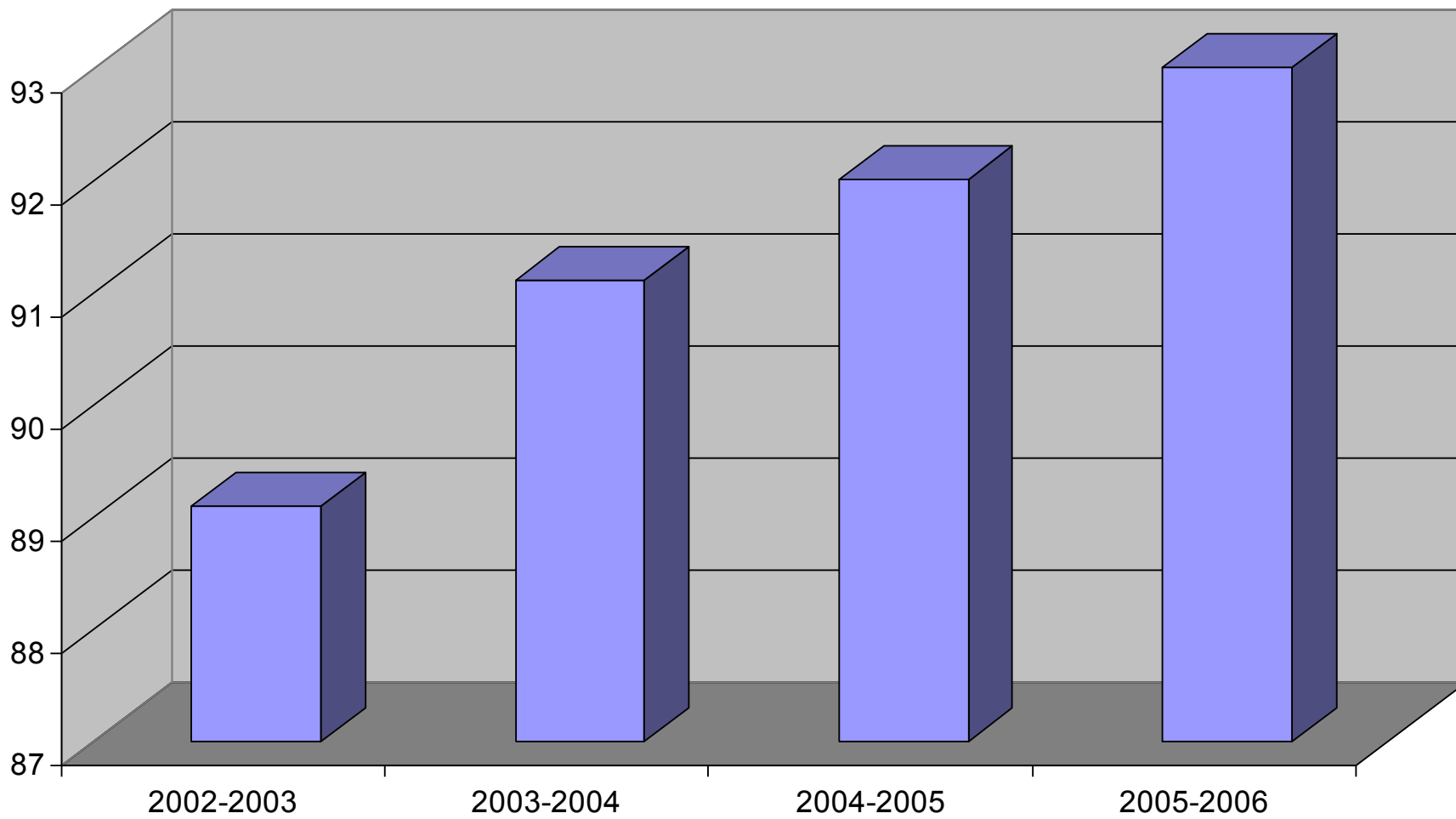
- Teacher Interviews
- Parent Surveys
- Student Interviews
- Observations & Hall Counts
- Student Lists – Truant & Tardy
- Attendance Data System Review
- Data Trends



