

Sample High School Attendance Plan

The following attendance plan is illustrative and was developed to represent how a prototypical high school might create an attendance improvement plan that is consistent with IC 20-31-5. The plan was developed to address (1) students who exhibit behaviors consistent with low levels of student engagement and (2) students who are disengaging from school because they do not perceive their academic courses as worthwhile or engaging. As illustrated, the plan provides an example of targeted interventions that research suggests effectively improve student attendance. More importantly, the plan demonstrates how a school can move from existing data about student attendance to a clear, concise plan that not only improves student attendance but provides documentation that can be used to refine these efforts from one year to the next.

School-wide Attendance Goals

Section describes the school's attendance goals for the next school year. The goals described should be specific statements that provide justification for the school's prevention and intervention measures described below.

Sample High School will improve student attendance by:

- Increasing student attendance among ninth and tenth grade students;
- Increasing personalized learning opportunities for eleventh and twelfth graders;
- Increasing student attendance for all students in core academic classes (Math, Language Arts, and Science);
- Decreasing the number of students who miss five or more days of school during Fall Semester by 50%.

Analysis of School Attendance Data

Section describes who was involved in the development of the plan, how the data was collected, and what the analysis of the data suggested. While not required, it is assumed that principals will engage teachers and other stakeholders in developing the attendance plan for their building and engage them in the analysis and interpretation of the school's attendance data.

Student Connections Team

The principal, an assistant principal, department chairs from core academic subjects, and the school counselor meet monthly to review student attendance data as well as current course grades for students who are missing classes.

Analysis

The analysis section should describe what information was collected and an overall interpretation of the school's attendance patterns. In particular, the analysis should identify the students who arriving late to class, the students who are chronically absent, and possible

explanations for their attendance behaviors. The purpose of citing this information is to ensure that prevention and intervention activities are “data-driven.”

The Student Connections Team (STC) downloaded data from the school corporation’s student information system and obtained grade information from teachers collected by the department chairs. The team found that ninth grade students missed 4.8 days in the Fall Semester and 11.9 days by the end of the school year. Tenth grade students missed 5.2 days in the Fall Semester and 12.3 days by the end of the school year. Eleventh grade students missed 9.2 days in the Fall Semester and 13.1 days by the end of the school year. Twelfth grade students missed 11.9 days in the Fall Semester and 13.4 days by the end of the school year.

Thirty percent of students who missed five or more days in a core academic class earned a B or lower on their semester report card. Fifteen percent of students who missed ten or more days failed the class. Students were most likely to fail a math class.

The STC also noted that eleventh and twelfth grade students were more likely to miss class or skip class in the afternoon, particularly following the lunch period. The team found that 40 percent of students who missed a class did so after lunch. Math and Language Arts classes were the most frequently missed.

Notification

The school will adopt a tiered series of notifications for students who are missing an increasing number of school days. The school will use a variety of communication measures (e.g., meetings between the principal and student; phone calls; letters; etc.) to inform parents about their son or daughter’s attendance and to connect students and families with resources that support improved attendance.

# of days absent	Notification
2	Phone Call - Parent will receive a phone call from the school indicating that the student has missed two days of school for any reason.
3	Letter – Parent will receive a letter from the school indicating that the student has missed three days of school. The student will be required to meet with the assistant principal or school guidance counselor to discuss their attendance and to identify any supports that are needed.
5	Phone Call and Letter - Parent will receive a phone call and letter from the school explaining that the student has missed five days of school and reminding the parent of the importance of regular school attendance. The parent will be encouraged to meet with the son or daughter’s counselor to discuss attendance issues.

7	Phone Call, Certified Letter, and Meeting - Parent will receive a phone call from the school informing them that their son or daughter has missed seven days of school. A certified letter will be sent home from the school requiring that the parent meet with the school's principal or counselor to discuss supports that can be provided to facilitate improved attendance as part of an "attendance contract."
10	Home Visit – The school principal and counselor will conduct a home visit to the meet with the student's parents, assess barriers to school attendance, and develop a plan to improve the student's attendance.
11+	Attendance and Truancy Center – Students who miss 11 or more days of school are automatically referred to the Attendance and Truancy Center. The Center works with students and their parents to identify supports that would enable the student to attend class regularly, it also serves as a site to 'collect' students who are absent and re-connect them to their studies.

Prevention Activities

Sample High School will complete the following activities to improve on-time arrival for classes and reducing the incidence of chronic absenteeism.

- **Close campus at lunch**
 - To reduce the incidence of students skipping afternoon classes, the school will move to a closed campus for lunch. Students will be required to eat lunch on campus.
- **Open-house presentation to parents and families**
 - The assistant principal will provide a presentation to parents attending the school's fall and spring open house. The presentation will summarize the risk factors associated with chronic absenteeism, note the resources available at the school to improve student attendance, and describe the risks associated with attendance.
- **Institute the Check and Connect Program for freshman and sophomores with attendance concerns**
 - The principal will pay for a team of freshman and sophomore teachers to participate in the Check and Connect Program. Teachers will be assigned to monitor students who demonstrate frequent absences and assist the student in securing additional resources or supports that enable their attendance.
- **Promote Dual Credit Courses and Career/Technical Education Courses for juniors and seniors to improve engagement**
 - Working with teachers, the school will promote dual credit and career/technical education course offerings to promote greater engagement among students. Dual credit courses will be offered in concert with a nearby community college.

Career/technical education courses will be promoted and enhanced through the integration of Project Lead the Way engineering and biomedical health sciences program.

Community and Legal Intervention

The community and legal intervention section is designed to describe the strategies that the school will use to address students with the most severe absence patterns. This section should describe how the school will utilize truancy, community, or legal interventions to improve attendance.

Sample High School is located in a district that has established a partnership with the Juvenile Justice Department and Sample City Police Department. Students who are absent 10 or more days are required to meet with representative from the Attendance and Truancy Center to discuss their attendance and identify necessary supports. The Attendance and Truancy Center requires each student and their parents to sign a contract that stipulates what each part will do to improve attendance. In the event that the student violates the contract and misses school, they are brought to the Truancy Center and held until their parent is able to pick them up. During the student's time in the center, they meet with a counselor and are required to work on homework or other assignments. To ensure that the students are engaged in productive work, the Center maintains copies of core academic course syllabi and textbooks. These materials are provided in the event that the student does not have his or her homework.

Evaluation and Assessment

The final section describes the steps that the school will take to evaluate the effect of their absenteeism and truancy initiatives. This evaluation need not be sophisticated. It should, however, provide evidence that clearly supports that the efforts are working and are having a positive impact on schools.

To evaluate the absenteeism and truancy reduction efforts at Sample High School, the STC will collect and monitor the following data. This data will be reviewed each semester.

- Total number of days absent for each student enrolled through the school year
- Number of parental notifications sent
- Number of parental meetings held to discuss student attendance
- Number of phone calls made to inform parents about their son or daughter's attendance