



Neenah Joint School District

**Attendance/Truancy Goal and Updates
2025-2026**

**Building Strong Schools and Communities
Through Every Day Attendance**

The Neenah Joint School District (NJSD) is committed to ensuring every student receives the maximum benefit from their educational experience through consistent daily attendance. This updated plan reflects our district's comprehensive, data-driven approach to attendance improvement, incorporating equity-focused interventions and community-wide engagement strategies.

Three-Year Goal (2025-2028): Reduce district chronic absenteeism by 10%, with specific focus on closing achievement gaps while maintaining pre-COVID attendance rates (5% or less) for non-economically disadvantaged students.

Vision/ Mission

Vision: Every student in NJSD will be present, engaged, and ready to learn each day, supported by strong relationships and comprehensive community partnerships.

Mission: To create systematic, equity-focused attendance interventions that address barriers to regular attendance while fostering positive school climates where all students feel valued, connected, and motivated to attend.

Core Beliefs:

- Relationships are the foundation of effective attendance interventions
- Attendance is a shared responsibility among students, families, schools, and the community
- Early intervention prevents chronic absenteeism
- Cultural responsiveness must guide all attendance practices
- Data-driven decisions lead to effective outcomes

Legal Framework

- [Wisconsin State Statute 118.153- Compulsory school attendance](#)
 - All students between the ages of 6 and 18 are required to attend school regularly, as outlined in the Wisconsin State Statute.
- [NJSD Board of Education Policy- Attendance](#)
 - District attendance policies align with state requirements and emphasize the critical connection between attendance and academic success.

Truancy Definitions

- **Habitually Truant:** 5 or more unexcused absences in a semester
- **Chronically Truant:** Missing 10% or more of enrolled school days (approximately 18 days annually)

Data Analysis and Trend

Current Patterns (Based on District Analysis)

Demographic Disparities

- Black/African American students show disproportionately higher chronic absenteeism rates
- Native American students face elevated absenteeism challenges
- Female students demonstrate higher risk factors than male students

Grade-Level Trends

- Absenteeism increases with student age
- Sixth grade represents a critical transition point requiring targeted intervention
- Secondary levels show the highest rate of chronic absenteeism

Risk Factors

- Economic disadvantage correlates with higher absenteeism
- Students receiving special services require additional support
- Mental health challenges increasingly impact attendance patterns

Multi-Tiered Support Framework

Tier 1: Universal Prevention (all students)

Positive School Climate Initiatives:

- NJSD Attendance Magnets Program
- Universal relationship-building expectations for all
 - I.e., Greetings at the door
- Consistent attendance messaging across all district communications
- “Attendance Works” quarterly awareness campaigns

Systematic Supports

- Daily attendance monitoring through Infinite Campus and/or NextPath
- Teacher accountability for relationship-building and attendance awareness
- Clear, consistent attendance procedures district-wide

Tier 2: Targeted Early Intervention (students at risk for chronic absenteeism)

5-Day Response System

- Automated attendance letters sent in English, Spanish, and Hmong
- Administrative assistant follow-up and family contact
- Connection with school social workers and support staff
- Resource identification and barrier assessment

10-Day Medical Documentation (Med-Ex) Process:

- Medical excuse verification for students with recurring health absences
- Healthcare provider documentation requirements
- Alternative educational planning when appropriate
- Family support and resource coordination

Tier 3: Intensive Support (Chronic Absenteeism)

15-Day Chronic Absence Meeting Process:

- Mandatory family conferences with multidisciplinary teams
- Individualized attendance improvement plans
- Community resource connections and wraparound services
- Regular progress monitoring with defined benchmarks

