

Washoe County School District Attendance Manual 2023-2024

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Policy Information

1. **Students who are sick should stay home from school based on current exclusionary practices. More information can be found at: [Student Health Services / When Should My Child Stay Home Sick? \(washoeschools.net\)](#).**
2. Attendance in WCSD is governed by NRS Chapter 392 as well as Board Policy 5400 and all attached Administrative Regulations and Procedures. Please visit the WCSD Policy website for more information on these policies.

Common Policy Questions

1. How many days can students miss before retention or course failure is considered?
 - a. Per WCSD policy no student shall be retained or fail a course **solely** due to attendance. Principals and teachers may choose to consider attendance as one component of a retention/failure decision, but it cannot be the only factor.
 - b. WCSD recognizes that students who miss class time are at a greater risk of falling behind academically which can lead to increased risk for failure, academic struggles, and dropout. The best way for students to stay at grade level is to attend school on time, every day, unless they are physically or mentally unable to attend.
2. What is considered to be the legal record book for WCSD?
 - a. Infinite Campus is the legal gradebook. It is not required to keep copies of assignments or other proof of completion of instruction related activities beyond what is recorded in Infinite Campus.
3. What is Chronic Absenteeism?
 - a. Chronic absenteeism is a federal definition that means students are absent for 10% or more of their enrolled school days. Students are considered to be absent for a given school day if they miss 50% or more of their scheduled instructional minutes for a given school day.
 - i. At the middle and high school level students are considered absent from an individual course if they miss more than 50% of the minutes scheduled for that course. Missing fewer than 50% of the course minutes, no matter when those minutes are in the course is recorded as tardy.
 - b. WCSD is required to identify students who are chronically absent and to report numbers of chronically absent students to the state and federal government annually.
 - c. Chronic absenteeism is a strong predictor of academic struggles including dropping out even at the elementary level.
4. What is Truancy?
 - a. Truancy is defined by NRS 392.130 as “a pupil shall be deemed truant when they are absent from school without the written approval of the pupil’s teacher or the principal of the school, unless the pupil is physically or mentally unable to attend school.”
 - b. An unapproved absence of at least one full period may be deemed as truancy.

- c. Habitual truancy indicates that a student has been declared truant three or more times within a single school year or when a single truancy occurs in the year following a year when a student was found to be habitually truant.
 - d. Truancy can be confirmed in two ways:
 - i. When parents/guardians verify the truancy
 - ii. When a school official witnesses a student leaving campus without permission
 - e. Students must be off campus to be considered truant; a student out of class but on campus is not absent from school and is thus not considered to be truant.
5. What absence types exist in WCSD?
- a. There are no excused or unexcused absences in WCSD.
 - i. The types of absences that exist in WCSD are exempt and non-exempt:
 - 1. Absences for which documentation is provided by a medical, mental, or behavioral health professional are exempt from consideration when calculating chronic absenteeism.
 - a. Covid exclusions are by definition ordered by a medical professional and are exempt.
 - 2. All other absences are non-exempt.
 - b. All absences, regardless of the reason, other than those for which documentation is provided by a medical, mental, or behavioral health professional, including the school nurse when exclusion criteria are met, are considered to be absences and count towards chronic absenteeism.
6. Which attendance code should be used when students do not attend school due to parent refusal?
- a. The DOM code should be used in the event that a parent chooses not to send their student to school for reasons other than illness.
 - i. These absences will be subject to calculation for chronic absenteeism as well as subject to 10- and 20- day withdrawal as appropriate.
7. Which attendance code should be used when students do not attend due to their own refusal?
- a. Students who are refusing to attend school as reported by a parent or guardian meet the definition for truancy and should be recorded as CT.

