

Attendance Messaging & Calendaring in Utah Schools

March 11, 2025 Attendance Webinar

Agenda for Webinar

1. USBE Supports Quick Review
2. Attendance Messaging
3. Attendance Calendaring
4. Ogden School District Presentation
5. Resources
6. Questions

USBE's Support to LEAs

USBE Attendance Cohorts

- USBE offers year long attendance cohorts focused on tier 1 attendance implementation.
- In these cohorts attendance teams will learn about attendance teaming, attendance legislation and board rules, MTSS attendance structures, attendance messaging, attendance calendaring, and other helpful attendance items.
- Attendance teams throughout the state also have the opportunity to collaborate with each other and learn what is going on around the state in regards to attendance.
- If you are interested in joining the 2025-2026 cohort please contact one of the USBE Attendance Specialists.

Monthly Attendance Newsletter

USBE Attendance Specialists are sending out information to LEA Attendance Leads each month with important updates, research, articles, and Utah success stories.

If you're not receiving these as an attendance Lead, please reach out to [Megan Menlove](mailto:megan.menlove@schools.utah.gov) at megan.menlove@schools.utah.gov to be added to the mailing list.

Check and Connect for Prevention

Check and Connect is the only **Tier 2** evidence based mentoring program. Utah identifies at-risk students based on their ABC's (Attendance, Behavior, and Course Performance).

Mentors work with students and families to set-goals to help students re-engage with schools with the goal of graduation.

For more information on Check and Connect Trainings please reach out to [Garrett Russell](mailto:garrett.russell@schools.utah.gov) at garrett.russell@schools.utah.gov

Attendance Messaging

Attendance Messaging Ideas (1)

- Districtwide/Schoolwide Attendance Messaging
 - Be consistent with your message
 - Stay positive
 - Utilize listservs, social media, local media, etc.
 - Create a schedule of when and where you will send out messages
 - Pre-prepared messages to send out from the district, school, and teacher to show continuity

Attendance Messaging Ideas (2)

- Parent Communication Ideas
 - 2-way messaging app- Parent Square (purchased Remind)
 - Letters home
 - Phone calls home
 - Scripts and templates for staff- phone calls, emails, texts
 - Try to utilize as few communication platforms as possible

Attendance Calendaring

Attendance Calendaring Ideas

- Create an attendance specific calendar
 - September Awareness Month
 - Monthly nudges/messages
 - Social media posts
 - Attendance Incentives
 - End of term data
 - Impacts on missing school
 - What is Chronic Absenteeism?
- Examples
 - [Sample LEA Calendar](#) and [Blank LEA Calendar](#) (Attendance Works)
 - [Sample School Calendar](#) and [Blank School Calendar](#) (Attendance Works)

District Attendance Team Yearly Planning Calendar



SAMPLE ACTIVITIES for DISTRICTS: rev 10-7-24

District Attendance Team Yearly Planning Calendar



School District	School Year
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This is an example of a district attendance calendar to guide the work of the district over the year. This calendar is best used by a district-level team that has responsibility for establishing policies and creating systems to ensure attendance is an integral part of school success. The district calendar can be used in conjunction with the school site yearly planning calendar. Use the blank version to create your own.