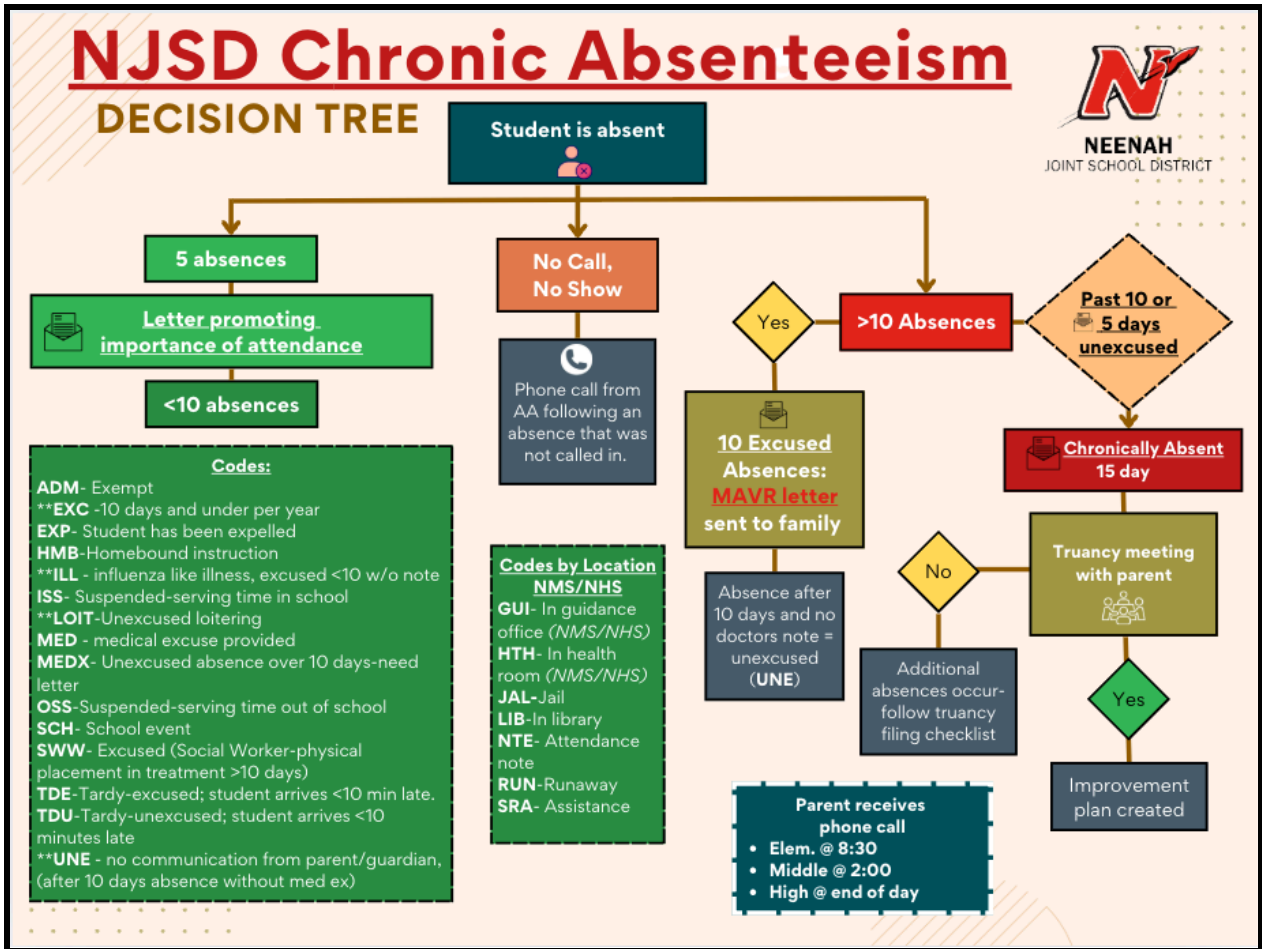
Intervention Processes

Communication Timeline

Days Absent	Intervention	Languages	Responsible Party
5 days	Warning Letter (excused/unexcused)	English, Spanish, Hmong	Administrative Assistant
10 days	Medical Documentation Letter	English, Spanish, Hmong	Administrative Assistant
15 days	Chronic Absence Meeting	All languages as needed	Social Worker/ Administrator
Ongoing	Truancy Court Referral	All languages as needed	Administrator

Attendance Flow Chart Implementation

Standardized visual process guides are used across all schools, ensuring consistent application of interventions and clear communication of expectations.



Communication and Engagement

Family Engagement Strategies

Multilingual Communication:

- All attendance letters are available in English, Spanish, and Hmong
- Infinite Campus messaging in preferred family languages
- Culturally responsive communication approaches

Educational Outreach:

- Open house presentations on the importance of attendance
- Attendance magnets for friendly reminders
- Early childhood (4K-2nd grade) attendance education
- Parent education on when to excuse students (physical education, mental health, family emergencies)
- Seasonal reminders (flu season, winter/spring break expectations)

Community Partnerships:

- CESA 6 professional development collaboration
- County-wide truancy meeting collaboration
- Healthcare provider partnerships for attendance support
- Community resource mapping for family support services

