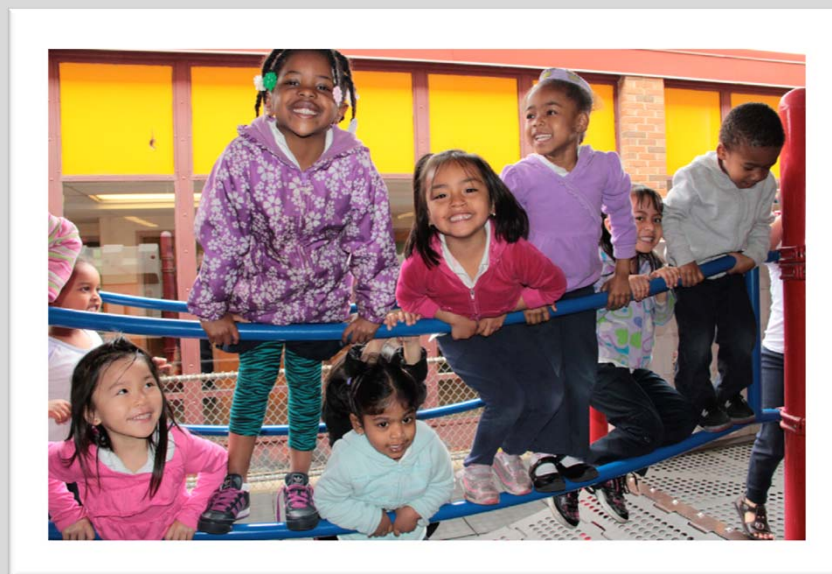


CPS FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS

Collaborating for Improved Attendance



Policies and Procedures Overview

Why Attendance Matters



From preschool through high school, absenteeism has serious implications for academic outcomes. Students who are chronically absent have (CCSR, 2013):

- Lower test scores
- Lower likelihood of being on-track in high school
- Lower likelihood of graduating
- Lower course grades limiting college acceptance and hindering completion



Strong attendance is the foundation for success in college, career and life:

- Attendance is a pre-requisite to engage in instruction
- Helping chronically absent students get caught up through remediation is a far more challenging and expensive way of educating them than if they move through the system engaged and on-track at every grade level
- Students who attend regularly have a greater sense of connection to their school community.

Every Day and On Time



We need your child in school every day so that:

- They are a part of our school family
- They stay on top of their education
- They learn about new things that help them get ready for their future
- They understand how to work with others
- They understand the importance of school



What happens when they do not come every day?

- They feel out of place
- They fall behind in their work
- They miss important opportunities that can inspire their future
- They have a hard time working with others
- They do not see how school is important to their future

Let's Talk About Being On Time



- Start the day on time to make the day go well.
- Coming late to school starts your child's day feeling rushed, frustrated, and behind.
- When the bell rings, an elementary school child should be in line to start the day with their class.
- When the bell rings, a high school student should be in their seat, ready for class instruction to begin.
- Students who arrive late for school must be allowed to proceed to their class after obtaining proper documentation of their tardiness.
- An elementary school student that receives fewer than 300 minutes of instruction on a regular attendance day due to a tardy is recoded to a whole day or $\frac{1}{2}$ day absence (depending on the arrival time).
- A high school student that receives fewer than 300 minutes of instruction on a regular attendance day, due to his/her missing entire class(es) due to late arrival, is recoded to a whole day or $\frac{1}{2}$ day absence (depending on the arrival time).



Communicating About Your Child's Absence



- Make sure you give the school contact information that includes at least one working phone number; it is important that someone can be reached if your child becomes ill during the school day, or something happens where the child's family needs to be reached.
 - If you child must be absent, call the school and tell them that your child will not be coming.
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- Elementary schools take attendance during the 1st hour of the school day and, if the parent has not notified the school of the absence, a representative from the school phones the home of absent students during the 2nd hour.
 - High schools take attendance during each class but are not required to call the home of absent students.
 - The CPS district absentee robo outcaller automatically phones the home of every absent elementary student, even if their parent/guardian informed the school of the absence.
 - Provide the school with a signed "Reason for Absence Note" form ***the first day your child returns to school*** from an absence.

When Should Your Child Stay Home?



WHEN SHOULD I KEEP MY CHILD AT HOME?



