

# Albemarle County Public Schools Attendance Handbook

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## 1. Purpose

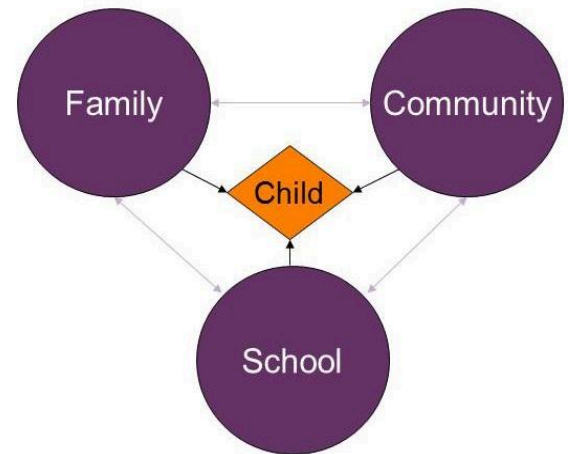
This handbook supports school leaders and attendance teams in implementing consistent, effective attendance practices across Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS). It provides practical guidance, aligns expectations, and promotes a shared commitment to student success. Our goal is to ensure every student is present, supported, and ready to learn—through strong partnerships between schools, families, and the community.

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## 2. Research

Absenteeism has grown significantly in recent years. Between 2019 and 2023, suburban schools saw a 46% rise in student absences (Bay, 2023). This trend highlights the need to rebuild relationships and improve communication between schools and families (Attendance Works, 2022).

Attendance matters. Students who miss school fall behind academically. Absences widen opportunity gaps, especially for students from low-income backgrounds or those already struggling (Aucejo & Romano, 2016). Missing school early in a child's academic journey greatly increases the risk of not graduating or attending college (Liu et al., 2021). Even students with good attendance are affected when classmates are frequently absent (Gottfried, 2014).



The financial cost is also high. Each absence represents roughly \$90 in lost instructional value based on the average spent to make-up a day's worth of learning using tutoring and other interventions (Aucejo & Romano, 2016). This means improving attendance by 1% across ACPS is worth around \$2.3 million in reduced remediation needs annually.

The reasons students miss school are often complex. Barriers include transportation, family stress, unclear school communication, or limited engagement (Attendance Works, 2022). But schools can make a difference. Strong student-teacher relationships, proactive outreach, effective communication, comprehensive support to overcome challenges, and meaningful academic opportunities help keep students coming every day (Smythe-Leistico & Page, 2018; Berman & Chan, 2019; Musaddiq et al., 2023).

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## 3. Chronic Absenteeism versus Truancy

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more of the school year *for any reason*. Truancy deals only with unexcused absences accrued by a student. While there is a strong relationship between these two terms, it is important to distinguish them to ensure all students get support for attendance needs. The ACPS approach is designed to support all students who have attendance challenges, no matter the reason for those absences.

In the guidelines that follow, you will learn about Tier I, II, and III support for students, as well as referral to the Multi-Disciplinary Team and the Court Services Unit. While referral to the Multi-Disciplinary Team and Court Service should be reserved only for students with unexcused absences, all other supports should be used for any student who is absent frequently, regardless of the reason. For example, if a student is absent due to a

chronic health issue with documentation from a medical provider, and therefore has excused absences; that student should still be provided with the supports available for any student who has attendance challenges, such as participation in flexible learning time, connection with outside agencies as needed, mental health support in school, et cetera.

Per Albemarle County Policy, [a chronic absenteeism letter](#) will be sent when a student becomes chronically absent, but does not have excessive unexcused absences. A quarterly update should be provided for students who continue to be chronically absent. This ensures that all caregivers and students are aware of the importance of regular attendance and supports available, even if absences are due to excused reasons such as illness with medical documentation. Schools may proactively send a letter to families of students who were chronically absent the previous year to establish a system of support as the school year begins ([example from Ivy Elementary](#)).

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#### 4. Culturally Responsive Attendance Practice in ACPS

At Albemarle County Public Schools, we approach attendance through a culturally responsive lens that values both accountability and empathy. This philosophy is rooted in three guiding characteristics of culturally responsive educators:

**Data-Driven:** Attendance data helps us identify which students are thriving and who needs additional support. We use data to assess the effectiveness of our interventions, ensure all who need support receive it, and guide next steps in improving attendance outcomes for all learners.

**Warm:** Every student and caregiver has unique needs. We meet families with respect, listen closely to their needs, and communicate with them effectively based on their preferences. Our goal is to build authentic partnerships that help students overcome barriers to daily attendance.

**Demander:** We set high expectations for all students to attend school and engage in learning, as required by state law and division policy. We clearly communicate these expectations and hold ourselves, families, and community partners accountable for supporting consistent attendance.

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#### 5. Virginia Attendance Law

Virginia law makes it clear: students must attend school, and families are responsible for making sure that happens. Under [§22.1-254](#), parents or guardians must enroll students and ensure they attend daily. Schools may also require students to attend summer school or remediation programs if a student has a documented need. If a student is absent, the school must be notified with a valid reason. If no reason is provided by the family, the school must attempt to reach the family by telephone to obtain a reason. If no reason is provided, the school may change unverified absences (UNV) to unexcused absences (UEX).



Teachers are legally required ([§22.1-259](#)) to record attendance daily. These records are used for school accountability—and are also considered legal documents.