Taking Daily Attendance

1. For all types of learning, attendance is to be taken daily.
2. Teachers are required to take attendance in Infinite Campus within the first 15 minutes of every class period.
 - a. AM/PM are considered periods for elementary school.
 - b. Unless participating through temporary distance learning or through an approved long term independent study plan, students must be physically present in class before the teacher can mark them present.
 - c. Teachers mark students as:
 - i. P – Present
 - ii. A – Absent
 - iii. T – Tardy
 1. Teachers can enter EMI into the comment box when a student has a valid reason (pass or other documentation) for being tardy to a given class period.
 2. Students who enter the school building late must check in at the office before proceeding to class.
 3. Students are considered present if they attend more than 50% of a class period. If students miss more than 50% of a class period they MAY be marked absent for that period at the discretion of the site administrator.
 - a. Students should only be marked absent in this circumstance if the behavior is habitual and for the purpose of designing interventions or facilitating communications.
3. The school secretary, attendance clerk, or other person designated by the site administrator should run the classroom monitor report 15 minutes into each period to ensure that teachers are taking attendance. Calls should be made to any teacher who does not take attendance within the first 15 minutes of class.
4. The school secretary, attendance clerk, or other person designated by the site administrator should run the call report daily and contact the parents/guardians of students who are recorded as UNV absences for that day to determine reason for absence.
5. A complete list of current attendance codes and their meanings can be found on the attendance section of the Intervention Department website.
6. Students participating in Temporary Distance Learning or in approved long term independent study should be considered present when meaningful contact occurs on a given day between the student and a certified staff member. See temporary distance learning section for additional information.

Attendance Coding

A list of attendance codes and their meanings can be found below.

- *AEL – Student is learning at an alternative location (i.e., Jan Evans)
- AUK – Unverified absence while on distance learning (only used with authorization.)
- CT – Confirmed truant.
- CTL – Confirmed truant, record for dates on which truancy letters are sent.
- *DLP – Distance Learning Present (only used with authorization.)
- DOM – Domestic
- *EMD – Absent with professional note provided.
- FCA – Absence due to foster care placement, use only as directed by district foster liaison.
- *HDE – Exclusion due to declared outbreak.
- *HDED – Exclusion due to positive test (lab or home) for Covid
- IAB – Intersession absence
- *ISS – In school suspension
- MED – Medical absence for which documentation from a professional is not provided.
- MVE – McKinney Vento eligible, use only as directed by district CIT staff.
- *PRE – Special use code for students excluded due to Covid partway through a school day.
- REL – Religious observance
- RWY – Runaway, requires police case number.
- *SCH – School activity
- SUS3 – Suspension with instruction provided.
- SUS – Out of school suspension
- UNV – Unverified absence

* - indicates a code which is exempt from chronic absenteeism calculation.

Reports

The following are reports that can be generated within IC or BIG as well as recommended timelines. Instructions for running each report can be found in the staff section of the attendance website.

1. Classroom Monitor Report
 - a. This report is used to monitor that teachers are taking attendance within the first 15 minutes of each class and should be run 15 minutes into each period.
2. Caller Report
 - a. This report generates a list of students for whom the UNV code has been recorded on a given school day as well as contact information for their parents/guardians. This report should be run daily. It is recommended to run this report shortly after Blackboard Connect calls are made.
3. Period Count Report
 - a. This report can be run to identify students who have missed a specified number of class periods during a given period of time. It is recommended to run this report on the first day of the week to identify students who missed a number of periods in the previous week. The purpose of this report is to help identify students who may be in need of attendance intervention.
4. Consecutive Absence Reports
 - a. This report is used to identify students who have missed a specified number of days in a row. Students who miss 5+ days for unknown reasons (UNV) should be referred to the Attendance Officer assigned to your site. Students who miss 10 consecutive days for unknown reasons (UNV) must be unenrolled from school and referred to the Re-Engagement Specialist assigned to your site. Students who miss 20 consecutive days for any reason (other than exempt absences) must be unenrolled from school and referred to the Re-Engagement Specialist assigned to your site.
5. ASR Reports
 - a. ASR reports are run every other week at each site. Teachers are responsible for reviewing those reports to verify that attendance is correct. Any irregularities in the ASR should be reported to the office staff for corrections. ASRs are managed by the office of Student Accounting and are required for reporting and auditing purposes.

