
GUIDELINES FOR STAFF IMPLEMENTING STUDENT ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Guidelines/Expectations for Taking Attendance

Teachers will enter attendance within the first 20 minutes of the day/class and High School and Middle School Teachers will update at the end of every class period.

Office Managers, Attendance Clerks and other attendance staff will run a daily classroom monitor report to ensure accuracy of all attendance. The report for teachers who have not taken attendance for 3 consecutive days in one or more periods will be forwarded to building administration.

Building administration will monitor and intervene with teachers who are excessively not taking attendance.

Coding of absences

All absences must be coded by the end of the business day. Recoding may occur as more information is provided. Excusal documentation may be accepted at any time during the current school year, no specific deadline is required (ex. Medical excusal, funeral, college visits)

Attendance Codes attached. Addendum A

How to respond to tardies

- HS-If a student arrives to class before the end of the class period they are tardy to that class.
 - Example-A student arrives in the middle of second period. They are absent for first period and are tardy to second period.
- ES/MS- If a student arrives late to school, they are tardy under the following example:
 - Example-A student arrives to school 60 minutes late. They should be marked using a tardy code. Any time after 60 minutes they are absent for that time.
- Schools will determine their response to tardies and excessive tardies. This may include designating a time frame of excessive, and dictating when staff write a level 1 or level 2 office referral for tardies, etc.
 - Example: 0-10 minutes late = Tardy, no referral. 10 - 20 minutes late = Level I referral. 20 minutes or more = level II referral. Students who have 1-5 times tardy =no referral, 5-10 times tardy=level I referral, 10-20 times tardy=Level II referral.

Absence Calculations

Whole day/Half Day-define-ADA State guidelines—this is the calculation information sent to the state, this is ADA. This calculation uses the whole day/half day minutes entered into Campus (per

building) if the student's absent minutes are equal to or more than the minutes, the student is considered absent either .5 or 1 day absent.

- Example-Whole day is 365 minutes, half day is 182 minutes. If the student is absent 250 minutes, they will be considered absent for half day because they are gone more than the 182 minute threshold. If they are gone for 360 minutes they will still only show half day absent because they have not met the 365 minute threshold. Anything less than the half day threshold will not be counted as absent in this calculation.

Exact Attendance—Sums the total minutes of absence across all days and divides by minutes in a day, to arrive at the total amount of “days” missed. EIS and Tier 2 Tableau is using actual minutes to identify students for intervention.

- Example-If the student is late 181 minute for three days, the student would show being absent for 543 minutes. This equates to being absent 1.48 days.

If you run a Whole day/Half day report and an Exact minute report for the same date range, the list of students will not match.

Reminders regarding response to notification and interventions

The attendance calculation for Elementary and Secondary schools notification resets at each semester.

Infinite Campus automates letters and will populate the PLP> Contact Log as well. Absences calculated for the letter are based on exact attendance, not the whole day/half day approximation.

Phone calls should be recorded in the Student information>General>Contact Log. (Attendance Clerks, Office Managers, Team members, teachers)

When calling/emailing parents utilize all phone number and emails in Infinite Campus until a parent is contacted. If in IC you identify that there is sibling at another school, contact that school to confirm phone numbers/emails.

Automated dialer for High Schools will generate calls twice daily. The first automated call will generate at 15 minutes prior to the end of first block, and the second automated call will be generated at 6 pm. A parent who receives a call in the morning will not receive a second call at 6 pm, even if a student is marked absent for another block later in the day.

Automated dialer for ES/MS buildings generate calls once a day. This does not replace the office manager/attendance staff's calls to parents verify the reason for the absence. Every effort should be made to locate the student.

Buildings are required to send out the 10 day attendance letter. However if a building wishes to send more letters in addition to the 10 day letter, they may utilize current letters available in IC or develop their own. They can contact the IC team to see if their version of the letter can be created in IC.

Attached (Addendum B) is an optional script for teachers to use when contacting parents regarding student absences. If a student speaks a different language, teachers will contact their schools Bilingual

Family Liaison by email. Please include the student's id., name, dates missed and classes they have missed.