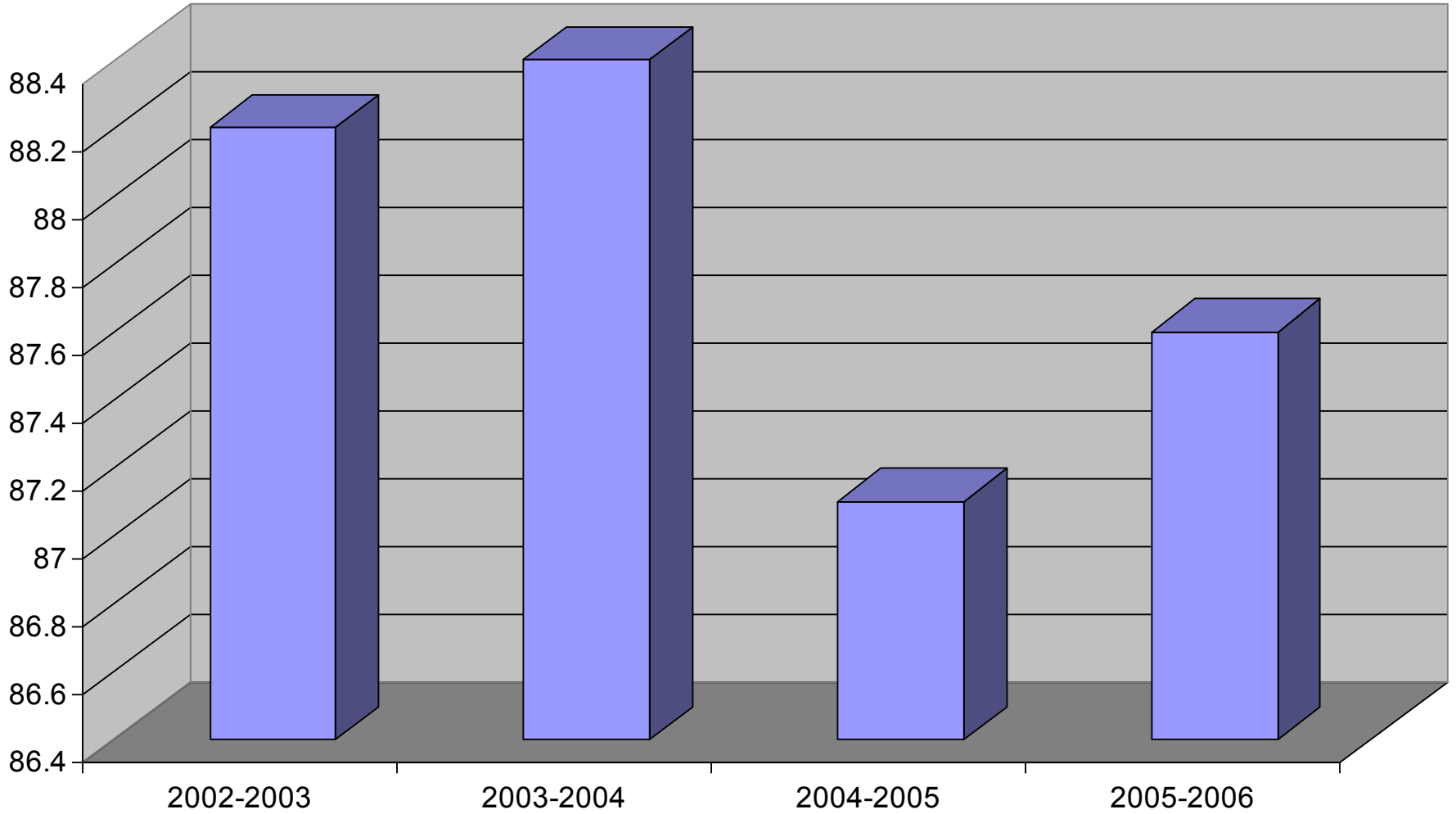
**Step 4: Develop and
Implement a Plan
Addressing Each
Screen**

Impact

Attendance Rates - West Albany High School



XYZ High School



Continuums of System Capacity for Improvement

Effective Strategies

Improvement Flare-Ups

Sustained Improvement

Low System
Readiness

- Low Leadership Trust
- Staff Discord
- Low Commitment
- No Team Oversight
- No Coaching Available
- No Systematic Data Review
- Poor Communication Systems
- Low Awareness of Need for Change
- Habits of Political Appeasement