Timing	Ongoing	Summer	Welcome Back	Fall Semester	Winter	Spring
Capacity Building	Coach and support school teams to organize multi-tiered systems of support for attendance and engagement and ensure they utilize data to monitor attendance. Allocate resources to support efforts to reduce chronic absence. Identify bright spot schools and highlight effective practices.	Include attendance in start of school year PD for all staff. Provide principals with tools to lead a team in designing and implementing effective school-wide attendance strategies. Establish a year-round process to share best practices among and between school teams. Map out and agree upon how to integrate attendance into related district initiatives.	Support schools to put in place bridging activities that welcome families, offer assurances about the health and safety of the school environment and set attendance expectations. Ensure attendance is a standing agenda item for administrator meetings.	Conduct site visits to all schools, observe team functioning, identify bright spot schools and schools in need of additional supports. Develop school coaching plans based on the results of school team self-assessments. Support schools by developing and resourcing good and improved attendance recognition programs.	Document and assess the sufficiency and impact of school-level interventions and strategies across all schools. Determine how to take bright spot best practices to scale across the district. Continue to support the sharing of best practices among and between school teams.	Develop protocols for attendance as a summer school placement factor and to flag students who need attendance supports early in the new school year. Align resources to schools with high levels of chronic absenteeism.
Actionable Data	Review district data and trends by school, grades and student groups (e.g., ethnicity, ELL, disabilities). Ensure school leaders and teams have access to site level data for in-person and distance learning. Monitor accuracy of attendance data and analyze for inequitable outcomes.	Clean up data and notify school teams of chronically absent students who will be entering and returning to each school. Analyze previous year's data for disparity, trends and overall progress. Celebrate previous year's progress.	Review EOY data, and set and publicize district and school goals. Provide school teams with critical questions to consider. Develop district-wide attendance improvement plan and present to the school board. Use data on attendance for in-person and distance learning during the first weeks of school to engage in problem-solving.	Help school teams analyze attendance patterns and trends to inform school-wide strategies. Equip schools to share attendance data with students and families (e.g., parent-teacher conferences, advisory periods).	Measure district progress compared to previous years when possible. Analyze trend data, school and student data to identify attendance dips and set district-wide fourth quarter improvement targets.	Monitor attendance dip trend data and identify schools in need of additional support. Celebrate and recognize schools that are making progress and putting in place effective and innovative engagement practices.
Positive Engagement	Consistently and positively reinforce why reducing chronic absence matters for achievement. Recognize schools that are improving attendance and reducing chronic absence. Manage the attendance messaging campaign.	Establish family outreach and home visiting protocols. Develop year-round district-wide attendance messaging campaign and provide schools with messaging materials. Promote summer bridge activities that establish and strengthen relationships and provide students and families a warm welcome back to school.	Ensure that schools are utilizing messaging materials in back-to-school strategies and implementing the district's messaging campaign. Support schools to implement SEL welcome back activities. Provide schools with training, staff and the freedom to tailor activities to their site.	Develop district protocols for embedding attendance into daily school culture (e.g., classroom practices, student assemblies, parent-teacher conferences). Support schools to use their data to inform their outreach plans and ensure that families whose children are chronically absent receive positive personal outreach.	Implement district-wide winter holiday and spring break messaging campaign. Support schools to respond to common barriers to attendance.	Implement an "end the year strong" attendance messaging campaign. Support the development and implementation of end-of-year engagement activities for students and families.

Attendance Activities School Year Plan (K-12)



SAMPLE ACTIVITIES for K-12: rev. 3-28-23

Attendance Activities School Year Plan (K-12)

School Name	School Year
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Activities in the grid are examples. You can customize the plan for your school or program. For each activity, specify who is responsible for leading and how to measure the results. You can also recreate this chart in a larger format and use post-it notes to add activities as a group exercise. See the 3 Tiers of Intervention (<https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/>)