Communications

1. Schools are responsible for informing students as well as parents/guardians about the WCSD attendance policy as well as site specific attendance regulations including the importance of regular school attendance and what constitutes chronic absenteeism. It is most important for families to understand that regular attendance is one of the best predictors we have for future academic success. Also of critical importance is the fact that all absences, other than those exempted by documentation from a medical, mental, or behavioral health professional are counted in calculating chronic absenteeism.
2. Parents should provide documentation for absence requests within 3 days of the absence in order to change an absence to exempt status. Documentation received after this 3-day window must be approved by the site administrator prior to absence codes being changed.
3. All contact between school sites and parents/guardians regarding attendance should be documented in the attendance notes tab of Infinite Campus.
4. Attendance letters are intended to facilitate communication between school and parents/guardians when student attendance reaches three thresholds that could indicate that attendance intervention is needed. Letters should be generated once per month and sent to all students who have reached those thresholds. Infinite Campus will track which students have received letters and generate the correct letters for you if you follow the instructions available on the attendance website.
 - a. Recommended thresholds for attendance letters are 5 absences for the first letter, 10 for the second, and 15 for the third.
5. Truancy letters can be found in the behavior letter wizard of Infinite Campus and should be sent following a confirmed truancy. Please note that a waiting period of 7 school days must elapse in between sending truancy letters in order to give parents/guardians time to respond. The third truancy letter must be sent via registered mail so receipt can be confirmed.
6. Pre-arranged absences should be communicated to the school by parents/guardians 48 hours prior to an absence of 1-2 days and 5 school days prior to an absence of 3 or more days.

Exclusions

Currently students may be excluded from school by the WCSD or the Washoe County Health District due to Covid as well as for other conditions.

Covid Exclusions

1. Covid exclusions are only done when a positive case is confirmed by either a lab or home test.
 - a. The current exclusion period for Covid is 5 days.
 - b. This period can be extended up to 10 days if symptoms are still present after the 5-day exclusion period has elapsed.
 - i. Symptoms requiring an extension of the exclusion include a fever over 100.4 or vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours of the end of the exclusion.
 - ii. If symptoms are no longer present students should return to school after the 5-day exclusion.
2. Covid exclusions are coded using HDED.
3. When a student is excluded due to Covid they must be provided with temporary distance learning opportunities. School sites have flexibility to determine specific temporary distance learning plans and formats. Students who are excluded due to Covid are coded as HDED regardless of participation.
 - a. Students should be placed into the Temporary Distance Learning group within Infinite Campus to indicate that virtual learning is offered.

Exclusions for Other Conditions

1. Students can be excluded from school by the WCSD through Student Health Services (school nurse) or by the Washoe County Health District for conditions other than Covid. Most commonly these exclusions are GI related.
 - a. The period of exclusion is typically 48 hours but is at the discretion of Student Health Services or the Health District.
 - b. Temporary distance learning is not offered for exclusions other than those due to Covid.
 - c. Students excluded for conditions other than Covid and ordered by the Health District due to outbreak status should be coded as HDE.
 - d. Students excluded by the school nurse for conditions other than Covid but for which there is no outbreak ordered should be coded EMD.
 - i. DOM should be used if a parent chooses to keep a student who is not ill home out of an abundance of caution.
 - ii. MED should be used if a parent chooses to keep a student home who is ill but not required to be excluded.

Procedures When Students Are Absent

When students are sick and have symptoms which may be contagious, they should not come to school. The following are procedures to follow in the event that students are not able to attend school. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to schedule family trips and other activities during regularly scheduled school breaks. Students who miss school are at a greater risk of falling behind, course failure, and dropout than students who attend daily.

1. If the student is ill parents/guardians should notify the school in person, via telephone, or through the use of the absence request form in the parent portal on each day that the student will be absent.
 - a. It is the responsibility of the student to request make up work/missed concepts from their teacher(s) upon their return to school following an absence.
 - b. When make-up work is requested, teachers have 48 hours from the day the request is made to provide it.
 - c. Students have the number of days absent plus one from the day they receive the make-up work to return it. This period can be extended at the discretion of the teacher.
2. Pre-arranged absences can be requested for domestic reasons including but not limited to family trips, appointments, or for other purposes.
 - a. It is the responsibility of the student to request make-up work from teachers at least 48 hours prior to the start of a pre-arranged absence of 1-2 school days and at least 5 school days prior to absences longer than 2 days.
 - b. Where possible sites are encouraged to provide work for students to complete during the pre-arranged absence. If this is not possible then students have the number of days absent plus one from the day, they receive make-up work to return it. This period can be extended at the discretion of the teacher.
 - c. Please refer to Administrative Procedure 6420 regarding unenrollment of students when on vacations or trips exceeding 10 days.
3. In the event that students miss 5+ days of UNV absence contact should be attempted; if contact is unsuccessful, the Attendance Officer assigned to your site should be contacted.
4. If students are absent for 10 consecutive days and their whereabouts are unknown (UNV absences) the student must be unenrolled.
5. If students are absent for 20 consecutive days for any reason the student must be unenrolled.
6. In the event that students reach the 10-day UNV or 20-day unenrollment thresholds the Re-Engagement Specialist assigned to your site should be contacted when the student is unenrolled.