After five unexcused absences (UEX), schools must send a formal letter and work with families to create an attendance plan. This plan can be created over the phone, but must be made in partnership with the student and family and document the reasons for the absences. A seventh UEX after the plan requires a face-to-face conference with the family. This can occur at the school, during a home visit, or in a community setting. During this meeting, a comprehensive support plan to address the specific barriers to attendance identified by the family, student, and school team is co-created. If absences continue after implementation of the plan and without improvement and the student has more than 10 unexcused absences, the school may refer the case to the district Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) and the juvenile court system ([§22.1-258](#)).

Per [8VAC20-110-130](#), school divisions must change a student's status from "enrolled" to "withdrawn" with a W970 code when the student has been absent for 15 or more consecutive days, regardless if those days are excused, unexcused, or a combination of both. Schools are still directly responsible for keeping track of these students in attendance reports, maintaining contact with the family, and working with them to re-enroll, provide support, and refer to the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) and Court services for truancy if needed. Exit dates will be marked as the 16th day of absence to allow for accurate attendance records should these be needed as legal documents.

The following report in PowerSchool will provide attendance data for both enrolled and withdrawn students. Withdrawn students will be labeled as "inactive" under the status column: **Data and Reporting -> reports -> sqlReports -> Attendance -> Students at or Above Attendance Threshold [set Minimum Number of Absences to 0 for all students]**. Attendance teams will make it a priority to reach out to families whose children have been withdrawn due to absences via telephone or home visits.

Virginia also ties school attendance to driving privileges. Students aged 13 and up may face a delay in receiving their initial license or suspension of an existing driver's license if they fail to meet attendance requirements ([§16.1-278.9](#)).

Virginia provides caregivers the right to homeschool their child. For students already enrolled in Albemarle County Public Schools, transfer to homeschooling occurs through a process initiated by the caregiver when they submit an intent form either in-person at the county office building, through email, or online ([more information here](#)) to the district representative for homeschooling (Lauren Crawford and Craig Dommer in school year 25-26). The district representative will evaluate the intent to provide homeschooling based on state and school board code and provide a letter of approval to the caregiver if they meet qualifications.

Students remain enrolled in their school until the school receives the letter of approval for homeschooling from the district representative for homeschooling. Students remain under typical expectations for attendance (i.e. state and school board code) until this letter is received. The district representative will send the signed letter of approval for homeschooling to both the family and the school at the same time. The date of withdrawal should correspond with the date of approval, and the registrar will note district approval of homeschooling in the Exit Comment in PowerSchool. If the school has any questions about whether the letter has been issued, they can reach out directly to the district representative for homeschooling for confirmation.

## 6. ACPS Attendance Policy and Procedures

### Family Responsibilities



Albemarle County Public Schools follows Virginia law and the division's policy ([JED](#)) outlines further the responsibilities for families and schools. Parents and guardians are expected to ensure their child arrives at

school on time every day. If a student is absent, the caregiver must notify the school within five days. Otherwise, the absence will be recorded as unexcused. Students who miss more than 15 consecutive days—whether excused or unexcused—are withdrawn but remain subject to compulsory attendance laws and must re-enroll.

## **School Responsibilities**

Schools are responsible for maintaining accurate records and reaching out to families when absences occur. Attendance must be recorded daily—by the first hour in elementary schools and by the end of first period in secondary schools. Notification messages (via BrightArrow text, phone, and email) go out to families after initial attendance is submitted. Secondary schools also take period, or meeting, attendance for each course.

At the start of the school year, schools must inform all parents and guardians of the process for reporting student absences. This process must include a way for parents and guardians to call and email the school in the language most comfortable for them to provide the reason for student absences.

If a student accumulates three unexcused absences, a staff member with a relationship to the student or family will contact the caregiver. At five unexcused absences, a formal letter is sent home and the school co-constructs an attendance plan with the family. At the seventh UEX, schools move to a more intensive support and documentation process coordinated through an in-person conference.

## **Secondary Course Attendance**

Credit-bearing classes in middle and high school require consistent attendance. If a student misses more than ten periods of a course, the principal may deny credit, or may offer an opportunity to engage in approved learning recovery such as graduation credit buy-back.

In addition to ACPS guidelines, students enrolled in Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) Dual Enrollment courses will follow attendance standards specific to PVCC courses, per [PVCC attendance guidance](#). For example, students in year-long Dual Enrollment courses with 26 or more absences may be withdrawn from the course unless the instructor determines they continue to be both engaged and have potential for achieving success.

## **Tardies**

Tardies are addressed through individualized supports and progressive consequences. While suspensions are not permitted for tardiness, schools may use interventions like lunch detention, after-school detention or tutoring, or the loss of privileges. Repeated tardies should trigger a caregiver conference.

## **Late Drop-offs and Early Pick-ups**

Schools will document student tardies and period absences due to late drop-offs and early pick-ups as well as the reasons for missing school. Late drop-offs for reasons other than excused absences are considered unexcused tardies. Late drop-offs and early pick-ups are unexcused absences if a student misses a period or leaves before attendance is taken for reasons not covered under excused absences. Schools may require documentation for late drop-offs and early pick-ups as they do for absences.

Repeated late drop-offs and early pick-ups will be addressed through caregiver conferences in which the negative academic and social impact of this missed time is explained and how to ameliorate it through improved punctuality is the goal. Unexcused late drop-offs and early pick ups that cause absences at the secondary level can lead to loss of credit in high school credit bearing courses. At all levels, unexcused late

drop-offs and early pick-ups associated with negative learning outcomes may lead to a requirement to attend summer school or other forms of remediation, and lead to a student no longer being considered in good standing, which can affect [participation in extracurricular activities](#), including VHSL sports.