Timing	Summer (July/August)	Welcome Back (August/September)	Ongoing (Weekly)	Fall Semester (October – November)	Winter Semester (December – February)	Spring Semester (March–April)	End-of-Year (May/June)
School Team	Establish school team to address attendance. Develop a yearly attendance plan and goals. Agree on metrics to monitor for in-person and distance learning. Utilize start of school year PD days for teachers and school staff to discuss yearly plan and whole school strategies.	Conduct team meeting by the second week of school.	Hold team meetings.	Review <u>early warning data</u> . Ensure staff are prepared to discuss attendance in a caring manner in parent-teacher conferences, attendance improvement meetings, outreach calls and home visits.	Revisit data to measure progress and revise school-wide strategies as needed. Expand team as needed to address reasons for absence.	Ensure staff are prepared to discuss attendance in parent-teacher conferences. Assess strategies and write school improvement plan.	Review data. Share data with student's next teacher for smooth transitions and trouble shooting.
Foundational Whole School Supports	Plan welcoming traditions for incoming early grades, transition grades and new students and their families. Ensure there is attention paid to students with disabilities and other student groups with historically high levels of absenteeism.	Disseminate in-person health and safety protocols. Promote immunization activities. Establish good and improved attendance recognition schedule/ process. Conduct welcoming traditions for students and families.	Coordinate with other school leaders to promote and maintain a positive school climate.	Provide a warm welcome for students who start later in the school year. Offer afterschool programs with engaging and culturally responsive curricula.	Create opportunities for students, families and staff to recharge physically and emotionally. Increase the sense of belonging for specific student groups through clubs, history months and celebrations.	Boost excitement in learning – celebrate and event such as Earth Day.	Plan end-of-year traditions including opportunities for service, e.g. students in upper grades lead tours for students entering the school next fall.
Tier I (Universal)	Promote <u>attendance messaging</u> during registration/enrollment. Have home visits/phone calls to build relationship and remind families about the first day of school.	Share back-to-school messaging about the importance of attendance for in-person and distance learning.	Ask staff to establish daily, weekly and monthly routines to build relationships in the classroom and welcome students back after absences. Hold weekly/monthly recognition. Ensure positive, regular communication with	During <u>parent-teacher conference</u> , recognize good attendance and express concerns in a supportive manner if needed. Anticipate and plan activities/supports to minimize dips in attendance during holidays. Conduct a resource fair for students and their families.	Share messaging and engaging activities around <u>winter holidays</u> . Use data to identify attendance dips and align events to mitigate low attendance days. Schedule mid-year activities to remind school community about attendance.	Hold parent-teacher conference student attendance check-in. Plan engaging activities and messaging to avoid the spring slump.	Communicate the importance of student attendance in last weeks of school. Acknowledge attendance successes.

OSD - Tiered Attendance Support

Universal:

- Communication campaign with loose/tight expectations

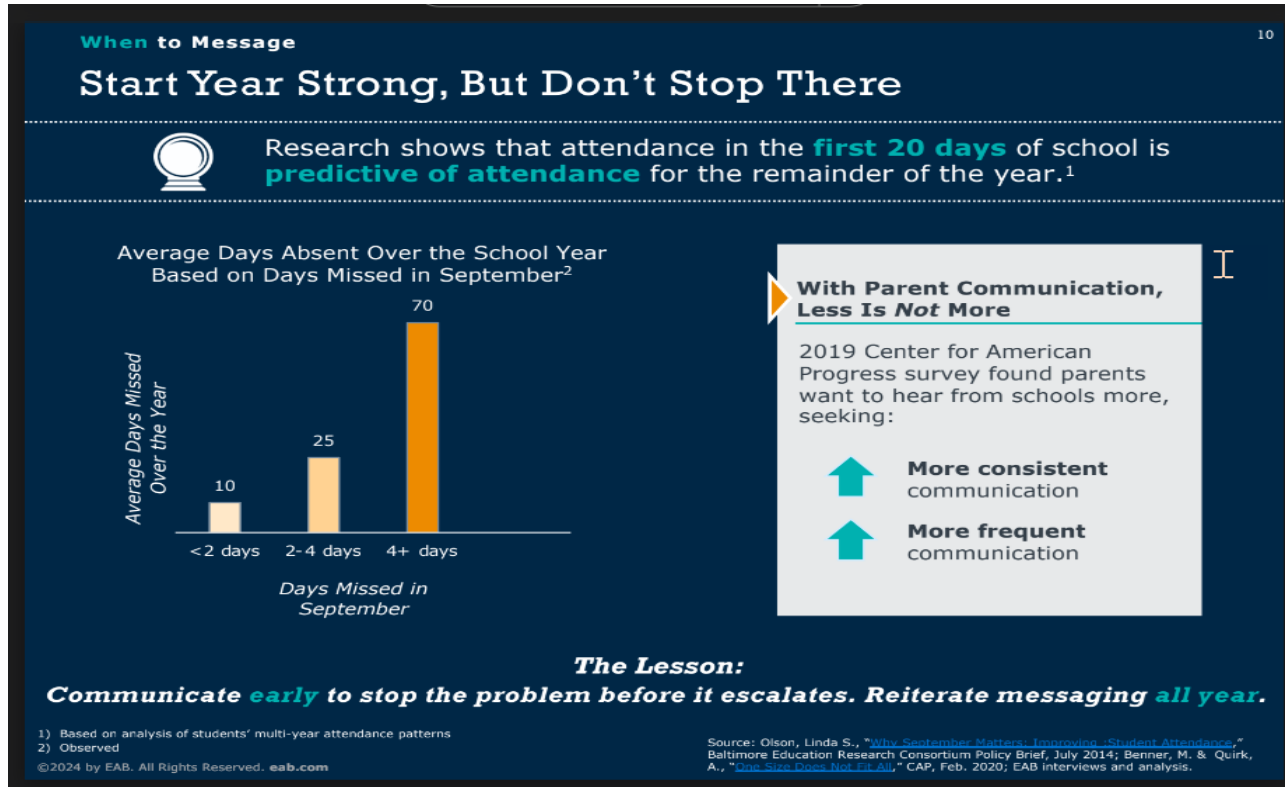
Systematic:

