



Chronic Absenteeism

WHAT IS CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM?

Being chronically absent means a student is missing 10 percent or more of school, for both **excused and unexcused** reasons. This puts the student at a higher risk of not graduating high school and possibly becoming a high school dropout.

Are chronic absenteeism and truancy the same thing?

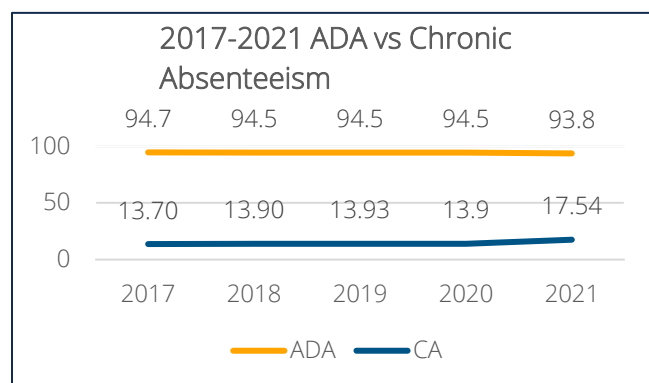
No. Chronic absenteeism considers both excused and unexcused absences. Any student missing 10 percent or more of the days that school has been in session at any point in the school year is considered chronically absent. Truancy occurs when a child is absent from school without a valid excuse.

Attendance rates tell **how many** students show up each day. Chronic Absenteeism rates tell **which** students don't show up.

72-1113(c) (1) Whenever a child is required by law to attend school and is enrolled in school, and the child is inexcusably absent therefrom on either three consecutive school days or five school days in any semester or seven school days in any school year, whichever of the foregoing occurs first, the child shall be considered to be not attending school as required by law. A child is inexcusably absent from school if the child is absent therefrom all or a significant part of a school day without a valid excuse acceptable to the school employee designated by the board of education to have responsibility for the school attendance of such child.

How are Attendance Rate and Chronic Absenteeism related?

The attendance rate is the Average Daily Attendance/Average Daily Membership of a school or district. The Chronic Absenteeism rate, which now must be reported, is the percentage of students in a school that miss more than 10 percent of the instructional time for any reason, excused or unexcused.



Myths about Chronic Absenteeism?

- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused.
- Sporadic absences aren't a problem.
- Attendance only matters in the older grades.

FACT ...
 Missing **10 percent** or more of instructional days can translate into third-graders unable to master reading, sixth-graders failing subjects and ninth-graders dropping out of high school.

Why are students chronically absent?

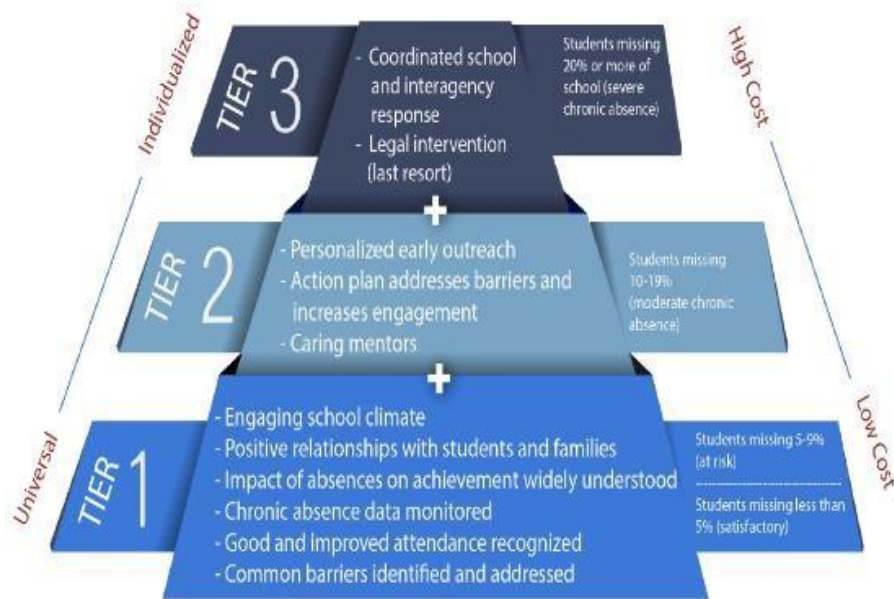
Identifying that a student is chronically absent is only the first step. After we know which students are missing school, we must find out the root cause of **WHY** they are missing school and put in place interventions to address that root cause. The focus must be on changing the behavior, not simply punishing the student for missing school.

Barriers	Aversion	Disengagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of access to health or dental care • Chronic illness • Trauma • No save path to school • Poor transportation • Housing instability • High mobility • Involvement with child welfare or juvenile justice system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggling academically or socially • Bullying • Ineffective/exclusionary school discipline • Parents had negative school experience • Undiagnosed disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of engaging and culturally relevant instruction • No meaningful relationships with adults in school • Vulnerable to being with peers out of school vs. in school • Poor school climate • Discouraged due to lack of credits

Attendance Works Strategy 2: Consider Needed Supports (website)
<https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/teaching-attendance-2-0/use-data-for-intervention-and-support/strategy-2-consider-needed-supports/>

What can schools do to improve attendance?

Tiered System of Supports For Improving Attendance



- Monitor data: Create a school team that regularly reviews attendance to identify trends in absences and possible barriers to attendance.
- Engage students and parents: Create a school climate that encourages students to come to school every day, create a welcoming culture of attendance and provide activities that engage students and families.
- Recognize good and improved attendance.
- Provide personalized early outreach: Make sure that every absence is accounted for and develop a multi-tiered approach to interventions.
- Identify and remove barriers to attendance: Work with staff, students, parents and community partners to help address barriers to attendance that are unique for your school and/or district.

For more information, contact:

Dr. Robyn Kelso
 Education Program Consultant
 Career Standards and Assessment Services
 (785) 296-3444
 rkelso@ksde.org



Kansas State Department of Education
 900 S.W. Jackson Street, Suite 102
 Topeka, Kansas 66612-1212

(785) 296-3201

www.ksde.org

The Kansas State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: KSDE General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, KSDE, Landon State Office Building, 900 S.W. Jackson, Suite 102, Topeka, KS 66612, (785) 296-3201.

NOVEMBER 2021