Protocol for Tier 2 teams

The attendance team function is to assess data on students who have met the threshold of excessive attendance and implement interventions to improve student outcomes. Team members determine the appropriate interventions based on student needs and document all student interventions in the process. Notification alone is not an exhaustion of interventions, or the purpose of the team.

1. Team will utilize the Tier 2 Tableau report to sort all students who meet excessive threshold and review student information.
2. Team members determine appropriate interventions based on student needs and document all student interventions in process.
3. Team members will keep documentation on parent communication and interventions for each student.

Options for interventions

Building attendance teams should review all cases of students with excessive absences, and provide appropriate interventions when necessary. Team member(s) will need to determine which interventions are appropriate for the student and family based on their individual needs. Below is a list of potential resources for students and families based on the following three categories: individual, group and accommodations.

Individual:

- Home visit
- K-3 Attendance Initiative
- Individual counseling session with school counselor
- SMART Goals
- Referral to SUCCESS
- AmeriCorps Volunteer-Middle School
- Referral to Student Assistance Program
- Referral to a community based organization (Community Schools is a good resource for matching need with resources)
- Referral to a therapy provider—school or community based.
- Peer mentoring
- Staff to Student mentoring
- HotEd Survey
- FBA/BIP

Group:

- School Counseling group

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- Examples: Social Skills, Career Counseling, Self-regulation, Grief, Group Contingency, Meaningful Work, Structured Reinforcement, etc.
- Check and connect
- Check in, Check out
- 2 Minute Intervention

Accommodations:

- Bus pass
- Transportation
- Schedule Change

If a student has 10 or more absences accumulated in the first semester the school **must** do a minimum of one of the following. If a student has accumulated 10 days by second semester a school **may** do one of the following.

- Administrative meeting resulting in an attendance agreement
- Support staff meeting resulting in an attendance agreement.
- Required excusal by a Health Care provider (doctor, school nurse)—students who require an excusal will be flagged with the attendance flag in IC.
- Filing for Truancy charges in court with Polk County Attorney’s Office

SUSPENSION IS NOT AN OPTION FOR AN ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION OR CONSEQUENCE.

Guidelines for Truancy Court Filing

A school may refer a parent to truancy court when a school’s interventions (individual or group) have failed to result in improved student attendance. Schools must demonstrate that all interventions have been exhausted. Students referred must have a minimum of 10 days absence and some of the days must be unexcused.

To file a case in court all of the following notifications must have occurred on top of the interventions provided:

- Phone call to the parent notifying them of the attendance concern-document in the student information>general>contact log
- Parent meeting to problem solve ways to improve their child’s attendance. If a school has attempted to schedule an appointment with the parent and the parent has not shown up, schools may include this in the write up. This should be documented in the student information/general/contact log.
- When a parent is going to be sent to Truancy Court, a letter must be mailed stating that future absences will result in filing with the County Attorney’s office (use check box option on the 10 day letter). Schools may elect to send additional letters if they wish, when they are struggling to reach a parent.

- These letters can be found at Student Information>General>Ad Hoc Letters, similar to the Student Transfer Form letter. Once the letter is generated a copy should be uploaded into the Attendance Documents tab for the student (Student Information > Program Participation> Custom Programs>Attendance Documents) Make sure to add new status and then upload the document with the naming convention <Student First Name> <Student Last Name> <date of Letter> - <number of days>. (Chris Bacon 07292016 – 18 days)

When a school has determined a truancy court filing is essential, review all status entries on the Attendance Document tab (Student Information>Program Participation>Custom Programs>Attendance Documents Tab>Truancy Documents) to determine if the student has a current case open or was previously filed on. If a student does not have a previous case, schools will complete a Level 1 truancy court referral form listing the point of contact at the school, both parents information, student information, all full unexcused days and all interventions the school has attempted. For elementary schools, the point of contact will refer the paperwork to Jamie Gilley, District At-Risk Coordinator and Michelle Heard, Executive Assistant for Learning Services. Jamie will file the paperwork with the County Attorney's office. For secondary schools, all truancy paperwork will be referred to the Juvenile Court School Liaison and Michelle Heard, to process and file with the County Attorney's office. If a student has a current case open, follow the guidelines provided in the mediation agreement. If questions regarding this agreement contact Kathy O'Brien, Kathy.O'Brien@polkcountyiowa.gov, at the County Attorney's office. If a student has had a previous case open and has since closed, a school should contact Kathy O'Brien or Jamie Gilley for directions on how to proceed with filing.