- Moveable Middle Communication

Attendance Communication Campaign

Universal Messaging

Communicate Early



Principles of Good Communication

Integrate Attendance, Communication Best Practices to Engage Parents



Simple:
Convey Messages
Simply, with Clarity



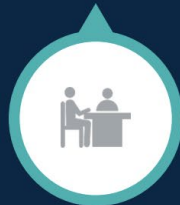
Principles of Good Communication to Engage with Parents on Attendance



Individualized:
Prioritize
Personalization



Frequent:
Leverage
consistent, frequent
communication



Supportive:
Lead with Empathy,
Support



Teacher-led:
Use Trusted
Messengers to
Partner with Parents

Resources



Attendance
Essentials
Handout



"Stay
Home"
Checklist



Cost of
Absence
Nudges



Attendance
101
Presentation



Family
Resource
List

BEGINNING OF YEAR

Welcome Packet



Principal's Welcome Message



Teachers' Welcome Outreach



Back to School Event



ONGOING

Monthly
Newsletters



Monthly Social
Media Posts



Fall and Spring
Parent-Teacher Conferences



Winter and Spring
Break Reminders



Attendance Essentials Handout



Did you know? Starting in Kindergarten, students should miss no more than 9 days of school per year to stay on track for graduation. That means missing **no more than one day per month!**

✓ Excused Absences Include...

- Illness
- Medical appointments
- Dental appointments
- Doctor-recommended quarantine
- Funerals
- Religious holidays
- Legal appointments
- Jury duty (if over 18 years old)

✗ Unexcused Absences Include...

- Vacations and trips
- Missing the bus
- Oversleeping
- Work
- Babysitting

Too sick to come to school?

If your child will be absent, please let us as know soon as possible. Call the front office (123-456-7890) or email us (attendance@district.edu).

Not sure how many days your child has missed so far this year?

Don't let absences add up! Check your child's attendance monthly:

1. Visit **ParentPortal.com/SchoolDistrict**
2. Login using your username and password
3. Click **Attendance**
4. [Add instruction about comparing # of absences to # of months in school year?]

Having trouble getting to school? We are here to help!