High System
Readiness

- High Leadership Trust
- Staff Cohesion
- Sustained Commitment
- Empowered Team
- Oversight
- Credible Coaching
- Data-Focus
- Strong Communication Systems
- Felt Need
- Savvy Political Courage

systemic Misery

Low Performance
High Readiness

Ineffective Strategies

For More Information...

www.lblesd.k12.or.us

Scott Perry or

Vicki Harlos

541-812-2600



Common Challenges

- Communication breakdowns
- Staff reductions, work load
- Policy not in line with practice
- Inaccurate data collection
- Lack of positive, proactive interventions
- Sporadic, hit/miss interventions
- Parents “out of the loop”
- Lag time from skip to consequence
- Hall pass system inconsistency
- Counselors “out of the loop”



Common Areas of Focus

- Leadership
 - Data accuracy & Data reporting
 - Attendance values
- Monthly review (an “attendance PBS team”)
 - Data analysis: building-wide patterns
 - Building intervention systems
 - Individual students
 - Involve key players
- Policy fit to practice
- Rapid communication with parents



Common Areas of Focus

- Block secretarial time
- Clear tardy policy
- Teach positive “attendance skills” to students and parents
- Adults in halls during passing periods
- Clear, consistent pass system
- Excused/unexcused clarity
- Community Engagement
- Timely referral to attendance officer



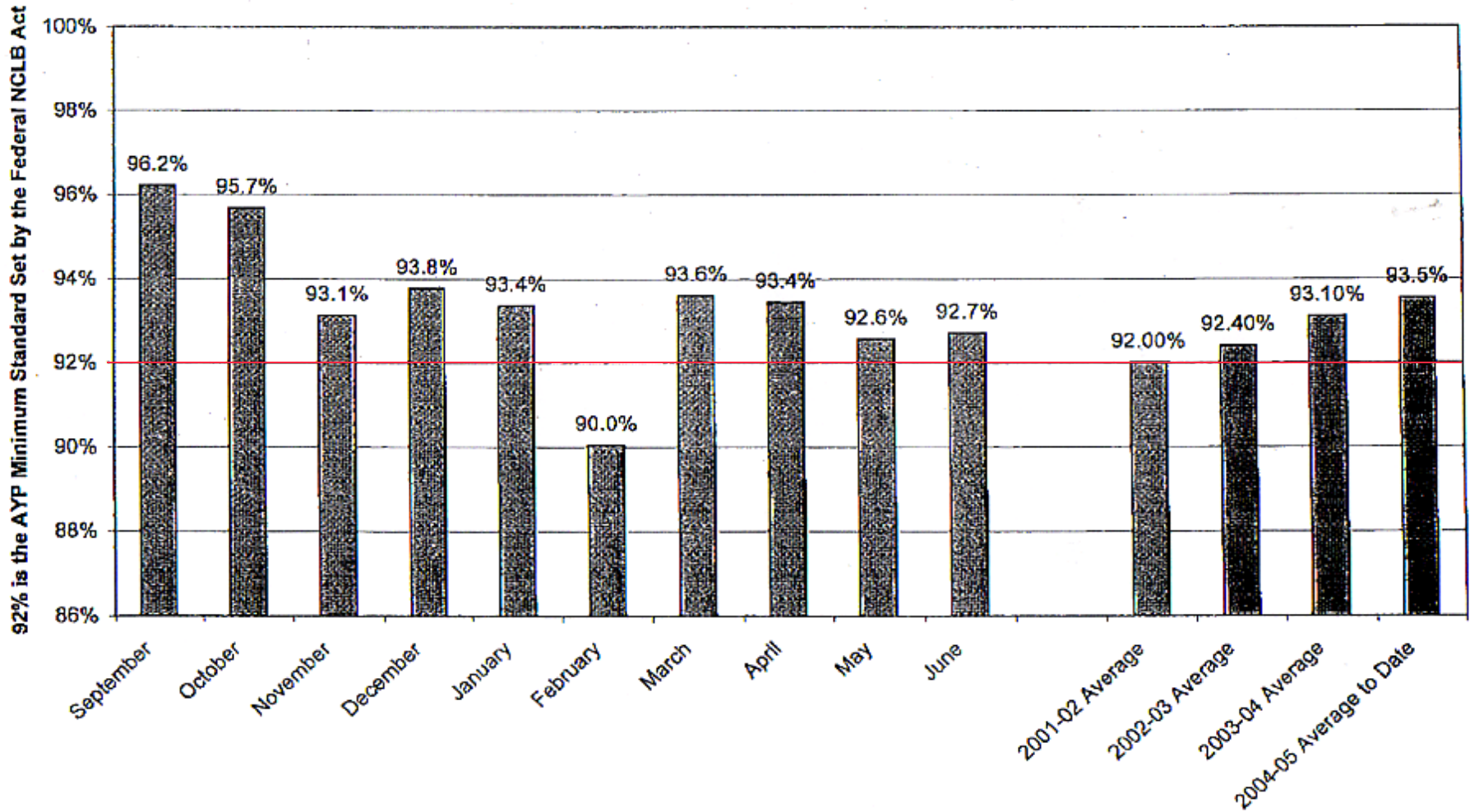
Shasta Middle School: Bethel School District