Send me to school if...

- I have a runny nose or just a little cough, but no other symptoms.
- I haven't taken any fever reducing medicine for 24 hours, and I haven't had a fever in that time.
- I haven't thrown up or had any diarrhea for 24 hours.



Keep me at home if...

- I have a fever higher than 99.6 *degrees* F.
- I'm throwing up or have diarrhea.
- My eyes are pink and crusty.
- I have a cough that keeps me awake.
- I have a sore throat.



Call the doctor if...

- I have a fever higher than 99.6 F longer than 2 days.
- I've been throwing up or have diarrhea longer than 2 days.
- I've had the sniffles for more than a week, and they aren't getting better.
- I still have asthma symptoms after using my regular asthma medication (call 911 if I'm having trouble breathing after using an inhaler).
- I have a sore throat.

Important Attendance Definitions



- **Attendance rate** = percentage of days present out of total days enrolled; attendance rate includes both excused and unexcused absences
- **Truant** = A student with one or more unexcused absences
- **Chronic absentee** = A student with 18 or more excused or unexcused absences (10% or more of days enrolled)
- **Chronic truant** = A student with 9 or more unexcused absences for the school year (5% or more of days enrolled)

An Excused Absence	An Unexcused Absence
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student’s illness 2. Observance of a religious holiday (absence note must be provided prior to absence) 3. Death in the immediate family 4. Family emergency 5. Circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent for their child’s safety or health (must be approved by the principal) 6. Other situations beyond the control of the student (as determined by the principal) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A student absence that is not for one of the six valid reasons is deemed unexcused. 2. An unexcused absence for all or part of a school day by a student in grades K-12 is deemed a truant absence and the student is designated a truant student. 3. A truant absence by a grade 9-12 student is referred to as a “cut”. 4. A chronic truant is a K-12 student who has 9 or more full-day unexcused absences for the school year.

Medical Information and Its Importance



- Let the school know if any member of the family is diagnosed by a physician as having any contagious/infectious diseases (like chicken pox).



- Make sure you get a release from a doctor to return to school if the student is suspected of having a communicable/nuisance disease.
- Submit required medical reports to the appropriate school personnel.

- Take care of all periodic health examinations and immunizations so your student does not miss school.

When Is It Time for Vacation?



CPS provides time throughout the year for families to take a vacation. Families should plan their travel around the time given so children do not fall behind.

When is it Time for Vacation?
Labor Day
Columbus Day
School Improvement Day(s)
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Break
Winter Break
Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday Holiday
President's Day
Spring Break
Memorial Day
Summer Vacation

Frequently Asked Questions



- Does my child have to go to school?
From age 6 until reaching age 17, a child who lives in Chicago must be enrolled in and attend school. However, once a child enrolls in school, they must attend even if they are younger than 6 or older than 17.
- Is an excused absence still an absence?
Yes, a note tells the school why your child was absent. This allows your son/daughter to avoid becoming truant. However, whenever a student is not in school, it does count as an absence.
- What if my child does not want to come to school?
Families should maintain that going to school is important, and they should communicate with the school about the anxiety a child is feeling. The school will work with the family to create a solution. Letting a child stay home without working together creates a bigger problem for the student.
- Can my child be dropped due to absences or tardies?
No. Board policy prohibits schools from withdrawing students from enrollment due to excessive absences or tardies.
- Can my child get a consequence for being late or missing classes without an excused absence?
Yes, the "CPS Student Code of Conduct" allows a school to assign detention and/or in-school suspension for excessive truancies or tardies.



What Are Ways That I Can Stay Informed About My Child's Attendance and Progress?



There are 3 ways to stay connected:

1) **Parent Portal:**

Sign up at your school to get regular updates about your child's attendance and grades through the CPS parent communication system.

2) **Parent Involvement**

Attend and participate in school sponsored parent activities and programs such as the Parent Advisory Council and Report Card Pick Up.

- Take the opportunity to meet with your child's teachers
- Participate in events that showcase what is happening at the school

3) **Asking questions:**

- Ask your child every day about what they did
- Ask to see their work so you can make sure there is no homework or notes that need to be reviewed
- Ask your school questions that will help us be better partners in your child's education

The Best Advice



Ask questions!
Your child will have the best
chance for success
if we are connected.