- Transportation
- Housing
- Mental health
- And more

Resources and services are available to help your child get to school. Contact the front office for assistance (123-456-7890)

- Offers key data about the cost of a school absence
- Conveys expectations for when students need to come to school and what to do when a student misses a day
- Empowers parents to act as partners to track their student's attendance
- Leads with empathy and proactive support

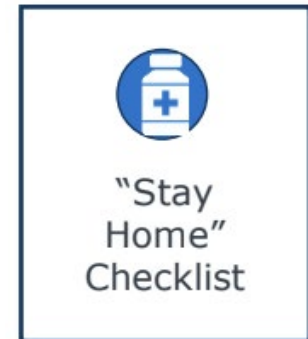


Attendance
Essentials
Handout

Stay Home Checklist

 See You in Class!	 Best to Stay Home.
☒ Have a runny nose or a little cough, but no other symptoms	☒ Temperature higher than 100.4 (with or without medicine)
☒ No fever-reducing medicine for 24 hours, and no fever during that time (temp. of 100.4 or higher)	☒ Persistent cough
☒ No throwing up or diarrhea for 24 hours	☒ Throwing up or diarrhea
	☒ Eyes are pink and crusty
	☒ Instructed by doctor to isolate from others
Heading to school! What should I know? A day of missed school is a lost opportunity for social development. By coming to school every day they're not sick, your child is gaining social skills that will land them their first job as an adult: ✓ Time Management ✓ Collaboration ✓ Problem Solving	My student is staying home. What should I do next? 1 Notify the school by phone (123-4567) or email (attendance@district.org) before 9:00am, if possible, on the day of the absence. 2 Repeat this checklist every morning. We hope to see your student back soon!

- Consistent across locations
- Provides clear understanding for families
- Integrates best practices to engage families



Monthly Attendance Nudge

- Messaging around how “absences add up”
- Recommended distribution:
 - Social media, website, newsletters
 - SIS message
 - Other communication platform (e.g. School Binder)
- Tight: monthly message sent to families
- Loose: content of message
- [Cost of Attendance Nudges](#)



Attendance 101 Presentation (1)

August

Did you know...? Don't let two missed days define your year. Research shows that most students with just two absences in the first month of school go on to miss more than 25 days total. Start the year off strong by making sure students are in school whenever they're not sick.

September

Did you know...? Children's mental health is important. Students who miss just two days of school a month tend to be more stressed out and anxious. Help lower student stress by encouraging attendance when students are feeling well.

Attendance 101 Presentation (2)

October

Did you know...? A day of missed school is a lost opportunity for social development. By coming to school every day they're not sick. Your child is gaining social skills that will land them their first job as an adult.

- Time management
- Collaboration
- Problem-solving

November

Did you know...? Set your student up for success. Research shows that students missing 10 days by December are more likely to fail at least one class. Maximize learning time by encouraging attendance when student students are not sick.

Attendance 101 Presentation (3)

December

Did you know...? Consistent attendance build stronger reading skills. Research shows that students who missed just two days of school a month are less likely to read at grade level by the end of third grade. Make sure your student is in school each day they are not sick.

January

Did you know...? Thinking about staying home? Research shows that students that miss more than 10 days a year are 20% less likely to graduate on time. By coming to school each day they aren't sick, your student is staying on track for graduation.

Attendance 101 Presentation (4)

February

Did you know...? Attending school every day has impacts beyond elementary, junior high, and high school. Research shows almost 90% of students that miss 15 days a year in high school drop out of college. Prepare for the future by encouraging consistent attendance every day your student isn't sick.

March

Did you know...? Help your student and their classmates! Research shows that one student's absence negatively impacts the learning of an entire classroom. Encourage your student to be in class every day they're not sick to support their success of all students.