### **Excused and Unexcused Absences**

Excused absences include illness (with medical documentation after seven occurrences), bereavement, legal obligations, religious or cultural observances, family military duties, civic engagement, or other reasons approved by the principal. Documentation for legal and other appointments may be required if a student is chronically absent. Unexcused absences include skipping class or school, missing the bus, and absences due to illness without the required documentation after seven events. Leaving campus without permission is also unexcused.

If a student is repeatedly absent due to illness, and faces difficulty in finding a medical provider, the school's attendance team and nurse will collaborate with the family to identify community resources available for medical support, including both physical and mental health. Students who will be absent for an extended time due to a physical or mental health issue may be eligible to receive [homebound education services](#). Those facing chronic illness that leads to chronic absenteeism may [complete this form](#) to excuse absences and coordinate support with the school nurse. Schools may use or modify [this letter](#) to inform families about required medical documentation for more than 7 absences due to illness.

### **Pre-Arranged Absences**

Families are encouraged to plan trips outside of school days. When a pre-arranged absence is necessary, approval must be obtained in advance, and may not be granted if a student is not in good academic or attendance standing. ACPS provides the following forms to support families in attaining approval for pre-arranged absences: [secondary form](#), [elementary form](#). Teachers are not required to prepare work ahead of time. Students and caregivers must use the learning management system to stay up to date.

### **Vaccination Compliance**

Students must meet vaccination requirements to attend school unless exempt under the McKinney-Vento Act or state medical/religious provisions ([§22.1-271.2](#)). Absences due to vaccination noncompliance will be unexcused, unless the reason for absence is attending a medical appointment to obtain a vaccination.

### **Loss of Privileges due to Absenteeism: Extracurricular Activities**

Students who do not meet attendance standards due to unexcused absences lose the privilege to participate in extracurricular activities in school, including high school sports, per [school board policy JFC-R](#).

### **Promotion/Retention and Absenteeism**

Per school board policy [IKEB-R](#), attendance can be taken into account as one consideration in decisions about promotion and retention.

## **7. ACPS Attendance Procedures**

ACPS has developed a clear set of daily practices and intervention steps to promote consistent student attendance, ensure accurate records, and support students who are at risk of chronic absenteeism.

## Daily Attendance Practices

Each school day, teachers are expected to record attendance accurately. Elementary teachers must submit attendance by the first hour of school, and secondary teachers by the end of first period. The office associate monitors attendance submissions and follows up with staff who miss deadlines.

Unverified (UNV) absences trigger same-day caregiver notifications through BrightArrow messages (text, email, and phone). Secondary schools also send a message near the end of the workday for students marked present during first block but unverified in later periods. The office associate monitors caregiver responses (e.g. via telephone, voice message, email) and updates records with appropriate absence codes. For students with seven or more illness-related absences, documentation is required.

Those entering attendance can distinguish between a medically excused absence with and without documentation with the MEX and ILL absence codes. MEX is for a health related reason *with documentation*. ILL is for a parent / guardian provided reason for a health related absence *without documentation*. Please note the ILL code and the definitions for these codes are changes from the previous school year to support documentation.

Schools can require documentation for any student absence after a student has reached 10 excused absences, regardless of the reason.

## Flexible Learning Time

This is a temporary state initiative in response to post-pandemic challenges to reward schools that provide extended learning time to help students catch up after absences ([click here for VDOE information](#)). Flexible learning time must be in-person, outside of regular school hours, mirror as closely as possible a normal school learning environment, be taught by a licensed teacher, have teacher/student ratios of no more than 25:1, and review VA standards consistent with areas of struggle for the student or curriculum they missed.

Schools receive flexible learning time towards student absenteeism at a three to one ratio (three hours of buyback for one absence) for students who are catching up on learning after excused absences, or are participating as part of an attendance plan.

Flexible learning time does not replace actual school attendance and should not be used to “bank” days for future absences. If a student is participating in flexible learning time, and unexcused absenteeism does not improve, the school will move to other interventions / support plans / truancy procedures. Schools should continue to monitor students’ regular attendance and make sure this improves even as students also participate in flexible learning time. If this attendance does *not* improve, participation in flexible learning time is not an effective intervention, and other options for support will be explored.

[Click here for detailed instructions](#) on how to enter flexible learning time into PowerSchool for students.

To see all students’ attendance, flexible learning time, and adjusted attendance rates, use the report below in PowerSchool. The schools’ adjusted chronic absenteeism rate can be derived from averaging the adjusted rates of all students generated by this report, after removing students who have 50% or less membership at the school:

Data and Reporting -> reports -> sqlReports -> Attendance -> Flexible Instruction Priority List

## Graduation Credit Buy Back for High School Courses

Principals may decide to offer graduation credit buy back sessions for students at risk of losing credit in a high school course due to the school board policy of possibly denying credit after more than 10 absences in a course. Graduation credit buy back should mirror as much as possible VDOE regulations for flexible learning time to ensure that students recoup learning lost due to absences. Schools should inform both students and caregivers of the possibility of losing credit after five period absences in the course.

### Addressing Unexcused Absences

When a student reaches three unexcused (UEX) absences, a teacher, counselor, or designated staff member with a relationship to the student or family contacts the caregiver to check in. At five UEX absences, a formal letter is sent home, and the attendance team works with the family to create a support plan. This plan may be discussed over the phone or in-person, but must be co-created with the student and family.


