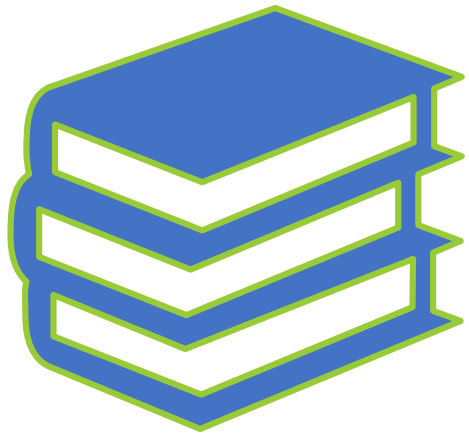




ATTENDANCE IS THE KEY

Presented by
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School Social Worker / Attendance Court Liaison

2021-2022 PST TRAINING FOR NEW PST CHAIRS



Absenteeism is a
leading indicator of
educational inequity

Chronic Absenteeism

Focus is on reducing **chronic absenteeism**, which is defined as missing 10 percent of school days for any reason, whether excused or unexcused absences, including out-of-school suspensions.

Research shows that chronic absenteeism is a primary cause of low academic achievement and a powerful predictor that students will eventually drop out of school.

In the VCS Strategic Plan 2020-2023 one indicator under the Safe and Supportive Environment Goal 3 is to decrease our chronic absenteeism rate and return to the pre-pandemic rate of 14.2%.



Chronic Absenteeism Rate Five Year Comparison

(Students are considered chronically absent if they accumulate 10% or more absences in a school year)

LEVEL	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020**	2020-2021***
Elementary Schools	17.3%	17.4%	15.0%	13.9%	29.6%
Middle Schools	18.0%	17.4%	14.8%	15.1%	33.1%
High Schools	15.4%	14.8%	12.0%	19.6%	33.2%
Alternative Education	75.8%	76.8%	52.5%	59.0%	79.7%
Charter Schools	25.8%	19.1%	15.1%	20.4%	24.1%
Online Learning*	9.0%	2.7%	---	---	---
TOTALS	17.4%	16.9%	14.2%	16.2%	31.3%

Habitual Truancy Rate Five Year Comparison

(Students are considered habitually truant if they accumulate a minimum of 15 unexcused absences from school during a 90 calendar day period.)

LEVEL	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020**	2020-2021***
Elementary Schools	3.1%	3.0%	3.1%	3.9%	6.0%
Middle Schools	3.3%	3.3%	2.9%	4.9%	7.6%
High Schools	4.6%	5.0%	4.3%	6.3%	7.2%
Alternative Education	25.6%	27.6%	17.3%	19.5%	28.1%
Charter Schools	14.2%	7.5%	5.9%	4.7%	5.6%
Online Learning*	11.5%	1.8%	---	---	---
TOTALS	4.0%	3.9%	3.5%	4.9%	6.8%

What can schools do to encourage good attendance?

01

Make Attendance a priority even during a pandemic

02

Begin intervention strategies early

03

Develop targeted intervention strategies for students with chronic attendance problems

04

Develop strategies to increase student engagement

05

Use data to identify areas of concern and concentrate resources in those areas

06

Recognize that students in transition may be at risk


07

Publicize attendance policies and communicate expectations to students and parents

Compassion, sensitivity, and flexibility are key in addressing attendance during this pandemic

Compulsory School Attendance Law

All children who have attained the age of 6 years or who will have attained the age of 6 years on or before February 1 of the school year up to the age of 16 years (only if a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment has been completed and filed with the school district) are required to attend school regularly during the entire school term (Florida Statute 1003.21)



According to Florida Statute 1003.24, each parent of a child within the compulsory attendance age is responsible for the child's school attendance.



Habitual Truancy is defined as 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days

House Bill 7069

Effect of Proposed Changes - July 2017

- School boards are to adopt student policies regarding student appointments to receive autism spectrum disorder therapy.
- Allows parents to request and be granted permission for a student's absence resulting from an appointment to receive therapy.
- Allows a student who is continually sick and repeatedly absent to satisfy nonattendance requirement by being under the supervision of a licensed health care practitioner or certified behavior analyst for the treatment of autism spectrum disorder.



Enforcement of School Attendance

Florida Statute 1003.26

School districts must take an active role in promoting and enforcing attendance as a means of improving student performance.

Daily Notification-Schools must notify parents of each unexcused absence (i.e. personal contact, phone calls, Volusia Connect, letters, etc.) to determine the reason for the absence.

Students who are exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance must be referred to the Problem Solving Team (PST) for assistance with the remediation of the problem. A meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies.

