



Attending school regularly is essential to students gaining the academic and social skills they need to thrive.

Chronic absence, missing **10%** or more of the school year, has doubled nationwide since the pandemic, now affecting an estimated **16 million** students.

In Utah, nearly **1 in 4 students** were chronically absent in 2023–2024.

When students miss school regularly, they miss more than lessons, they fall behind socially and academically:

- Falling behind in reading
- Struggling to stay engaged
- Increased risk of not graduating

Every Day Counts: Why Student Engagement & Attendance Matter

For Utah's City, County, and
Community Leaders

Why Students Miss School

- Lack of access to food, clothing, or healthcare
- Unreliable transportation or unsafe routes to school
- Housing instability
- Unhealthy environmental conditions

City and county leaders are uniquely positioned to help address these systemic hurdles. By working together to reduce these barriers, and build a culture of belonging and consistency, we can help more students show up and succeed.



**Every
Day
Counts**

Join the Effort!

The Utah State Board of Education is partnering state-wide to support student attendance and success.

Find tools at AttendanceWorks.org and learn more at tinyurl.com/USBEAttendance.

Student Attendance Impacts the Entire Community:



Stronger Economy

Thriving schools attract families and businesses.



Better Schools

Consistent attendance helps boost school performance.



Safer Communities

Engaged students are less likely to participate in risky behaviors.

How Local Leaders Can Help

Lead & Convene

- Form or support a community-wide attendance task force
- Bring together leaders from education, health, housing, transportation, safety, and more
- Elevate student attendance as a shared community priority

Use Local Data

- Partner with districts to analyze and monitor chronic absence data
- Identify which students and neighborhoods are most affected

Promote Attendance

- Join the Utah Statewide Attendance Campaign
- Become an Attendance Ambassador
- Help families access resources to reduce absences
- Recognize improved attendance (not just perfect attendance)
- Celebrate students publicly—via newsletters, social media, or school events
- Connect schools with businesses and local celebrities for incentives

Address Health & Basic Needs

- Support school-based or community health services
- Collaborate with health departments on clear, consistent guidance about illness
- Promote wellness strategies that reduce preventable absences
- Expand access to clothing, food, and school supplies

Improve Access to School

- Help identify transportation challenges and support solutions
- Expand safe routes, bus lines, or public transit access
- Consider walking school buses or group travel supports

Mentor & Mobilize

- Recruit adult mentors through city staff, businesses, or local organizations
- Collaborate with nonprofits and national service programs that provide mentorship
- Support schools in building ongoing volunteer networks

Together, we can help every student show up, stay connected, and thrive.