Interventions

Per Administrative Regulation 5400 all schools should have an MTSS team in place and one area of focus for that team should be on student attendance. A list of suggested practices and interventions as well as a complete toolkit for administrators and school leaders for addressing absenteeism is available on the attendance section of the Intervention Department website.

Contact Rechelle Murillo, Intervention Department Director, or Doug Taylor, Attendance Coordinator for additional support and intervention related resources.

Attendance Officers

Attendance Officers are primarily considered to be a tier 3 support for students when site-based intervention has not been successful. At least 3 site-based interventions should be attempted prior to Attendance Officer involvement in most cases. Supports that Attendance Officers include:

- Formal attendance monitoring
- Home visits/well checks when students have 5+ consecutive days of UNV absence recorded.
- Limited transport to school, including refusals.
- Address verification when needed for audits, zoning, or returned mail.

SARB/eSARB

These are the district student attendance review boards which are conducted for students in grades 1-10. Site administrators and counselors can make referrals to SARB/eSARB after 3 site-based interventions have been documented in IC and once an Attendance Officer has attempted formal tier 3 intervention (Formal attendance monitoring.)

The purpose of SARB/eSARB is to identify barriers to attendance and to create a plan for students, families, and school staff to remove those barriers. **SARB/eSARBs are not meant to be punitive.** The Universal Referral Form for SARB/eSARB can be found on the Intervention Department website.

Temporary Distance Learning

Temporary distance learning (TDL) opportunities must be offered to students when excluded from attending in person due to Covid. **Temporary distance learning cannot be used for any other purpose**, including exclusions for conditions other than Covid.

The method that students use to participate in TDL will be determined by individual school sites. However, meaningful daily contact between the student and a certified staff member is a requirement. Learning goals for students participating in TDL must be the same as the learning goals for students participating via in person learning in order to provide for a continuity of instruction so that, when students return to in person learning, they have not missed concepts. Possible forms of contact with students include:

- Work sent home in paper form for students who do not have computer access and the teacher discusses the assignments or learning objectives with the student via telephone.
- If the student does not have access to a computer or a telephone, then paper assignments may be sent home to be worked on during the exclusionary period. Students can only be marked present on days when there is meaningful contact between the student and a certified staff member.
- Students can view or work on lessons delivered to the class live via Microsoft Teams
- The teacher can record the lesson for students to watch and will use an online resource or telephone conversation to monitor student progress.
- Student participation in live online virtual lessons with the teacher via Microsoft Teams or another approved platform
- Receipt of daily assignments by the teacher through an online platform (Microsoft Teams) with feedback provided to the student.
- Email sent from the student to the teacher (can include a reply to an email sent from the teacher to the student)
- Telephone contact between the student and the teacher in which learning objectives are discussed.
- Other forms of contact as approved by the school principal.

Extended Distance Learning (Independent Study Plans)

Students may be placed on extended distance learning in the event that a medical, mental, or behavioral health condition makes it impossible or impractical for the student to attend school in person for an extended period of time. In this event, schools should contact their Associate Chief or the WCSD Attendance Coordinator to request authorization for extended distance learning. Students cannot be placed on extended distance learning without authorization from an Associate Chief or the Attendance Coordinator. If authorized, then the DLP code is used to record students as present on days in which they either make progress towards learning goals or have meaningful contact with a certified staff member. If the student does not make progress or have contact then the appropriate absence code (MED, DOM, UNV) should be used.

Site and District Wide Temporary Distance Learning

In the event that all three contingency days are used for inclement weather, smoke days, or other similar occurrences then sites or the entire district will move to Temporary Distance Learning for additional days in order to provide a continuum of learning to students. Sites are expected to develop a plan for site and district wide temporary distance learning, and have it prepared to implement if this occurs. The specific format for distance learning in this event can be set by individual sites. Work through Microsoft Teams is recommended with plans in place to support students who do not have access to devices or the Internet.

When this occurs, teachers are to mark students present as normal when they have contact with the student using the site distance learning plan. Any student who does not participate as expected in that plan is to be marked absent using the appropriate absence code (MED, DOM, UNV.) A single contact during the day is sufficient at the elementary level, secondary students are expected to participate in all scheduled courses for the temporary distance learning day.