Student Engagement

- Age-appropriate attendance incentives and recognition programs
- Peer support and mentoring initiatives
- Student voice integration in attendance improvement planning

Professional Development***Staff Development Priorities*****Universal Training for All Staff:**

- Relationship-building as an attendance intervention
- Cultural competency in attendance practices
- Understanding trauma-informed attendance approaches
- Data interpretation and early identification strategies

Specialized Training by Role:

Teachers	Administrative Staff	Social Workers
• Daily attendance accountability and relationship building • Early warning sign recognition • Family communication strategies • Classroom climate and belonging initiatives	• Attendance letter processing and family outreach • Data analysis and progress monitoring • Legal requirements and compliance • Crisis intervention and resource coordination	• Advanced family engagement techniques • Community resource navigation • Mental health and attendance connections • Group facilitation for attendance improvement meetings

Progress Monitoring***Data Collection and Analysis***

Regular Monitoring Schedule	Key Performance Indicators	Accountability Measures
• Daily attendance rates are tracked through IC • Weekly early warning	• Overall district attendance rate • Chronic absenteeism	School-Level Accountability • Monthly data is shared with staff

- system reports - Monthly chronic absenteeism trend analysis - Quarterly comprehensive data review with disaggregated analysis - Annual comprehensive evaluation and plan adjustment	- rates by demographic groups - Early intervention success rates (5-day and 10-day response effectiveness) - Truancy referral trends and outcomes - Family engagement participation rates	- Quarterly improvement goal setting - Annual school-specific attendance action planning - Regular admin review and support District-Level Oversight - BOE attendance reports - Annual data presentation to the community - State reporting compliance and trend analysis - Continuous improvement implementation
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Action Plan and Timeline

Year 1 (25-26): Foundation Building		Year 2 (26-27): Enhancement and Expansion	Year 2 (26-27): Enhancement and Expansion
Fall 2025	Spring 2026	Focus Areas:	Focus Areas:
- Initiate a comprehensive district-wide truancy plan update process with county representation - Finalize letters in three languages - Launch staff training on relationship-building and attendance through Character Strong (CS)	- Deploy enhanced family engagement strategies and interventions in CS - Implement a comprehensive data dashboard - Ongoing update process with county stakeholders and plan completion	- Implementing the updated plan with county coordination - Advanced professional development implementation - Community-wide awareness campaigns - Enhanced student engagement initiatives - Technology integration improvements	- Comprehensive program evaluation - Best practice documentation and sharing - Long-term sustainability planning - Preparation for the next three-year cycle

Success Measures

Quantitative Outcomes	Qualitative Outcomes
• By July 2028, the Neenah Joint School District will reduce the district-wide chronic absenteeism rate by 10% from the 2024-25 baseline, as measured by the percentage of students missing 10% or more of enrolled school days. • By July 2028, the Neenah Joint School District will maintain a chronic absenteeism rate of 10% or lower for non-economically disadvantaged students, as measured by annual chronic absenteeism data. • By July 2028, the Neenah Joint School District will reduce chronic absenteeism disproportionality by at least 10% for underrepresented student subgroups, as measured by comparative chronic absenteeism rates disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, disability status, and English learner status. • By July 2028, the Neenah Joint School District will increase the early intervention success rate to X% for students identified in the Tier 2 intervention process (5-day and 10-day response systems), as measured by the percentage of at-risk students who demonstrate attendance improvement (reduced unexcused absences) within 30 days of receiving initial intervention communications.	• Improved school climate and student engagement • Enhanced family satisfaction with school communication • Stronger community partnerships and resource coordination • Increased staff confidence and competence in attendance interventions

Conclusion

These comprehensive attendance and truancy plan updates represent NJSD's commitment to continuous improvement and ensuring every student has the opportunity to succeed through regular school attendance. By implementing evidence-based interventions, maintaining focus on a Neenah for All, and engaging our entire community, we will create an environment where all students are present, engaged, and ready to learn.

The success of this plan depends on sustained commitment from all stakeholders- students, families, staff, and community members- working together to make attendance a shared priority and responsibility.

This plan aligns with the NJSD “Plan for Success” and incorporates evidence-based practices from the Future-Ed Attendance Playbook and Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction guidelines.

APPENDICES



{Date}

{Attendance breakdown chart}

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter informs you that **[student]** has accumulated **X** number of partial or whole days of absences. We are reaching out because we care about your student's success and want to ensure you know about these absences.