Leadership in use of attendance data to impact
truancy and tardiness

(Bert Eliason & Ginny Weil
Co-Principals)

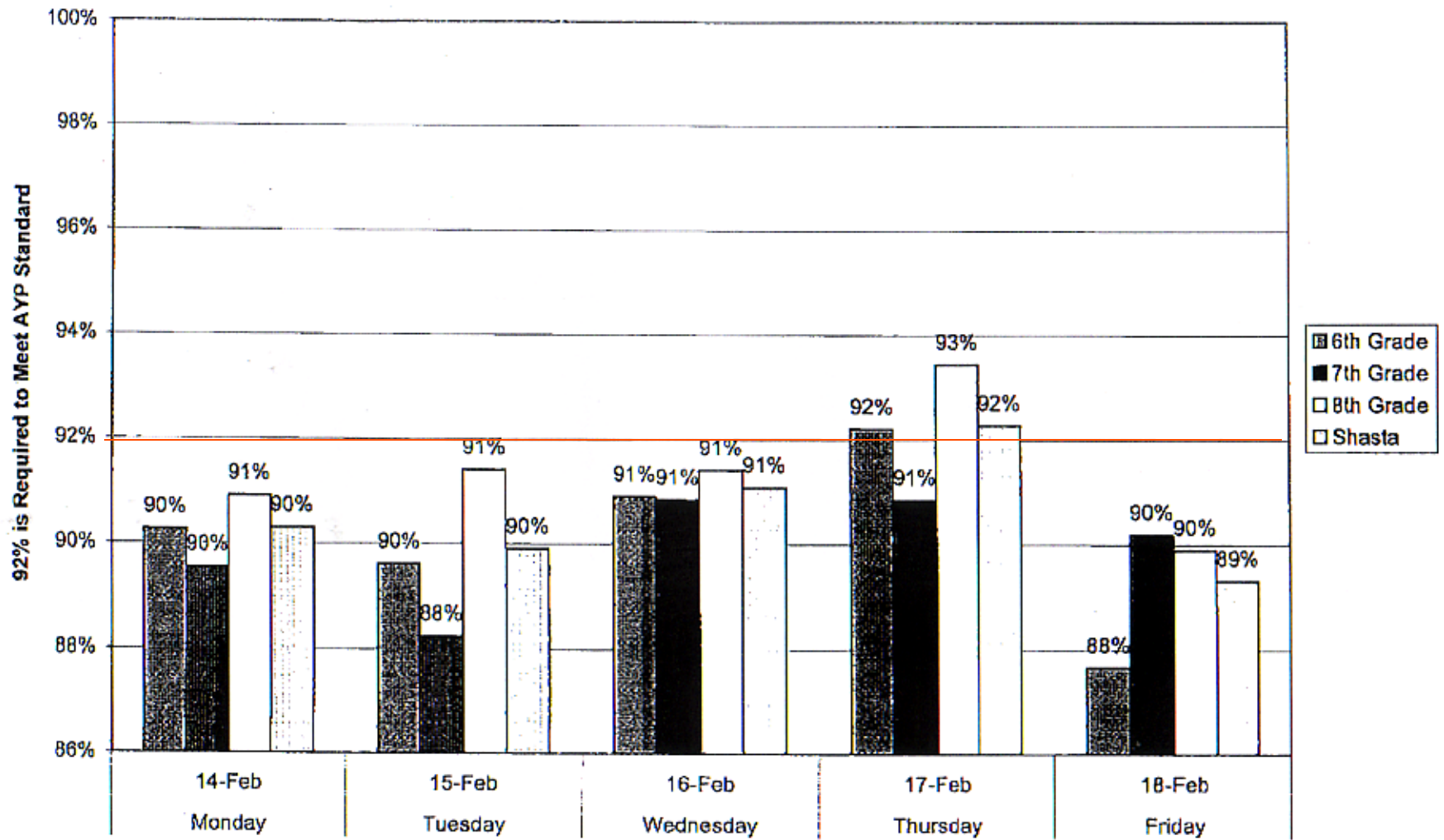


Shasta 2004-2005 Average Monthly Attendance Compared to Historical and Year-to-Date Averages