The following are a list of notaries in Des Moines Public Schools.

Addendum C

Students who have been referred to Truancy Court will have a status entry and a truancy court document uploaded into the Student Information>Program Participation>Custom Programs>Attendance Documents Tab>Truancy Documents, including the date the student was referred. All documents are required to be uploaded in IC. Follow these directions to tag students an upload documents:

To upload documents make sure to search for the student first. Then go to the Student Information>Custom Programs>Attendance Documents.

1. Click New Status
2. Choose the document type from the drop down list
3. Click Save
4. Click on Documents
5. Click on Upload Documents
6. Click Add files
7. Browse out to where you have the file saved an click on the name of the file
8. Click Open
9. Make sure the information in the name box follows the naming convention

10. Click Upload

Procedures for dropping/unenrollment of students

If a student has reached 10 consecutive unexcused days and attempts to intervene have not resulted in a student's return to school, on the 11th day the student will be dropped from school. Schools may not go back and drop them on day 1 of the consecutive days count. For students in grades K-6, end the student's enrollment record with 1: Transferred and 13: Unknown destination. For students in grades 7-12, end the student's enrollment record with 4: Dropout.

If a student is traveling out of country and will be gone for more than 10 consecutive days, the student should be transferred on day 11 using end status 1: Transferred and 9: Out of country. Do not drop them on the first day of absence.

WHEN A STUDENT IS UN-ENROLLED, SCHOOLS/STAFF SHOULD MAKE EVERY ATTEMPT TO LOCATE THE STUDENT UNTIL THEIR LOCATION IS CONFIRMED.

Addendum A

Des Moines Schools Attendance Codes 17-18

- EH** **Excused (Present)** – Out of Building. These absences will not go towards the student’s overall absent minutes. (Example: homebound (first 10 days only), inpatient/day treatment)
- EP** **Excused (Present)** – Out of Building. These absences will not go towards the student’s overall absent minutes. This is for the Polk County Detention Center
- EY** **Excused (Present)** – Out of Building. These absences will not go towards the student’s overall absent minutes. This is for the YESS Shelter
- E1** **Excused** – Other than personal illness. (Example: a religious holiday; court; death or illness in **IMMEDIATE family - parents, grandparents, siblings in relationship to the student** (follow employee handbook guidelines for number of allowable days); other as approved by school administrator. (e.g., college visits))
- E2** **Excused** - Medical appointment (doctor, dentist, counseling) that is NOT a result of the child being ill. For example: a sports physical, routine orthodontist appointment. (*Note: We take the parent’s word for this if a note is not produced, however please encourage a doctor’s note.*)
- E3** **Exempt** – Out of School Suspension
- E5** **Excused** - Medical injury absences due to injury versus illness (Example: A doctor’s note is provided to be excused from P.E. due to a broken leg, etc.)
- E6** **Excused** – Illness excused by parent, no medical excuse. Use this code prior to them accumulating the 6 absences per semester. This is used when the parent only is reporting the child as being ill. (Example: Mom calls in and states that the student has been ill all night and will not be coming to school.)
- E7** **Excused** - Illness with doctor note is used when the illness is verified by a medical professional (either the child’s health care provider or the school nurse) OR Student is sent home from the health office.
- E8** **Exempt school activity** - This absence will not show up as an absence on the report card and does not count as an absence. If students are late to school due to a school bus issue or something similar use this code. Field trips are school activities and should be coded as E8.
- E9** **Exempt** - In-school suspension
- ET** **Excused Tardy** – If the student is late to class because they were in the nurses office, counseling office etc. then they are excused. (SECONDARY ONLY)
- UT** **Unexcused Tardy** – If the student is late to class with no reason they have an unexcused tardy. (SECONDARY ONLY)

ALL ‘C’ VERSIONS STOPS THE AUTOMATED DIALER FROM CALLING THE PARENT. OVERNIGHT IT WILL BE CHANGED BACK TO THE NON-‘C’ VERSION TO BE ABLE TO CALCULATE ATTENDANCE CORRECTLY

- U4/C** **Unexcused**– Absence without a valid reason. Miscellaneous unexcused absence. (Example: Skipping school—as in senior skip day, staying home to babysit a sibling, Family vacation)

UPL/C Unexcused - Late to school without a valid reason. (i.e. - Overslept, missed the bus, etc.) Use this code to check in students **during the first period of the day** (HIGH SCHOOL ONLY). Use this code to check in students if the student is less than 60 minutes late to school (MIDDLE SCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL).