By the seventh UEX absence, and after implementation of the initial attendance plan, the team holds an in-person conference with the student and their caregiver(s). The school uses a barriers identification guide to conduct a deep analysis of the reasons for non-attendance. This guide is used during the conference to identify barriers and provide solutions in the form of additional supports both in school and through outside partners such as Region 10 or other organizations.


An attendance contract is signed by the student, caregiver, and school officials showing commitment to the comprehensive support plan. A consent to share information form is also offered to families to sign to facilitate connection of the student or family to needed community support systems.


Contact methods for the conference include calls, texts, emails, and home visits. All communication attempts are documented, and emergency contacts may be used to reach families. If repeated attempts to contact fail, or if a caregiver is unresponsive, this is also documented.


All letters sent and notes on student/caregiver conferences should be documented in PowerSchool in the student's attendance tracking screen (See below: **PowerSchool Student Selection -> Attendance -> Attendance Tracking**). This is important because this screen will be used if the student needs to be supported by the Multi-disciplinary team.


**Daily Unexcused Absence Notification Tracking**


3 Day Call Made:  


5 Day Unexcused Letter Sent:  

Attendance Plan Signed:  

7 Day Unexcused Letter Sent:  

10 Day Unexcused Letter Sent:  

10 Day Excused Letter Sent:  

**Multi-Disciplinary Team Referral Submitted:**  

Attendance Tracking Notes

Individual attendance conferences should be tracked on the student's [More > Student Conference Logs](#) screen with a conference purpose of *Attendance*.

Documentation of the attendance plan after 5 UEX absences and an attendance conference with a contract after 7 UEX absences must also be documented in PowerSchool in the state-reported field located under **Compliance -> SRC Unexcused Absences** when a student is selected (see below).

VDOE Student Record Collection (SRC) Unexcused Absence Data - This data is entered on the student's [State/Province - VA > SRC Unexcused Abs](#) screen

Year	School	Attendance Plan	Attendance Conference	Court Referral
2024-2025	MOHS	Plan was developed (1)	Conference held within 10 days of 10th absence with parent (1)	No Court Referral Needed/Progress Monitoring (1)

## Referral to Juvenile and Domestic Court

If attendance does not improve after implementing the comprehensive support plan, and a student accrues more than 10 UEX absences, the case may be referred to the County's Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) as an intermediary step in the referral to court. Prior to referral to the MDT, the school should give time for the interventions put in place to work and monitor for progress. Students may accrue beyond 10 UEX absences while this intensive plan implementation and monitoring for improvement occurs.



The MDT includes representatives from regional support organizations, including mental health providers and social workers, to ensure all avenues of support have been explored prior to court. Schools must submit the student's full documentation to the MDT, including:

- [Truancy barriers identification guide](#)
- [MDT student case presentation](#)
- [Attendance contract](#) (or documentation of attempts to get signed)
- [Signed release of information](#) (or documentation of refusal)
- [Referral to MDT Form](#)

If the family is unresponsive, staff should document all outreach attempts and submit this in lieu of missing forms. **Schools must file petitions with Court Services prior to April 1st.** After this, schools may require students to attend summer school due to unexcused absences, document attendance at summer school, and use this if needed in filing a petition the following school year.

[Here is a link to a flowchart on the ACPS process](#), built in collaboration with community partners. See the next page for a copy of this flowchart.

# Attendance Support in ACPS

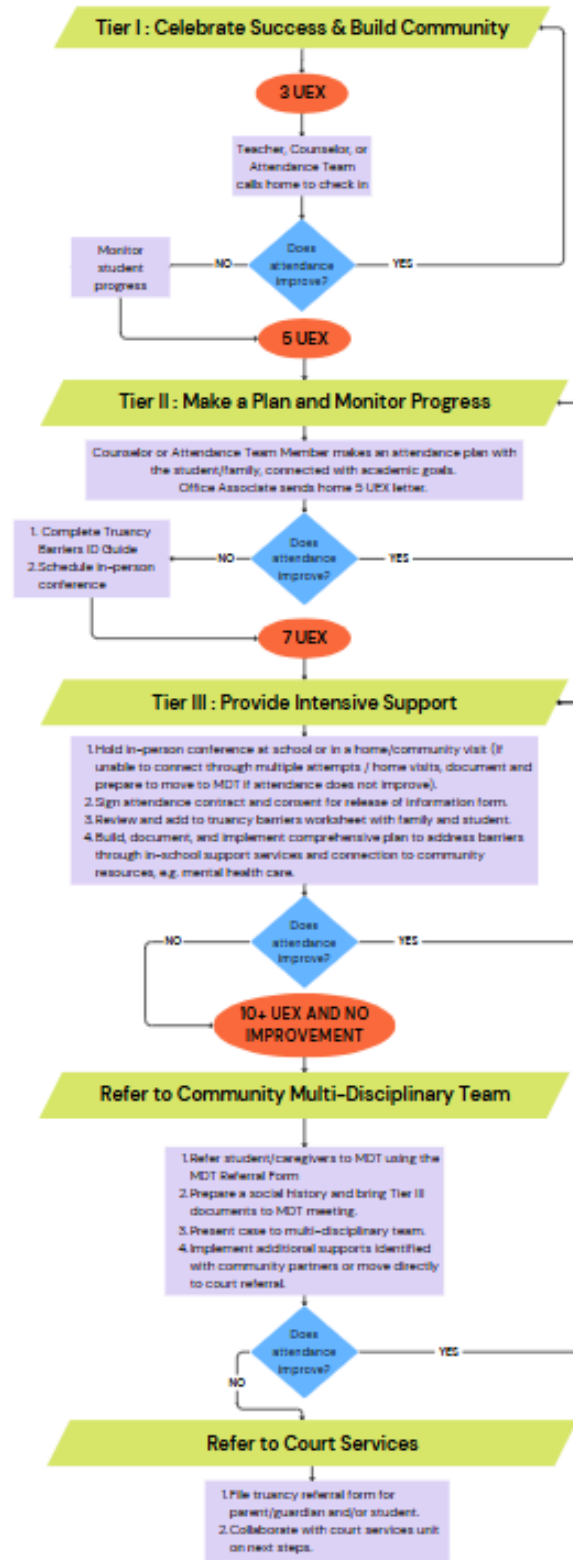
This flowchart indicates the process for school attendance teams to support all students' wellbeing and attendance at school. It is vitally important to go through this process, rather than focus only on the specific number of unexcused absences a student has.

