

2b. Attendance

(Note: Section 2b does not apply to private schools.)

The ability to continue to monitor attendance, as a proxy for engagement, is arguably one of the most important ways schools can help ensure equitable access to student learning and account for student wellbeing during a pandemic across any instructional model. The primary rationale for documenting student engagement with high-quality attendance data is the relationship between student attendance and student achievement.

As a state education agency, rooted in ensuring civil rights protections and access to quality education, ODE recognizes a fundamental responsibility to gather and review any information that can assist in that core public purpose. Attendance data won't and should not be used in the 2020-21 school year for comparative or accountability reporting but as a potential tool in helping understand the changes happening in how and where students learn and teachers teach. What is most important at this time is our collective effort to support active engagement and provide resources to meet students and families experiencing challenges with staying connected.

The guidance below describes the requirements that each district must use to create and implement a system to internally monitor and track the attendance and engagement of their students. Additional attendance reporting scenarios and FAQ will be captured and shared in a forthcoming document.

Session day requirements are unchanged; session days may not be claimed for weekends or holidays, per ORS 336.010 and 187.010, or any other day during which a licensed or registered teacher is not available to students. If a school switches from a five day/week schedule to a four day/week schedule, the session days must also change.

For On-Site Instructional Models, the ODE's prior attendance and reporting practices are unchanged and should meet the requirements described in this section and can be informed by the recommendations presented.

For any Hybrid Instructional Model or Comprehensive Distance Learning, ODE is establishing the following definitions and guidance:

- Attendance includes both participation in class activities and interaction with a licensed or registered teacher during a school day or interactions with educational assistants,

paraprofessionals, and TAPP family advocates through teacher-designed and facilitated processes.

- Interaction can be evidenced by any of the following or reasonable equivalents:
 - Participating in a video class;
 - Communication from the student to the teacher via chat, text message, communication app or email;
 - A phone call between the teacher or educational assistants/paraprofessionals and the student, or, for younger students, with the parent or guardian of the student;
 - Posting completed coursework to a learning management system or web-based platform or via email; or
 - Turning in completed coursework on a given day.
- When there is no evidence of student interaction during a 24-hour period surrounding a scheduled school day as described, students are reported as absent for the day (grades K-5/ self-contained) or class (grades 6-12/ individual subject).

There may be unusual or unique situations where continuation of daily attendance reporting may require additional problem solving. ODE will work with all districts to help ensure that the reported data meets ODE's criteria for actionable data. ODE does not anticipate attendance data will be a part of At-A-Glance School and District Profiles or Accountability Details reports.

Required

- Grades K-5 (self-contained): Attendance must be taken at least once per day for all students enrolled in school, regardless of the instructional model (On-Site, Hybrid, Comprehensive Distance Learning, online schools).
- Grades 6-12 (individual subject): Attendance must be taken at least once for each scheduled class that day for all students enrolled in school, regardless of the instructional model (On-Site, Hybrid, Comprehensive Distance Learning, online schools).
- Alternative Programs: Some students are reported in ADM as enrolled in a non-standard program (such as tutorial time), with hours of instruction rather than days present and days absent. Attendance must be taken at least once for each scheduled interaction with each student, so that local systems can track the student's attendance and engagement. Reported hours of instruction continue to be those hours in which the student was present.
- Online schools that previously followed a two check-in per week attendance process must follow the Comprehensive Distance Learning requirements for checking and reporting attendance.
- Provide families with clear and concise descriptions of student attendance and participation expectations as well as family involvement expectations that take into consideration the home environment, caregiver's work schedule, and mental/physical health.

Recommended

- ⇒ Build as much meaningful opportunity for student engagement into learning as possible. For example, defining attendance by merely logging on to a computer session could lead to non-engagement.
- ⇒ When implementing Hybrid and Comprehensive Distance Learning models, districts should prioritize funds toward providing access to technology and internet access for students and communities most marginalized by the system.

- ⇒ Prioritize CTE and Accelerated Learning opportunities as they are correlated with increased engagement and attendance.
- ⇒ Use positive outreach as a mechanism to build strong engagement and attendance patterns and relationships with families. Center equity in all outreach and communication efforts with parents and caregivers. This includes honoring home language and culture and considering the strengths and needs of students. Establish that a student's physical and emotional wellbeing is in place before engaging with the curriculum.
- ⇒ Monitor and address chronic absenteeism. See [Future Ed's Attendance Playbook: Smart Solutions for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism in the COVID Era](#) for planning and recommendations.
- ⇒ Update student information systems (SIS) and early indicator and intervention systems (early warning systems) to account for changes in attendance policies.
- ⇒ Leverage attendance data from the 2019-20 school year, including spring 2020 distance learning data if available, to inform additional supports including food; physical or mental health resources; or access to instruction, learning materials, or technology.
- ⇒ Utilize Every Day Matter's Regional Capacity Builders and [Tribal Attendance Promising Practices \(TAPP\)](#) family advocates, where applicable, to develop and/or redesign systems and approaches to sustain regular attendance.
- ⇒ Promote student engagement and consistent attendance through culturally responsive and relevant scheduling decisions that promote whole student wellness.
- ⇒ Design and implement a system of support that addresses barriers teachers may be facing in engaging and communicating with families. Create robust professional development for teachers that supports attendance taking data and engagement strategies. Provide equitable resources to teachers and staff that may help them remove barriers and engage with their students more frequently.
- ⇒ Engage with community based organizations, community partners, and other entities to provide access to resources and create a community-based system of support.