ULA/C Unexcused - Late to school past first period without a valid reason. (i.e. - Overslept, missed the bus, etc.). Accumulates to overall absent minutes. You will need to check students in with this code. If they arrive late to school in the middle of a period other than first period, use this code for the entire time, then go back to the partial period and change it to a UT. (HIGH SCHOOL ONLY) *For example Susie arrives to school in the middle of second period. You will check her in using the ULA code. This will code 1st period as an absence. Then you need to adjust the code for 2nd period to UT since she made it to part of the period.* FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL POLICY STATES: Late to school past timeline (MORE THAN 60 MINUTES) without valid reason (i.e. – Overslept, missed the bus, etc.). Use this code to check in students if the student if more than 60 minutes late to school. Accumulates to overall absent minutes.

ULE/C Unexcused - Left school early without a valid reason.

Addendum B

Sample Scripts for Teachers when calling regarding attendance

Example A:

- Hello [Parent's name].
- I am [caller's name] from [school name]. How are you doing today?
- First, let me say it is a pleasure having [child's name] as a part of our [grade level].
 - If caller knows child, include a comment about a quality the child has (e.g., [child's name] has a wonderful smile, is always willing to help other children, etc.)
- I'm calling because, just like you, we want to do all we can to be sure [child's name] is successful in school and one way we can help make this happen is to be sure [s/he] gets to school each day.
- When [child's name] misses school [s/he] also misses valuable learning time and this can make [her/him] fall behind in [her/his] school work.
- Our attendance records show that [child's name] has missed [number] days of school.
- Sometimes these absences add up before we know it so I thought I'd call to see if you might be able to help us out.
- How can we work together to get [child's name] to school each day and on time?
 - Give parent time to talk; parent may begin to talk about ways the parent can do things differently do get child to school
 - Open discussion; depending on how the conversation is going and how open the parent is, the caller may want to add a comment about how we all face daily pressures and we want to help support you any way we can
- My staff and I are here to help and we look forward to working with you.
- Please don't hesitate to let me know how we can be helpful to you and [child's name] so [s/he] doesn't miss more school.
- Thanks for taking time to talk today. I look forward to seeing [child's name] soon!

Example B:

I'm worried about: _____ because he/she has not been in school. During the school day, our class is learning new concepts so it is very hard for kids to catch up when they've been absent or tardy.

Example C:

We know that students are on track to graduate with less than 9 absences in a whole school year. More than 9 absences or 27 tardies, a student is NOT on track to graduate on time.

Example D:

I have dreams and goals for _____ to have every opportunity in life and I know you do, too. I want to partner with you so that _____ is regularly attending school. What do you think is getting in the way? How can I help?

Addendum C

Des Moines Schools In-District Notaries

Name	Building	Phone
Adcock, Dona	Roosevelt	242-7272
Avalos, Vanessa	Capitol View	242-8402
Baker, Connie	1917 Dean Ave.	
Charikov, Julie	North	242-8157
Fiscus, Mona	Bus Garage	242-8253
Fuller, Sharon	2323 Grand Ave.	242-8175
Garduno, Olimpia	Hiatt	242-7774
Lopez-Solis, Rina	bi-lingual outreach	422-6344
Martz, Mary Lee	Capitol View	
Pendleton, Debra	2323 Grand Ave.	
Roorda, Denise	2323 Grand Ave.	242-7392
Rouse, Barbara	2100 Fleur	242-7617
Ruiz-Angeles, Fabian	Hoover	
Schultz, Diane	Central Campus	242-8117
Suarez-Luna, Karina	Hoover	