## Documents Referenced in this Flowchart

- [5 Day UEX Letter](#)
- [Truancy Barriers Identification Guide](#)
- [Attendance Contract](#)
- [Consent for Release of Information Form](#)
- [Social History MDT Form](#)
- [MDT Referral Form](#)
- [Truancy Referral Form](#)



## Attendance Monitoring Process



## Flowchart Elements

Each symbol in the chart represents a benchmark, decision, or action in the process.

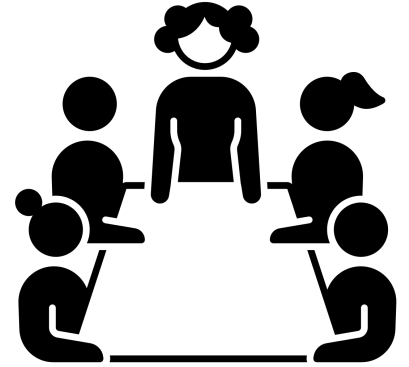
- State/ACPS Code Benchmark** (Red oval): These are critical junctures for attendance in the state or school board code. Early intervention at 3 UEX in ACPS, not state, code.
- Action Steps** (Purple rectangle): These show the action steps taken by schools to address attendance issues at each level of support.
- Decision** (Blue diamond): These show where attendance teams need to use student data to make a decision about the next step in the process.
- Level of Support** (Green banner): These indicate the level of support provided to students/caregivers to improve or maintain student attendance.
- Arrow** (Black line with arrowhead): Arrows show the flow of decision making within the process.

## 8. School Attendance Teams

School attendance teams are central to ACPS's approach to improving attendance. These teams meet at least twice monthly to review data, support students, and follow up on intervention plans. They ensure students and caregivers receive consistent, informed, and collaborative support.

### Purpose and Function

The team monitors attendance trends, identifies students who need intervention, and implements Tier I, II, and III supports. They maintain communication with families, conduct home visits, document outreach, and make referrals to the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) or court services when needed.



### Team Membership

Each school's attendance team includes members with designated roles:

- **Administrative Lead:** Usually the principal or assistant principal. They ensure meetings occur, assign responsibilities, and maintain momentum.
- **Data Lead:** Often an attendance office associate or registrar. This person gathers and shares attendance data prior to meeting, logs interventions in PowerSchool, and handles formal letters.
- **Support Lead:** A counselor or SEL coach who works directly with students and families to build support plans and access services.
- **MDT and Court Services Lead:** Typically an administrator or social worker who prepares and presents cases to the MDT and juvenile court, ensuring documentation is complete.

All team members collaborate on cases, but these role assignments ensure that each critical task has a clear point of responsibility.

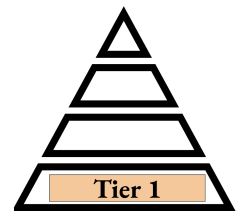
## 9. Tiered Attendance Supports

ACPS uses a tiered system of support to match student needs with the right level of intervention. This framework helps schools respond early and consistently, while also providing intensive help when needed.

### Tier I: Universal Practices

Tier I focuses on strong relationships and clear communication for all students and caregivers. Schools are expected to:

- Build a whole-school culture of attendance through welcome messages to families about attendance, lessons for students on the importance of attendance, and celebrating students and classes (and staff) with strong attendance.
- Build strong relationships through tools like [relationship mapping](#) and [warm welcomes](#) (Harvard MCCR, Edutopia).
- Offer a rigorous curriculum to all students, connect learning to the real world, and communicate high expectations for attendance to support learning for everyone.
- Accurately take attendance each day.
- Use BrightArrow to notify families of absences with translation and interpretation.



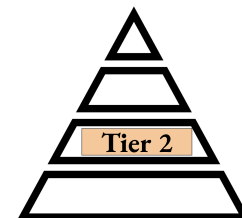
- Update attendance records based on family communication and collect documentation for absences when appropriate (e.g. for more than 7 illness absences in one school year, or for other appointments and absences when a student is chronically absent).
- Review attendance data twice per month and meet as an attendance team to review and create action plans based on the data.

These practices promote a culture where attendance is expected and valued for every student.