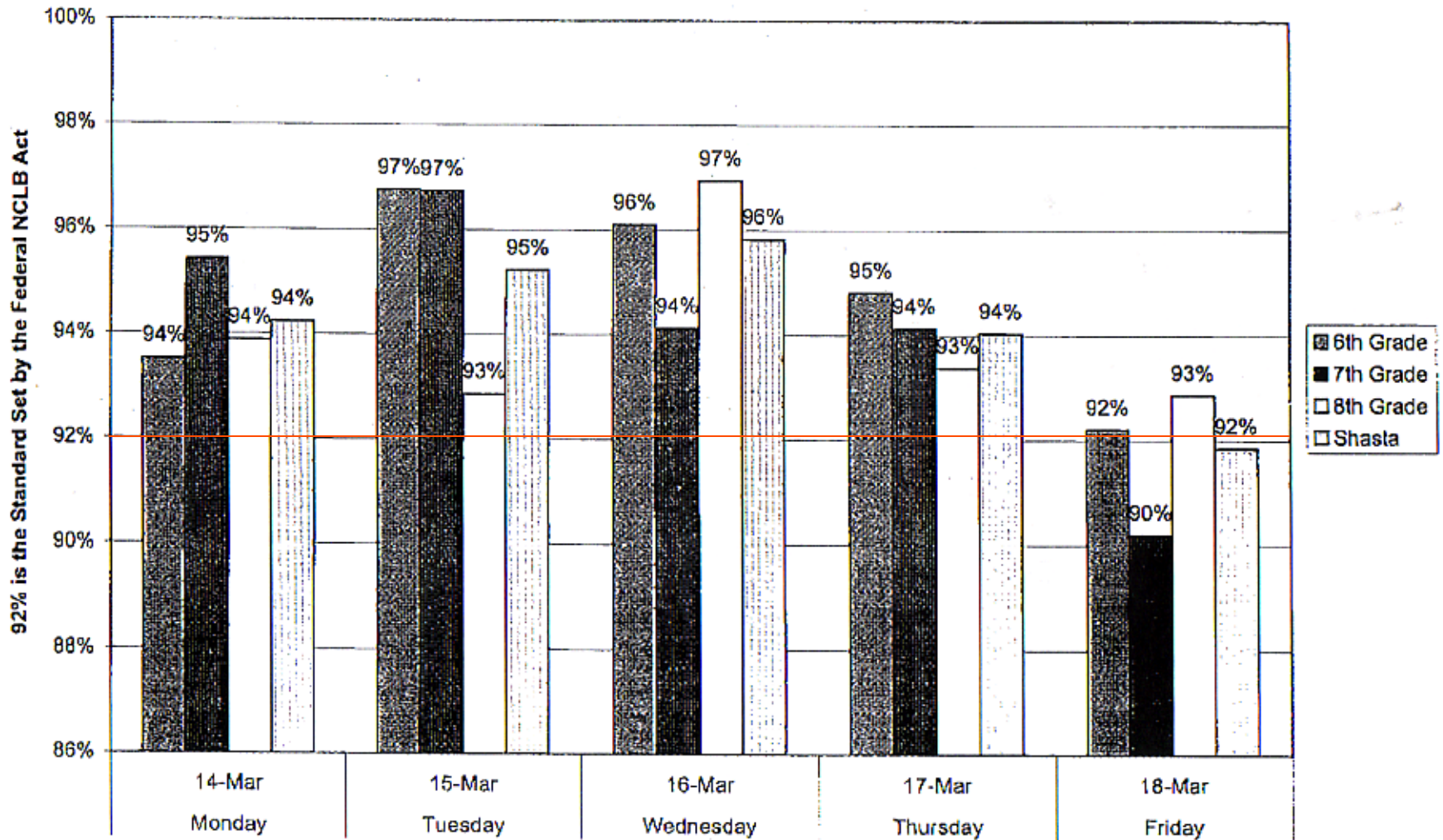
In March, it looks like we had a good recovery from the illness we were experiencing in February.

