

**Administrative Procedure JED-AP(1): STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES - (Grades K-5)**

Status: DRAFT

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**EXPLANATION**

**Editor's Note: Changes made at district's request.**

As directed by the board, the following procedures will be used to implement the district's attendance policy.

## Definitions

*Attendance* – A student is considered to be in attendance if the student is physically present in a class; participating in a district-sponsored or district-approved activity; participating in a class through alternative methods or media as allowed by board policy; receiving homebound services; or receiving services at another location pursuant to law or by arrangement of the district.

*Parent* – A parent, guardian or person acting as a parent in the absence of the parent or guardian if the student is under 18. If the student is 18 or otherwise emancipated, the student will serve as the parent for purposes of this procedure.

*Tardy* – A student is tardy if the student arrives after the expected time class or school begins, as determined by the district. Students arriving in class before or at the halfway point in the class period are considered tardy. Students arriving in class after the halfway point are considered to have been absent.

*Truancy* – A student is truant if the student is absent from class or school without the knowledge and consent of the parents and the administration. A student is also considered truant if the student leaves school without the consent of the principal or accumulates excessive unjustifiable absences, even with parental consent. Truancy is a type of unexcused absence.

## Attendance Standards

The following absences will be excused. In certain circumstances, written documentation may be required as indicated.

1. Illness or injury of the student, with notification from parent as specified by school officials.
2. Illness or injury of a member of the student's family when the student's presence is necessary or expected, with notification from parent as specified by school officials.
3. Medical and dental appointments, with notification from parent as specified by school officials. The principal may require written appointment confirmation by medical provider.
4. Funeral, with notification from parent as specified by school officials. The principal may require a program or other evidence of attendance as additional verification.
5. Religious observances, with notification from parent as specified by school officials.
6. Other appointments that cannot be scheduled outside attendance hours, such as court appearances, with notification from parent as specified by school officials.
7. Visits with a parent or legal guardian who is an active duty member of the military who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or is immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, with permission of the superintendent or designee.

All other absences and any absence for which required documentation is not provided are unexcused.

## Response to Students' Absenteeism/Attendance Concerns

*Grades K-5*

The district will ensure that the building-level Tier system has been implemented for each individual student when attendance is a concern. District personnel may contact the Children's Division (CD) if there is a reasonable suspicion that a student's lack of attendance constitutes educational neglect. In addition, all three cities (Raytown, Kansas City and Independence) in the Raytown School District have truancy ordinances. Continued chronic absences and failure of progress within the Tier 3 supports could result in court involvement.

Attendance in early grades is crucial to later academic development. In addition, attendance habits are formed in early grades, and many later attendance problems can be averted with intensive family and student interventions in early grades. For this reason, principals, with the assistance of building staff, will closely monitor student attendance and implement intervention strategies and other actions as follows:

**Tier 1 Supports: 90% to 100%**

- Clear and consistent communication about attendance expectations and goals
  - Buildings will provide that the RQS expectation is for students to maintain at least 90% attendance for the year.
  - Building will provide that the RQS expectation is for consistent communication from parents and students concerning absences. (Why is attendance important?/Why do we do this?)
    - Handbook, parent-teacher conferences, back to-school night, on-boarding new students, etc.
- District transportation shall be evaluated within attendance support team to identify students with a greater need for it.
- Clear expectations about arrival and dismissal
  - Use Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Celebrations of attendance (improved and perfect attendance)
  - September Attendance Awareness kick-off month
  - PBIS, Raytown Educational Foundation (REF), attendance programs
  - Utilize TV, bulletin boards, district website, Twitter, Facebook
    - Weekly attendance percentages by grade level and overall building
    - Monthly improvements
- Positive communication when students are absent
  - Daily automated by attendance office
  - Secretaries or staff designee will make personal calls for those students whose guardians have not called to notify the school of absence by 9:30 a.m. for early schools and 10:05 a.m. for late schools. THIS IS A SAFETY ISSUE.
  - Monthly Letter – 5 and 10 day
  - Teacher contact after 3–5 days of unexcused absences
    - Can be done by best way to get into contact with parent (email/phone)
    - Sped case managers can also call.
- Carpet time, Community Building – monthly attendance check in
  - Each classroom teacher will go over student attendance monthly, choose topic from outline below or

other related topic based on class needs (must be related to attendance)

- Send email to parent/Advisory teacher discussing attendance specifics
- Log in SISK 12-teacher
- **September** – Routines (bedtime routines, morning routines, self-care. Did you know – attendance facts)
- **October** – Healthy Habits (what is too sick for school, eating habits, sleep habits)
- **November** – Holiday stress relief (how to maintain good attendance through the holidays)
- **December** – Self-Care (Plans for End of Course exams, plans for break, plan of how to return to school refreshed and ready)
- **January** – Review Routines and Rituals (bedtime, morning, self-care)
- **February** – Review personal attendance –how to set goals for EOY/Celebrate
- **March** – Discuss barriers to attendance (focus on testing days, spring fever)
- **April** – What specific needs will help attendance through May/Summer school prep
- **May** – Plans for summer, summer school, academic plans, relaxation