## Tier II: Early Intervention

Tier II supports are for students with emerging attendance concerns, (e.g. chronically absent and/or 5 UEX absences). Strategies include:

- Creating an [attendance success plan](#) with the student and caregiver (Attendance Works). Link this plan to addressing any academic challenges as well.
- Connecting families to health and other resources in the community to address attendance challenges.
- Assigning a trusted adult to use the [2x10 relationship strategy](#).
- Offering flexible learning sessions to help students recover missed instruction and increase attendance.

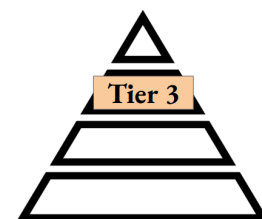


Tier II focuses on collaboration and problem-solving with the family to remove attendance barriers.

## Tier III: Intensive Support and Truancy Intervention

Tier III is for students with persistent attendance challenges (e.g. 7 or more UEX absences). Steps include:

- Hold an in-person conference using a [truancy barriers identification guide](#).
- Provide mental health and community services when needed, using tools like [this community resource map](#) to identify services.
- Finalize a comprehensive attendance support plan and [contract](#), with [caregiver consent for information sharing](#).
- Home or community visits.
- Assign a case manager from the attendance team to monitor progress and connect this to academic progress and support as well.



If a caregiver cannot be reached, staff will document all contact attempts, including home visits.

## Referral to the Multi-Disciplinary Attendance Team (MDT) and the Court Services Unit

After an attendance team implements a comprehensive support plan as part of Tier III, and the student's attendance does not improve, the school will refer the case to the district MDT as an intermediary step to referral to court, by completing this [MDT Referral Form](#). Prior to referral, a student must have more than 10 UEX absences, an intervention plan must have been put in place and monitored in Tier III, and with these additional supports, did not demonstrate sustained improvement in attendance. Prior to referring to the MDT, please make sure the [MDT Social History form](#), the [attendance contract](#) (if available), and the [consent to share information form](#) (if available), have been uploaded to PowerSchool using the attachments page under the student profile on the student's page (see below). Principals, Assistant Principals, Registrars, and SIS Contacts will have access to the attachment page. Please send your attendance team members' name to [datasupport@k12albemarle.org](mailto:datasupport@k12albemarle.org) to ensure other team members also have access.

The MDT meets throughout the year to review cases presented by school attendance teams. The MDT has representatives from the Court Services Unit, Region 10, and the Department of Social Services to ensure all community support systems have been activated prior to referral to court. The MDT may connect the school's team and the student's family to additional community support, or move the case directly to Court Services. When you submit the [MDT Referral Form](#), you will receive an appointment to present the case. Please share the date, time, and location of the appointment with the family of the student. They are not required to attend the meeting, but should be invited.

As noted above, **schools must file petitions with Court Services prior to April 1st**. After this, schools may require students to attend summer school due to unexcused absences, document attendance at summer school, and use this if needed in filing a petition the following school year.

## 10. Attendance Data Resources (PowerSchool, Power BI, and Branching Minds)

Attendance teams rely on timely, accurate data to monitor trends, identify students in need of support, and evaluate intervention outcomes. ACPS provides several useful tools in both PowerSchool and Power BI to assist in this work. Please note that nearly all attendance reports and Power BI data lag by one day. PowerSchool does attendance calculations to convert meeting attendance to a daily value and updates ADA/ADM in their overnight process. Attendance reports look only as far as the previous day to ensure consistency. Any changes made to attendance (e.g. if a student is marked absent and then arrives late) would be reflected the following day after PowerSchool's nightly attendance calculations and ADA/ADM reconciliation take place.



### PowerSchool Reports

PowerSchool includes several pre-built reports that help schools track attendance patterns. Attendance Team members who are a Student Information System (SIS) contact for their school should also review the [PowerSchool Attendance Procedures](#) document.

Question	Clickpath	Notes
How can I get a list with <b>the current absence percentage for all students</b> in my school?	Data and Reporting -> reports -> sqlReports -> Attendance -> <b>Students at or Above Attendance Threshold</b> [set Minimum Number of Absences to 0 for all students]	The cleanest, most comprehensive report on <i>all</i> students' absences in the school, including inactive/withdrawn students. It is useful for identifying students with high numbers of absences, either excused or unexcused, as well as all students with perfect attendance.
How can I get a list of <b>all students who were chronically absent this year or last year</b> , including new transfer students in my school?	Data and Reporting -> reports -> sqlReports -> Attendance -> <b>All Students Cur Yr Chronic Abs</b>	This is useful for identifying 6th graders, 9th graders, or other students who transferred within ACPS who were chronically absent the previous year. It can also provide a list of all currently chronically absent students. This report does <i>not</i> include inactive/withdrawn students.