Shasta Daily Attendance Week of February 14-18



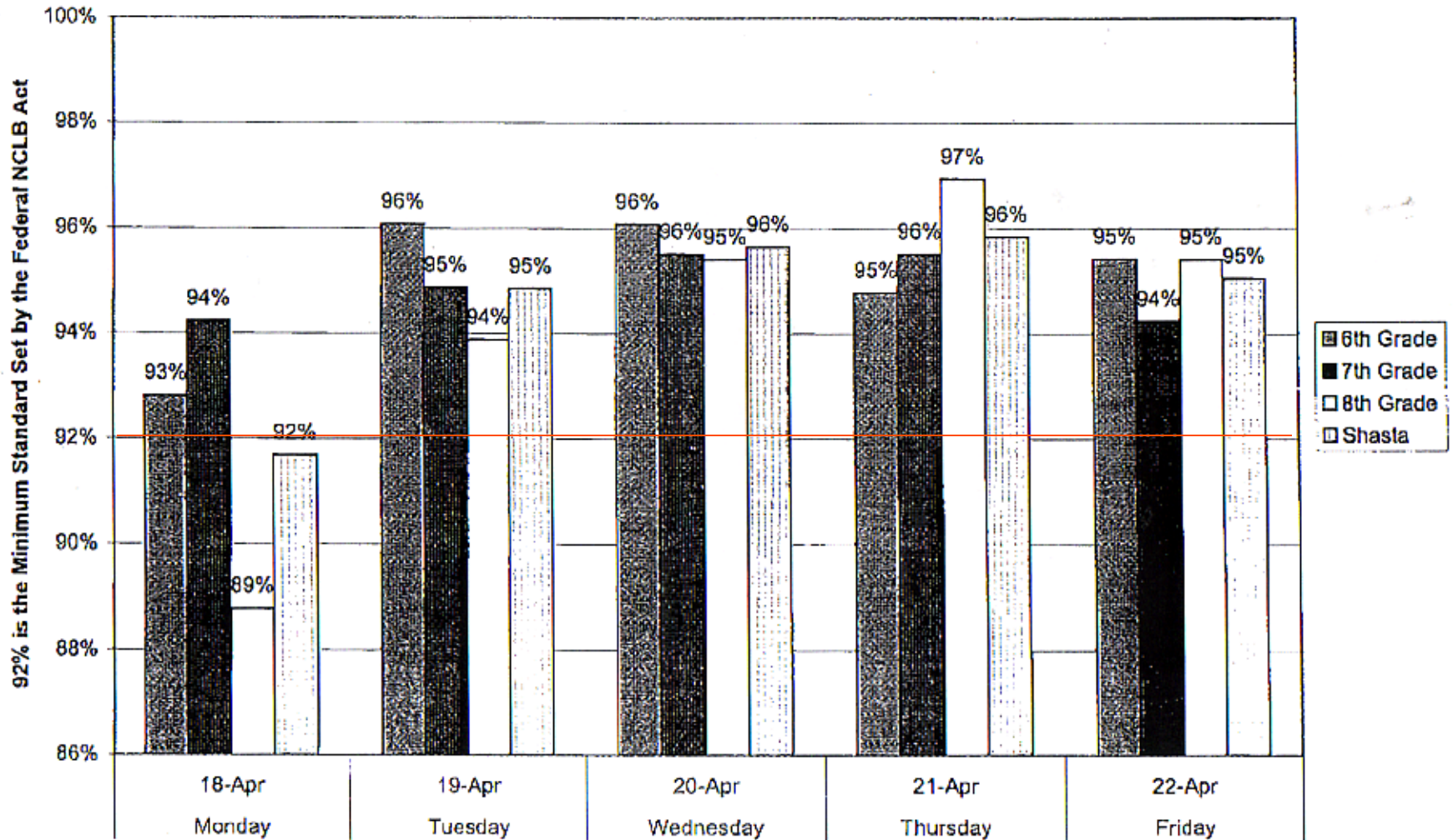
Significant sickness throughout the week.