**Tier 2 Supports: 85% to 90%**

- Community and school barriers identified and addressed by attendance team
  - Transportation, family care (babysitting, work, lack of support), basic needs, food
  - Support of district offices – Family Support Service (FSS), English Language Development liaison (ELD), transportation, student support
- Student peer/adult mentor assigned:
  - Use of ambassadors (possible older students)
  - Identified teachers, janitor, SRO, assistant principal, coaches
  - Students will meet until desired attendance is achieved.
    - 5-10 minute check in/triage
- Personal phone call to parent/student discussing attendance
  - Interventionist, counselor, social worker or staff designee
    - Can be divided up in attendance team meetings
  - Weekly until desired attendance is achieved.
- Attendance plans created and supported
  - Individual Educational Plan
  - 504 Plan created – medical, mental health
  - Behavior (to modify suspension)
- Small groups assigned until desired attendance achieved (social worker/counselor/interventionist)

- Discuss routines and self-care (trauma smart).
- Discuss barriers and how to overcome them.
- Discuss the need to be involved in a club or activity.
  - Complete an interest survey.
- Provide alarm clocks and/or automated wake-up calls to student and parent.
- Discuss possible community neighborhood supports for transportation.
  - Provide connections with families.
- Connect student/families to resources needed.
- Home visit
- Site intervention team referral process and data gathering begins Coordinator of Attendance and Dropout Recovery (CADR) referral – 0150 communication begins

### **Tier 3 Supports: Individualized Plans for Student below 85%**

- Parent/Student, attendance team meeting to discuss attendance – supports, needs, barriers
  - Include district offices – FSS, ELD, student support, SPED, CADR
  - Have an academic review to review
    - Discuss tutoring, possible academic plans, retention
  - Set monthly goals and follow-up meetings
- Home Visits – CADR, school representative, district office representative
- Work with outside agencies to improve attendance and supports
  - Sisters in Christ, REAP, Rediscover, Swope, medical, Children's Division, etc. (community resources)
  - Parent needs to sign release – if necessary.
- Site Intervention Team Student attendance hearing – District Level
  - Students may will be referred to the site intervention team an attendance hearing after two consecutive months at or below 70% with no improvement or mitigating circumstances.
  - Parents/Students may would be required to attend the site intervention team meeting hearing at the designated school building district level.
  - Site intervention team will District office representatives, school personnel and hearing officer:
    - Complete Hh historical attendance review
    - Resource need evaluation completed (social worker)
      - Resources contacted prior to hearing ending end of meeting
    - Academic review completed
      - Alternative educational paths evaluated

- Resources contacted prior to end of meeting hearing ending
  - Review date set for hearing continuation
    - Upon review, if no improvement is made, possible referral to:
      - Children's Division
      - KCMO, Independence and Raytown truant court
- Referral made to the appropriate municipality upon review of the Site Intervention Team and Coordinator of Attendance and Dropout Recovery hearing officer.
- Possible dates for hearing at RSECC:
  - October 5, 2023
  - November 2, 2023
  - December 7, 2023
  - January 11, 2024
  - February 8, 2024
  - March 7, 2024
  - April 4, 2024
  - May 2, 2024
- Hearing will start at 9 a.m.
  - 15-minute prep team meeting will be held prior to family coming in.

## Notice and Due Process

A summary of the board-adopted attendance policy and related procedures will be published in student and other handbooks and posted on the district's website. In addition, students and their parents will be notified prior to the imposition of any additional steps or consequences given.

## Intervention and Engagement Strategies

The district will utilize the following intervention and engagement strategies as part of the district's overall approach to improve student attendance and achievement.

The superintendent or designee will:

1. Conduct community-wide public relations efforts that stress the importance of school attendance.
2. Collaborate with community groups and other organizations that engage youth in activities to create a consistent message about the importance of education.

Building-level administrators and staff will ensure that the building-level Tier system has been implemented for each individual student when attendance is a concern.

## Evaluation

Principals, with the assistance of building staff, will conduct ongoing evaluations of all strategies used to improve student attendance. The evaluations will include:

1. A summary of movement between the tiers.

2. The number of students in each tier.
3. Changes in overall attendance rates.
4. Changes in attendance rates and academic achievement of students in Tier 2 and Tier 3.
5. Any other data that can be used to assess the effectiveness of strategies and interventions.

Strategies found to be ineffective will be modified or replaced. Staff members/teams will provide evaluation information to the principal for the ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategies and interventions used to improve student attendance.