<p>How can I get a list of all students in my school with the number and <b>percentage of absences, with time in flexible learning time included?</b></p>	<p>Data and Reporting -&gt; reports -&gt; sqlReports -&gt; Attendance -&gt; <b>Flexible Instruction Priority List</b></p>	<p>This is useful for understanding how participation in flexible learning sessions impacts the state's adjusted, qualified chronic absentee rate for the school. To monitor school-level data, remove students with below 50% EOY percentage membership at the school. Reverse sort by EOY School (not district) Absenteeism to see students with highest absentee rates first. This report does <i>not</i> include inactive/withdrawn students.</p>
<p>How can I get a list of all students who have a <b>certain number of absences in a high school credit bearing course?</b></p>	<p>Data and Reporting -&gt; reports -&gt; sqlReports -&gt; Attendance -&gt; <b>Period Attendance Summary</b> [set number of absences to the number you are searching for]</p>	<p>This is useful for secondary schools to identify students who may be denied credit for a course due to the school board's absence policy, and may require participation in extended learning time. Best practice is to send the possible <a href="#">denial of credit letter</a> at 5 period absences. Credit may be denied after the eleventh absence (see <a href="#">Section F of School Board Policy JED</a>)</p>
<p>How can I get a list of all <b>teachers who haven't yet taken attendance?</b></p>	<p>Attendance -&gt; <b>Teacher Attendance Submission Status</b></p>	<p>This is useful to see which teachers need reminders to take attendance.</p>
<p>How can I get a list of all students and a <b>count of unexcused tardies (or other code) for each class?</b></p>	<p>Attendance -&gt; <b>Attendance Count</b> [Example for tracking tardies: Highlight UTDY, Check all periods, set minimum to 0]</p>	<p>Middle or high schools use this to review tardiness trends across the school and identify students to celebrate or provide support. All schools could use this to get a count of a type of absence code within a certain range.</p>
<p>How can I learn if a <b>student or caregiver has been referred to court for attendance in previous years?</b></p>	<p>Select student -&gt; Compliance -&gt; SRC Unexcused Abs -&gt; <b>Court Referral Code</b> [1 = no court needed, progress monitoring, 2 = student referred to court, 3 = parent referred to court]</p>	<p>This allows schools to see if a student/caregiver has already been referred to court for attendance. This is especially important at the beginning of the year, for transfer students within ACPS, and 6th and 9th graders. Attendance teams should review this field for all students who were chronically absent the previous year.</p>

These reports help schools intervene early and track the impact of attendance initiatives.

## [Power BI Dashboards](#)

[Power BI](#) offers visual, interactive dashboards that show both current and historical attendance trends. Principals should contact [datasupport@k12albemarle.org](mailto:datasupport@k12albemarle.org) at the start of the year with a list of all attendance team members to ensure they have access to these reports.



Title	Notes	Uses
<b>Attendance % Membership Groups</b>	This reports shows a schools' progress towards overall annual attendance benchmarks. It shows historical annual percentage rates. The current school year's attendance rate is calculated with up-to-date data in that school year. The user can select "All" to see overall percentages, or on specific membership groups to see percentages for this group, e.g. SPED students.	Best used for <b>strategic planning while setting annual goals</b> for attendance. It is less helpful for short-term progress monitoring as it does not account for seasonal fluctuations in attendance rates.
<b>Weekly / Monthly Attendance Percentage</b>	These reports show attendance rates by week or month, and allow schools to compare their rates with the division average.	Useful for attendance teams to <b>progress monitor throughout the year</b> and to evaluate the effectiveness of attendance systems and improvements in real-time. It also allows teams to monitor changes in light of seasonal fluctuations in attendance rates.
<b>Chronic Abs Map</b>	This shows a list of all currently chronically absent students in the school, with a heat map showing where these students reside in the district. The map can be generated for the current or previous year.	Use this to <b>identify communities where chronic absenteeism is high</b> , then organize community events to build relationships and relay the importance of attendance.
<b>School Current Data: Effective Chronic Absentee Rate</b>	This report shows the current effective chronic absentee rates in the division, broken out by elementary, middle and high schools. If the user clicks on "more details" it allows schools to see an attendance dashboard with current effective chronic absenteeism data broken out by membership group and the numbers of students with different levels of full-day absences.	This report can be used to <b>monitor attendance by membership group throughout the year</b> to see if there is a group that needs more support to meet goals.
<b>Chronic Abs Membership Groups</b>	This shows historical <u>effective</u> chronic absenteeism rates for the school and calculates the current year's rates based on current data. The user can select "all" to see the overall rate, or on specific membership groups to see rates for that group.	This report is useful for attendance teams to <b>set goals</b> for chronic absenteeism and to <b>identify chronic absenteeism trends among membership groups</b> .
<b>Chronic Abs Qualified (VDOE) Membership Groups</b>	This provides the same information as the Chronic Abs Membership Group report, however it removes students who do not meet the VDOE enrollment requirements of being enrolled in the school for at least 50% of the school year. This produces the <u>qualified</u> chronic absenteeism rate.	This report is useful to <b>set goals</b> and <b>identify trends</b> among membership groups for <b>students who have been enrolled for at least 50% of the school year</b> .

These tools support both strategic planning and real-time monitoring to improve student attendance.

### [Branching Minds](#)

Branching Minds is ACPS's multi-tiered system of support digital management system and includes flags for attendance and ways to keep track of progress monitoring for



students for whom attendance is a concern. For students at Tier III of attendance intervention, keeping track of support in Branching Minds and incorporating attendance into a broader system of academic, health, and social supports leads to a more comprehensive, effective approach for overcoming attendance barriers.

## 11. Caregiver Communication Scripts

Effective family outreach is central to improving attendance. ACPS provides ready-to-use scripts for staff, tailored to various attendance situations and designed to build strong, respectful relationships with caregivers. Whenever possible *always* link attendance conversations to learning by sharing academic outcomes with caregivers and how attendance can improve these.

In the case of students who are 18+, compulsory attendance laws no longer apply. While the student is no longer obligated by law to attend school, they may still lose credit required for graduation or lose privileges reserved for students in good standing due to unexcused absences, including participation in high school sports.