Shasta Daily Attendance Week of March 14



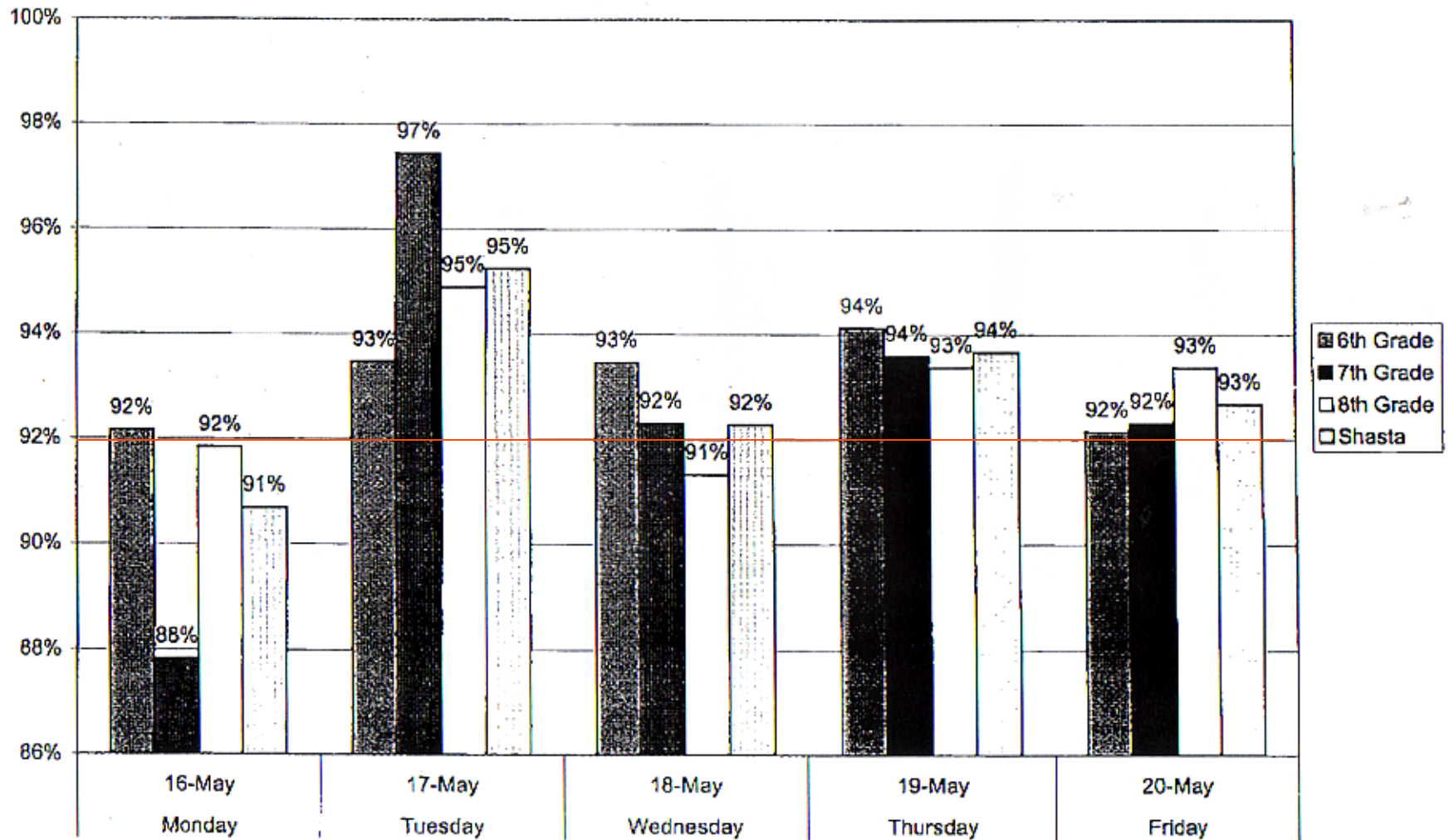
We have rebounded from the days in mid-February when we were sick throughout the school, but we decline as we approach Friday before break. I imagine the pattern is similar immediately prior to and just after other breaks.

Shasta Daily Attendance Week of April 18



As the sunny weather broke, students returned to school. Thursday, the day of our academic and special recognition awards, was the highest attendance rate in quite some time.

Shasta Daily Attendance Week of May 16



Possibly the best we can hope for is that these final weeks of lower daily percentage attending don't have a tremendous impact on our yearly average.

Shasta Daily Attendance Week of June 13