Enforcement of School Attendance: Problem Solving Team Process

Encourage teachers to take every opportunity to notify parents of developing patterns of nonattendance and determine the cause.

Parent contact must be made or attempted prior to referral to the PST. (At minimum, this should occur when a student has 5 unexcused absences within 30 calendar days.)

If a nonattendance pattern continues (reaches 10 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days)

- Ask teachers to submit PST 5
- During the meeting, Teachers bring documentation of all contacts/attempts at contacts with the parent/student and interventions tried. If the teacher is not able to attend the meeting, PST Chair should elicit their feedback prior to the meeting.
- Complete PST 6A/H during meeting
- Complete Attendance Contract AND Notice of Right to Appeal WITH the parent and/or student, when appropriate
- ESE-ONLY contact DPS/IEP Facilitator if it is determined that the student's attendance issues are directly linked or related to their exceptionality. Otherwise, follow the PST process.

Problem Solving Team: Attendance/Homeless
PST: 6 A/H

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Student ID: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____ Today's PST Meeting Date: _____

Teacher: (for elementary) _____

School Counselor/PST Chair: (for secondary) _____

Significance of Problem (i.e., number of absences/number of days in session for current school year): _____

Based on data, to what extent does it appear the attendance problem is impacting academic performance?

☐ Not at all ☐ Somewhat ☐ Moderately ☐ Significantly

Previous interventions (i.e., mentoring, tutoring, attendance contract, guidance services, frequent communication with parent, class change, community referral, etc.)

What worked: _____

What didn't work: _____

Number of schools attended this year: _____

What are the student's social/behavioral strengths and weaknesses? (please check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Makes friends easily | <input type="checkbox"/> Teased or picked on by others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outgoing/sociable | <input type="checkbox"/> Isolated/withdrawn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Follows school/classroom rules | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor peer relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Involved in extracurricular activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Defiant/disrespects adult authority |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ | |

Any known family crisis or situations that may be impacting student: _____

Medical concerns (i.e. health and mental health diagnosis): _____

What explanation has the parent provided for the absences: _____

Hypothesis: What is the most likely reason this attendance problem is occurring? (Consider ICEL, number of schools attended this year, family crisis, and/or health issues) _____

What is the goal? ☐ Student will attend school regularly and on time.

☐ Student will attend every class period daily and on time.

☐ Other (please specify) _____

Team decision(s):

- ☐ Begin/modify intervention (Specify interventions): _____
- ☐ Refer to Alternative Program: _____
- ☐ Refer for consideration of 504 Plan (documentation must be provided of health related issues and 504 process followed)
- ☐ Refer to PST to address academic and/or behavioral concerns (PST 1-4 required)
- ☐ Other: _____

If the parent is not present at the meeting, who is responsible for parent contact? _____

Team Member Signatures (and Title for "Other"):

PST Chair: _____ Other: _____

Teacher: _____ Other: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____ Other: _____

Student: _____ Other: _____

PST 6A/H



Volusia County Schools
School Social Services
ATTENDANCE CONTRACT

Student: _____ D. O. B.: ____ / ____ / ____

School: _____ Grade: _____ Student ID: _____

Mother/Guardian: _____

Father/Guardian: _____

The undersigned student and/or parent/guardian agree to abide by the following terms in an effort to improve the student's attendance:

Student Agrees To:

- ☐ Attend school daily and on time. ☐ Student did not attend conference.
- ☐ Abide by all school and classroom rules.
- ☐ Comply with parental rules regarding school attendance.
- ☐ Follow a consistent evening and morning school routine.
- ☐ Consult with teacher(s) about missing assignments and complete them.
- ☐ Attend school tutoring services (if available).
- ☐ Participate in a school mentoring program (if available).
- ☐ Other _____

Parent Agrees To:

- ☐ Transport student to school daily, ensure safe boarding onto assigned school bus, or make other arrangements.
- ☐ Ensure student's daily and on time school attendance. School begins at _____ a.m.
- ☐ Call the school at least ____ times per week to check on child's attendance. Speak with _____.
- ☐ Call the school on the day of an absence, and when your child returns to school send a note to the Attendance Clerk: _____ explaining the absence.
- ☐ For all absences due to illness, provide a **doctor's written excuse** (include date[s], illness, and doctor's name/phone).
- ☐ Schedule a conference with your child's teacher or school counselor by ____ / ____ / ____ to check on school progress and the effect the absences may have on your child's academic success.
- ☐ Call me, _____ by ____ / ____ / ____ at (____) _____ ext. _____ to discuss what progress has been made. If I am not in, please leave a message regarding how I may return your call.
- ☐ Other _____

I understand that failure to comply with the terms of this agreement may result in the filing of a CINS/FINS petition or a complaint to the Office of the State Attorney alleging violation of the state's compulsory school attendance law by the parent/guardian.