Purpose	Audience	Modality	Scripts
<p><b>Daily UNV Absence Message</b></p> <p><i>Required by School Board Policy</i></p>	<p>Caregivers of students who are marked UNV after the first hour in elementary school or the first period in secondary school.</p>	<p>BrightArrow - Phone, Email, Text</p>	<p>When enabled in advance, a list of UNV students can be generated each day in BrightArrow at a specific time for automatic or manual messaging with a predetermined message. The message can be different for each mode. Message recipients can also be manually generated by running the PowerSchool report Attendance &gt; (Attendance Reports) Absentee Report and the message content manually added.</p> <p><a href="#">Click here for a link</a> to scripts in English and Spanish.</p>
<p><b>Daily UNV Period Absence Message (Secondary Only)</b></p> <p><i>Required by School Board Policy</i></p>	<p>Caregivers of students who were present during part of the day, but were marked UNV for one or more periods afterwards.</p>	<p>BrightArrow - Phone, Email, Text</p> <p>Automated Msg Directions</p>	<p>When enabled in advance, a list of UNV students can be generated multiple times each day in BrightArrow at specific times for automatic or manual messaging with a predetermined message. The message can be different for each message/mode. Message recipients can also be manually generated by running the PowerSchool report Attendance &gt; (Attendance Reports) Absentee Report and the message content manually added.</p> <p><u>Sample message:</u> This is a message from the [school name] attendance office notifying you that your child, [student name], was marked present at the beginning of the day, but had an unverified absence later in the day for one or more periods. Please call or email at [provide contact information] to let us know if you have any questions and to notify us of the reason for the absence.</p>

<p><b>3 UEX Check-in</b></p> <p><i>Required by School Board Policy</i></p>	<p>Caregivers of students who have 3 UEX absences</p>	<p>Phone, in-person meeting, Remind text, and/or home visit</p>	<p>Hello, this is [staff member name] from [school]. I was just calling because [student name] has been absent this year three times. We always like to check in to make sure students are okay when they are absent, and we hadn't heard anything about [student name]. How are they doing? Is there anything we can do to support them getting to school or reporting absences when they are out? Do you have any questions about how they are doing academically [link attendance to academic progress]?</p>
<p><b>Possible loss of credit due to attendance in high school course (secondary only)</b></p> <p><i>Principals have discretion on how to implement</i></p>	<p>Caregivers of students with 5+ period absences in a high school credit-bearing course</p>	<p>BrightArrow - Email, Text</p>	<p><a href="#">Click here for a link</a> to scripts in English and Spanish.</p> <p>Communication about a school's implementation of this policy should be provided early in the year, and to individual students at risk of losing credit prior to them hitting the 11 absence threshold.</p>
<p><b>Quarterly Attendance Nudge</b></p> <p><i>Opt-in for Schools 2025-26</i></p>	<p>All Caregivers</p>	<p>BrightArrow - Email, Text</p>	<p><a href="#">Click here for a link</a> to scripts in English and Spanish.</p> <p>Click here for instructions in using an automated script in BrightArrow to send quarterly update nudges to caregivers.</p>

## 12. Documents for Tiered Intervention

The following documents are required at different points in the attendance support process. Required letters can be mass generated and printed with a student selection in PowerSchool with the clickpath [Data and Reporting -> FormLetters+ -> Attendance](#). These letters will include information on individual absences for students and pre-populate school information. If the letters do not appear, the user needs to be added to this screen in PowerSchool by emailing [sissupport@k12albemarle.org](mailto:sissupport@k12albemarle.org). Letters are available in multiple languages both in PS and [at this link](#).

In PowerSchool, when a student is selected, office associates and administrators can go to a student's page -> attendance -> attendance tracking and document with a date when the letters and forms below were completed. There is also a space to enter notes for student and caregiver attendance conferences. The attendance tracking page should be kept up to date for all students at Tiers II and III.

- **[Chronic Absenteeism \(excused\)](#)** (Students missing 10% or more of school year, but not hitting UEX thresholds): Sent by school quarterly for any student who is chronically absent and who has not already received one of the letters below. This letter focuses on available support for students who are absent, as well as the importance of regular attendance and necessary documentation for excused absences.

- **5 Day UEX Letter** (Attendance Plan): Sent by school after five unexcused absences to establish attendance plan based on student/caregiver needs.
- **7 Day UEX Letter** (Attendance Conference): Notification of a required attendance conference to provide additional support.
- **Attendance Letter Translations** Spanish, Chinese, Dari, Pashto, and Arabic Translations of all Attendance Letters
- **Truancy Barriers Identification Guide**: Completed during Tier III to understand root causes of absences.
- **Attendance Contract**: Agreement signed by student and caregiver to follow the attendance plan. Completed at the attendance conference after 7 UEX absences.
- **Consent for Release of Information**: Required to collaborate with community partners.
  - **Consent form translated to Dari.**
- **Social History Form**: Completed before MDT referral.
- **MDT Referral Form**: Fill this out to schedule a meeting with the MDT, prior to moving to court referral.
- **MDT Checklist**: This is to help the administrator or social worker bringing a case to the MDT to prepare.
- **Truancy Letter** (Truancy Process): Notification of contact regarding truancy. This does not need to be sent exactly at 10+ UEX. Rather, 10+ UEX is a minimum. This letter is sent after additional supports have been provided in Tier III, including referral to the MDT, and the student's attendance has not improved.
- **Truancy Referral Form**: Submitted when referring a case to court services. Email to [charlottesvilleintake@djj.virginia.gov](mailto:charlottesvilleintake@djj.virginia.gov)

Each document ensures consistent documentation, legal compliance, and strong communication with families and external partners.