Attendance 101 Presentation (5)

April

[Did you know...?](#) Thinking about missing another day?
Research shows that improving attendance by just five days a year leads to hire achievement in:

- Reading
- English
- Math

Family Resource Support

- Integrate Student Success Member (SSM)
 - Example: United Way - 211
- Family Support Referral
 - Basic Needs
 - Mental Health Resources/Support
 - Counselor Support

Park Hill School District Example



Family
Resource List

Moveable Middle

Intentional Messaging

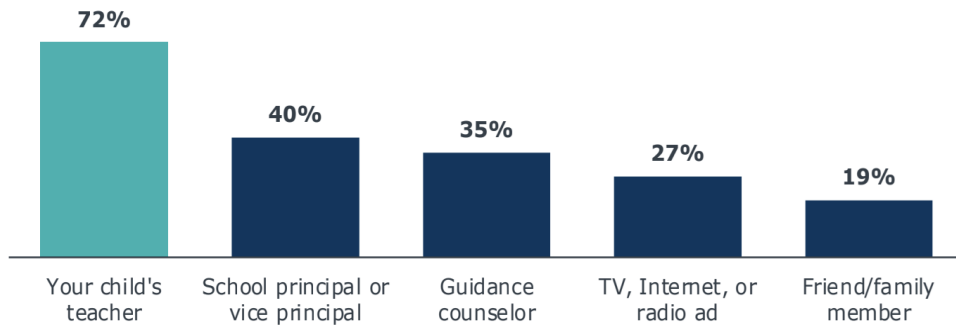
Teachers Hold the Keys to Parent Partnership

Teachers Hold the Keys to Parent Partnership



Parents Overwhelmingly Prefer to Discuss Attendance with Teachers¹

"Which of the following ways would you prefer to hear about the importance of school attendance?"



...Yet Most Teachers Don't Talk to Parents about Attendance...

42%

of parents reported that any school employee, including teachers, contacted them personally about attendance in the past 6 months

...And Few Have the Tools to Succeed

“When I get on the phone with a parent, **I don't know what to say.** I'm new this year, and I want parents to trust me.”

First-Year Teacher, Ohio

Systemic Teacher-Led Parent Outreach Achieved

Systematic, Teacher-Led Parent Outreach Achieved



The Problem: Johnson Middle School¹ was not making progress on high rates of chronic absenteeism by only sending **punitive truancy letters for unexcused absences**.

Established Scalable Parent Outreach Plan for Accumulating Absences



Scheduled **regular checkpoints** every 6 weeks for sending targeted parent outreach about attendance



Reviewed **Tier 2² students' attendance rates** to identify and respond to concerning, promising trends



Equipped **teachers - trusted parent contacts** - to engage in communication about attendance

The Outcome: **-59%** reduction in percentage of chronically absent students after instituting more regular parent outreach about attendance

Target “Movable Middle”

- Reduce strain on Tier 3 supports
- Address Tier 2 needs in a systematic way
- Attendance CTM for “Chronic” students every 5-6 weeks (mid-term and term)
 - Once in first 20 days of school
- Provide consistent communication to families regarding attendance
- Allows school leadership and grade level teams to have ownership of improving students’ attendance



22-23 Chronically Absent Student Percentage

Elementary	26%
Junior High	26%
High School	24%
Ogden School District	26%

Checkpoint Meeting Protocol

Review Data	Ask Context Questions	Select Parent Outreach Option
Identify students with daily attendance between 80% - 90% Monitor 5-6 week attendance trends among all students with 80-90% average daily attendance • Panorama Smart Group	Is the student's attendance ○ Improving? ○ Flat? ○ Declining? Are there extenuating factors influencing this student's attendance (e.g. extended illness)?	Concerned Message <i>(attendance is worsening or staying the same)</i> Celebratory Message <i>(attendance is improving)</i> No Message – Monitor <i>(known extenuating circumstances)</i>

Multiple Inputs for Outreach

Johnson Considers Multiple Inputs for Outreach

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Johnson Middle School's Checkpoint Meetings

- Meet every 6 weeks
- Repurpose grade-level "Student Support" meetings
- Review attendance data for each Tier 2 student
- Discuss known causes like suspensions, illness
- Participants: Assistant principal, grade-level academic teachers, counselor, student support specialist, and more

"Which students' attendance rates are between 80-89.99% today?"

Tier 1 ≥90%	Tier 2 80-89.99%	Tier 3 <80%
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"What was their attendance pattern for the last 6 weeks?
Do we know of any extenuating circumstances?"