Signature: Mother/Guardian: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

D.O.B.: ____ / ____ / ____ Driver's License #: _____ Social Security #: _____

Signature: Father/Guardian: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

D.O.B.: ____ / ____ / ____ Driver's License #: _____ Social Security #: _____

Signature: Student: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Approved by: _____ Title: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Reviewed by: _____ Title: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Attendance Contract

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF VOLUSIA COUNTY
NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL**

Student Name _____ Date of Birth _____

School Name _____ STUDENT ID _____

Florida Statute 1003 requires parents to participate in interventions designed to remediate patterns of nonattendance exhibited by their child(ren). This statute gives parent/ guardian the right to appeal to the school board if they believe the strategies or interventions recommended by the school are inappropriate or unnecessary. If you choose to exercise this right, you must notify the school Problem Solving Team or Individual Education Plan (IEP) Committee in writing.

I, _____, have read the above and understand my rights as outlined by the law.

Parent Signature

Date

cc: Parent
Problem Solving Team/IEP Committee

Notice of Right to Appeal

Enforcement of School Attendance: Monitoring Intervention Results

If nonattendance pattern continues,

Make additional contact with the family to review the plan and barriers to implementation OR

Schedule a follow-up meeting OR

Complete an Attendance Referral for School Social Worker to provide follow-up



The School District of Volusia County
School Social Services
ATTENDANCE REFERRAL



Student: _____ Student ID: _____ Birth Date: _____ Age: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____ ESE Exceptionality: _____

Homeless: Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown ☐ Information: _____
DCF Involvement: Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown ☐ Information: _____
DJJ Involvement: Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown ☐ Information: _____
Agency Involvement : Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown ☐ Information: _____

Date(s) of PST Attendance Meeting or IEP Review Meeting for Attendance: _____

Did a parent/guardian attend the attendance meeting? Yes ☐ No ☐

Was an Attendance Contract and Notice of Right to Appeal completed with the parent/guardian? Yes ☐ No ☐

Letter Type	Date(s) Sent
5 Unexcused Absences Within 30 Days	
10 Unexcused Absences Within 90 Days	
*Doctor Verification (15 excused/unexcused absences)	
Unexcused Tardies and/or Checkouts	
Other Attendance Letters/Correspondence	

**Required*

Parent/Guardian Contact Type	Date(s)	By Whom	Outcome
Telephone			
Email			
Face to Face			
Other Attendance Correspondence			

Interventions Attempted	Yes/No	Date(s)	Information/Outcome
Student/School Staff Conferences/Contacts	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Attendance Contract with Student	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Exploration of Educational Options	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Individual/Group Counseling	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Mentoring	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Tutoring	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Curriculum/Class Changes	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Community Agency Referral	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Reported Student to DHSMV (ages 14-18)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		

Additional information: _____

School Contact Person: _____ Title: _____ Extension: _____

Referral Date for School Social Work Services: _____

The Attendance Referral Packet should include: (scanned copies)

- ✓ PST Meeting Invitation Letter or IEP Meeting Notice
- ✓ PST 5 or ESE Request for Assistance
- ✓ PST 6 A/H Minutes or IEP Notes
- ✓ 15 Day Doctor Verification Letter
- ✓ School correspondence regarding attendance, such as letters, phone logs, parent conferences, etc.
- ✓ Attendance Contract and Notice of Right to Appeal (if able to be completed with the parent/guardian)

Send this referral page and entire packet to: mhburke@volusia.k12.fl.us.

Attendance Referral

Enforcement of School Attendance: School Social Worker Interventions

Consultation with school/district staff regarding attendance cases and compulsory reports

Parent and/or student contacts, including home visits when necessary

Create and/or review attendance contracts with parent and/or student

Connect families to community resources

Attendance monitoring and follow-up with the parent/student and school staff





Enforcement of School Attendance: Legal Action and Consequences

If the parent/student continues to be noncompliant with the Compulsory Attendance Law, the School Social Worker may make the following referrals:

- CINS/FINS (ages 6-17)
- Teen Court (ages 10-17)
- ASAP -Achieving School Attendance Program
- Adult Court-misdemeanor of the 2nd degree

Other Consequences:

- Learnfare families may lose benefits
- Students may lose driving privileges/license
- Students more likely to engage in delinquent behavior
- Lifetime earning potential is limited

REBOUND WITH ATTENDANCE !



ATTENDANCE AWARENESS
CAMPAIGN 2021

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For additional Questions, contact:
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