Tracking Daily Attendance on Remote Days in 2020-21

State Board of Education Policy (2008):
"A student is considered to be 'in attendance' if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip), for at least half of the regular school day."

A remote student can be considered as being 'in attendance' on a particular day if the total time spent on one or more of the following activities equals at least half the school day.



Synchronous virtual classes are live classes that are streamed real time to students using a videoconferencing platform like Google Meets, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.

Synchronous virtual meetings may be with a teacher, counselor, social worker, paraprofessional, etc. using a videoconferencing platform or via telephone. They may be homeroom opportunities, daily routine check-ins, or other synchronous conversations.

Time logged in electronic systems can be used to identify *any time over and above the synchronous virtual classes and meetings* that the student may have participated in during the school day.

Assignment submission/completion time can be determined by the teacher by starting with an estimate of time it will take for a typical student to submit/complete that assignment, and using that estimate to gauge the attendance time for the day that should be allotted to each student.

Notes:

- If a student is absent on a given day (either in-person or remote), they cannot make up for that absence on another day.
- Districts should track membership and attendance *separately* for a student's in-person *vs* remote days.

Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ pertains to data collection and state reporting of attendance data. Regular school attendance and overall student safety and well-being are vital for laying a foundation for success during the school year. See Addendum #14 for guidance regarding support student attendance and engagement during hybrid or remote learning.

1. ***Is attendance in synchronous virtual classes required by the CSDE for a student to be counted as being "in attendance" on remote days?***
   No. The CSDE does not require that a student be present in synchronous virtual classes to be counted as "in attendance" on remote days for state reporting purposes. This flexibility is designed to allow students and families who may have difficulty attending synchronous virtual classes to demonstrate presence through other means (e.g., meetings with teachers, assignment submission/completion). Students receiving special education or support under a Section 504 Plan may participate in classes in a manner determined appropriate by the student's planning and placement team or Section 504 Team.

2. ***Can a district require that students attend synchronous virtual classes in order to be considered as "in attendance"?***
   No. While the district may adopt such a general expectation, the CSDE expects districts to allow for legitimate exceptions where a student may be unable to attend synchronous virtual classes (e.g., parent work-life responsibilities, power outage, Internet bandwidth, documented disability).

3. ***Does a student need to complete some time in all four approaches, every day, to be considered as "in attendance"?***
   No. For example, one remote student may meet the ½ day threshold entirely with synchronous classes without submitting/completing any assignment, while another remote student may meet the ½ day threshold entirely based on assignment submission/completion without attending even a single synchronous class. The total time spent on all four components on a remote day should equal at least ½ day for the student to be reported as "in attendance" for state reporting. Students with disabilities may have modified/flexible attendance requirements as part of their IEP, Learning Model IEP Implementation Plan, or Section 504 plan.

4. ***When should attendance be recorded for remote days?***
   Since students may demonstrate presence through asynchronous methods (e.g., assignment submission/completion) at any time during the day including after school hours, and given that some students may not be able to participate in synchronous virtual classes, it is strongly recommended that attendance on remote days be recorded on the following day so all students have a chance to submit/complete work.

5. ***Can a student who otherwise should have attended school in-person on a given day, be permitted to participate remotely and counted as being "in attendance" for that specific day?***
   Yes, but within reason. Knowing which students will attend in-person or remotely on any given school day is critical for educators to plan instruction and for the school building to effectively manage health and safety protocols. However, there are legitimate situations when an in-person student can be permitted to switch to learning remotely for one or more school days. For example, the student may need to quarantine for two weeks due to potential contact with a positive COVID case, or the student may have a concerning symptom making it reasonable for the parent to determine that it is best to keep the student home for monitoring. In such situations, the district may authorize a switch to remote learning for that student for a specific day or days; such a student who meets the ½ day attendance threshold on those remote days can be reported as "in attendance." Such flexibility will allow the student to remain engaged with the learning. However, the CSDE recommends that districts construe this flexibility narrowly and establish clear protocols for situations that warrant such a shift (e.g., district required quarantining, written authorization from parent regarding illness symptoms). Districts may choose to offer this flexibility to students for reasons beyond health/safety and illness symptoms; however, in those instances, districts are strongly advised to establish clear, quantifiable limits on such flexibility (e.g., no more than three instances during the year) so as to not create a situation where students are choosing the days they wish to attend school in-person.