	10/3	10/10	10/17	10/24	10/31	11/7
Max B.	93.2	92.1	89.1	86.1	86.7	88.0
Improving	Worsening				No Change	

"So, what should we send to their parents?"



Supportive, concerned email



Celebratory email



Supportive, firmer email (#2)



No action, monitor

Example

Sample Absenteeism Checkpoint Meeting structure and implementation details

- Evaluate attendance trends among all Tier 2 students
- Contacting parents about concerning or improving attendance

Logistics	Team	7th Grade Student Focus Team
	Checkpoint Participants (Roles) <i>Optional participants are italicized</i>	• Assistant Principal (Meeting Lead, Data Preparation) • 7th grade academic teachers • Guidance counselor • Attendance secretary (Note Taker) • <i>Behavior interventionist</i> • <i>504 and special education coordinator</i> • <i>Nurse</i>
	Schedule	All meetings in Room 408, replacing usual weekly Student Focus meeting #1 Wed. 9/25/24, 12-1pm #2 Wed. 11/6/24, 12-1pm #3 Wed. 12/18/24, 12-1pm #4 Wed. 1/29/25, 12-1pm #5 Wed. 3/12/25, 12-1pm #6 Wed. 4/23/25, 12-1pm
Outreach Options	Supportive Outreach (#1)	Email from Homeroom Teacher
	Supportive Outreach (#2)	Phone Call from Homeroom Teacher
	Improvement Outreach	Email from Homeroom Teacher
Outreach Thresholds	If attendance dropped below 90% for the first time...	☐ Send Supportive Outreach (#1) ☐ No action, monitor
	If attendance stayed the same or worsened (still above 80%) since last checkpoint or drops below 90% for 2nd time...	☐ Send Supportive, Firmer Outreach (#2) ☐ No action, monitor
	If attendance has worsened (below 80%) since last checkpoint...	☐ Escalate case to School Leader for 1:1 management
	If attendance has improved since last checkpoint...	☐ Send Improvement Outreach

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Sample Email

Email Subject: Checking In

Good morning Mr. Baker,

We have noticed that Max has been absent for **5 days** of school this year. The school-wide average is only 3 missed days so far. We understand that some absences are unavoidable due to illness and other circumstances, and we would like to partner with you to help Max achieve the goal of being in school **90% or more** of the time.

Is there something making it difficult for Max to get to school? Please let us know if you'd like to have a conversation about possible supports for attendance.

Best regards,

Mr. King

Heritage Elementary Moveable Middle

Message #1- Excused Absence Check-In

Hello **[Parent's name]**,

Thank you for your communication with me and the school attendance line. We appreciate your partnership in ensuring the academic success of your student.

For your awareness, **[student's name]** has been absent for **[number]** days of school this year. The expectation is no more than 1 absence per month. Research shows that students who miss just 2 days of school a month are less likely to read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade.

We understand that some absences are unavoidable due to illness and other circumstances. We would like to partner with you to help **[student's name]** achieve the goal of 95% attendance or better (which means no more than 1 absence per month).

[Complimentary Close],

[Your Name]

Panorama Note

Sent Message #1 - Excused

	23/24	24/25
Reg. Attenders	47%	56%
At Risk	23%	20%
Chronic	17%	15%
Severe	12%	10%

Thank you for your efforts. We are doing much better.

Questions

Breakout Session #1

In your Breakout room discuss:

1. What is your attendance messaging strategy for all stakeholders?
 - a. How often do you send out messaging?
 - b. What content do you send out?
 - c. How can you involve more people in your current messaging format?

Other Resources

- [Attendance Work Attendance Awareness Campaign 2024](#)
- [US. Dept. of Ed Chronic Absenteeism 2025](#)
- [West ED Attendance Resources](#)
- [IES Student Engagement and Attendance Resources](#)

Exit Survey

We appreciate your attendance and
would love your feedback!



USBE Attendance Specialists

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