The Neenah Joint School District recognizes that there will be times when a student will need to miss school due to things such as an illness or some form of family emergency. Under Wisconsin State Law, there are two important attendance thresholds parents/guardians should be aware of:

Parent-Excused Absences (Wis. Stat. § 118.15(3)(c))

- Parents/guardians may excuse their child from school for up to ten (10) days in a school year
- These absences must fall within the acceptable reasons outlined in the district's Attendance/Tuancy Plan
- Once the 10-day limit is reached, additional absences require alternative documentation

Habitual Truancy Status (Wis. Stat. § 118.16(1)(a))

- A student becomes habitually truant after accumulating five (5) unexcused absences in a semester
- Habitual truancy may result in:
 - Municipal citation
 - County prosecution
 - Other consequences, as outlined in local ordinances

HEALTHCARE PROVIDER VERIFICATION

To have absences excused by a healthcare provider, please:

1. Sign the parent authorization below
2. Have a licensed healthcare provider complete their section

3. Return the completed form to your child's school building administrator

****PARENT/GUARDIAN AUTHORIZATION****

I authorize the release of medical information regarding my child's absence(s) to school officials.

Student Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (printed): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

****HEALTHCARE PROVIDER VERIFICATION**** (To be completed by provider)

Provider Name: _____

Provider Signature: _____ Date: _____

Date(s) of Care: _____

- ☐ Student was seen in the office
- ☐ Student was unable to attend school on the above date(s)
- ☐ Student may return to school on: _____

Attendance Matters! Research shows that by 9th grade, regular and high attendance is a better indicator of graduation likelihood than 8th-grade test scores. Students who miss just one or two days of school each month can fall seriously behind academically.

Support and Resources If you need assistance or have questions about your student's attendance, please contact:

School Staff Name:

Phone:

Email:

We are committed to supporting your students' academic success and are here to help address any challenges that may be affecting their attendance.

Sincerely,

Principal

School Social Worker



To the parent/guardian of:

Dear Parent/Guardian & Student:

Date

We would love to connect with you. We notice that **[student]** has missed **X** number of partial or whole days of school this semester unexcused. We wish the best for your student and want them to reach their goals. We are inviting you to meet with us, so we can hear more about the challenges related to attendance and so we can problem-solve together.

Attendance Matters! By 9th grade, regular and high attendance gives us a better idea of who will graduate than 8th-grade test scores. Students who miss just one or two days of school each month can fall seriously behind.

*Read more about the research on the [Attendance Works](http://www.attendanceworks.org) (www.attendanceworks.org)

Please Meet with Us: Let us know what works best for you. At this time, we have scheduled an in-person meeting at the school to meet with you, your student, and the school staff.

Meeting Time:

School Staff Attending:

Need to Change the Meeting Details? Please contact us as soon as possible if you prefer a different time, day, or place, or if you would prefer to meet virtually.

Call/email to change meeting: School Staff Name, Address, Phone: (608) XXX-XXXX, email)

Your Team: Let us know if you or your student would like specific school staff members present at the meeting, or if others are important to include.

- The parent, guardian, or child may request program or curriculum modifications for the child under Wis. Stat. § 118.15(1)(d) and the child may be eligible for enrollment in a program for children at risk under Wis. Stat. § 118.153(3).

What does Habitual Truancy Mean? A student is considered habitually truant when they are absent without an acceptable excuse for all or part of five or more days in a school semester. Each school district determines what constitutes “part of a day.” Our school district defines truancy as a student who is absent from school without notification of an acceptable excuse to the Attendance Officer.

What are the Consequences? Our biggest concern is that your student may fall behind. We want to help with improving your students’ attendance and avoiding other negative consequences. According to state law, we must include the information below:

- It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility, under Wis. Stat. § 118.15(1)(a) and (am), to cause the child to attend school regularly. If you fail to do so, you may be subject to penalties under Wis. Stat. § 118.15(5). Such penalties may include:
 - For the first offense, a fine of not more than \$500 or imprisonment for not more than 30 days or both.
 - For a second or subsequent offense, a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment for not more than 90 days or both.
- You may be required to perform community service work for a public agency or a nonprofit charitable organization instead of the penalties listed above.
- You may also be ordered to participate in counseling at your own expense or to attend school with your child, or both.

Laws: (add any additional required statute information from Wis. Stat. § § 118.15-16 as per locally approved language)

We look forward to meeting with you to discuss the needs of your student and work together to improve your student’s attendance.

Sincerely,

Principal

School Social Worker