



STUDENT ATTENDANCE

SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL ATTENDANCE AWARENESS MONTH

STUDENT ATTENDANCE:

Attendance matters! As school is back in session, it is important to have a strong understanding of how daily attendance is essential to student success at all grade levels. In alignment with legislation, policies that guides Colorado attendance focuses on compulsory school attendance, truancy and school finance. Important student attendance definition of rates and terms include:

Truancy Rate: Counts only unexcused absence

Habitual Truant (Student Count): Counts four unexcused absences in one month and/or 10 absences in one school year.

Chronic Absenteeism Rate: Counts all absences – unexcused and excused.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM:

Improving school attendance and addressing chronic absenteeism aligns with Colorado Department of Education (CDE) mission and [strategic plan](#) to support every student, every step of the way. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing ten percent or more of a school year. In Colorado, 1 in 5 students are chronically absent. Chronic absenteeism also uses positive and community based strategies to improve student outcomes.

Attendance is important at all levels including preschool. Chronic absenteeism in middle school is a warning sign that students are on a path to dropping out. In ninth grade, attendance is a clear predictor, more than test scores that a student will leave before completing high school. By third grade, children who missed too much of kindergarten and 1st grade fall behind in reading. For preschool, students with good attendance develop skills and good attendance habits to prepare for kindergarten.

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA):

According to the State ESSA plan, chronic absenteeism rates are collected as part of the CDE School Discipline and Attendance data submission. The submission includes the reporting of the number of chronically absent students by school, overall and disaggregated by ethnicity/race, gender, special education, English language learner status, homeless status and free-and-reduced lunch status. All of this data is requested from schools/districts. The definition CDE provided to school districts regarding chronic absenteeism is: "the unduplicated count of students absent 10 percent or more of the days enrolled in the public school

Colorado Attendance Law

School Attendance Act – Residence of child ([§22-1-102, C.R.S.](#))

- Every public school shall be open for the admission of all children, between the ages of five and twenty-one years, residing in that district without the payment of tuition.

School Attendance Act – Compulsory School Attendance ([§22-33-104, C.R.S.](#))

- Requires that each child between the ages of six and 17 shall attend public school unless otherwise excused.

Standardizing Truancy Reporting and Expanding the Resources ([§22-33-104, C.R.S.\)](#)

- Requires the Colorado State Board of Education to adopt guidelines for the standardized calculation of unexcused absences of students from school.

School Attendance Law of 1963 - Truancy Court ([§19-1-104, C.R.S.\)](#)

- Allows a criminal justice agency investigating a matter under the "School Attendance Law of 1963" to seek, prior to adjudication, disciplinary and truancy information from the juvenile's school.

Truancy enforcement ([§22-33-107, C.R.S.\)](#)

- Requires school district to have policy for a truancy plan with the goal of assisting the child to remain in school.

FINANCE ACT OF 1994 ([§22-54-103, C.R.S.\)](#)

- "Pupil enrollment" means the number of pupils enrolled on the pupil enrollment count day within the applicable budget year, as evidenced by the actual attendance of such pupils prior to said date.



during the school year." To learn more about ESSA in Colorado, please click [here](#).

COLORADO ATTENDANCE DATA:

Districts annually report on incidence of attendance and truancy. Chronic absenteeism rate is also available. See how your school or district compares to state data on the [Attendance Information webpage](#).

	State Attendance Rate	State Truancy Rates	Habitual Truant Count	Chronic Absence
2015-16	93.3%	2.5%	106,362	N/A
2016-17	92.9%	2.7%	115,054	18.6%
2017-18	92.5%	2.8%	117,109	24.3%
2018-2019	92.3%	3%	140,360	22.5%

STRATEGIES AND BEST PRACTICES:

Regular school attendance matters! There are a variety of research-based approaches that support regular school attendance. For more information and strategies, please contact the Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement.

Early Warning Systems:

An effective way to ensure that all students attend school is to create an early warning system that tracks students attendance, behavior and course performance (ABCs).

- Review the [data](#)
- [3 Tiers of Intervention](#)

Family and Community Engagement:

Relationships with families are strengthened when schools work closely with families to communicate the importance of attendance, which has been shown to improve attendance, lower dropout rates and improve attitudes towards school.

- Establish a [family and community partnership](#)
- [Home visits](#)
- Conducting [workshops](#) for families on attendance
- [Community engagement](#)

School-based health centers:

School-based health centers and interventions have a direct impact on educational outcomes, like attendance.

- [Partnerships with community health partners](#)
- [Healthy Schools](#)

Community Engagement References and Materials:

[Dropout Prevention Best Practice Guide References](#)

[Dropout Prevention Resources](#)

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/communityengagement>