

## Sample Elementary School Attendance Plan

The following attendance plan is illustrative and was developed to represent how a prototypical elementary school might create an attendance improvement plan that is consistent with IC 20-31-5. The plan was developed to address (1) students who are routinely late for class and (2) prevalence of chronic illness among students. 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 Elementary School will improve student attendance by:

- Reducing the number of students arriving late for class by 20%.
- Decreasing the number of students who miss five or more days of school during Fall Semester by 50%.
- Decreasing the number of students who miss 10 or more days during the school year by 50%.
- Increasing parental awareness about the importance of school attendance, arriving on-time, and the resources/supports available.
- Rewarding students who achieve perfect (no absences) or near perfect (less than 2 absences) attendance each semester.

### 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.

#### Attendance Monitoring Team

The principal, her secretary, the counselor, and three grade level teachers form the school's Attendance Monitoring Team (AMT). The team meets monthly to review student attendance and serves as the primary point of contact for students who miss school. The team contacts parents when their students begin missing school, meets with parents to discuss student attendance, and conducts interviews/home visits to identify barriers to regular school attendance, and serves as a

resource for other teachers and staff who are dealing with students who fail to attend class regularly.

### 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 Attendance Monitoring Team downloaded attendance data from the school corporation's student information system on a monthly basis. The data includes the student's name, the number of days they have been absent or late to class, and the reason that the student was late or absent. In addition, for any student who missed five or more days of school, the Team collects additional data through interviews with the student and their parents.

The school's attendance data indicate that students are arriving late to class. In the first month of school, 37 students arrived late three or more times while 58 students arrived late at least once. First and second graders appear to arrive late to school most frequently. Fourteen first grade students and seven second graders arrived late three or more times during the first month of school. The Attendance Team found that students who arrived late to class during the first 30 days often missed entire school days. Among students who were late in the first month of school, the Team found that half of these students ended up missing three or more days of school by the end of the semester. The Team also found that 35 students missed three or more days of school during the fall semester while 40 students missed three or more days of school during the spring semester. In fall semester, three students missed ten or more days of school. In spring semester, five students missed ten or more days of school. According to the attendance data, the most common reason for a child missing school was because they were home sick.

### Notification

The section describes how the school will notify parents when/if their son or daughter misses a specified number of school days. The notification system may be standardized across the school district or tailored to each school.

Sample Elementary 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 connect with parents. The communications will occur as students miss two, five, seven, or ten days of school.

# of days absent	Notification
2	<b>Phone Call</b> - Parent will receive a phone call from the school indicating that the student has missed two days of school. The student will be required to meet with the principal or school counselor to discuss his or

	attendance.
5	<b>Phone Call and Letter</b> - 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	<b>Phone Call, Certified Letter, and Meeting</b> - 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	<b>Home Visit</b> – 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.

### Prevention Activities

Sample Elementary School will provide parents and families with information about the importance of attendance as one of the primary prevention strategies. Moreover, the school will also introduce school-wide incentives to encourage students to strive for good or perfect attendance as well as 'Healthy Hands Program' that will emphasize the importance of

- ***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.
- ***Fall and spring newsletter***
  - The contents of the presentation given to parents during the open house will be presented in a, "Did you know?" article in the school newsletter. The newsletter will be mailed to parents at the end of the first month of each semester.
- ***School-wide incentive program***
  - With support from a nearby fast food business, students who have perfect attendance at the end of each semester will receive a \$10 meal voucher. Students who have good attendance (missed fewer than two days of school) will receive a \$5 meal voucher. The principal will present the vouchers in-person in each classroom.
- ***Rise and Shine!***
  - To increase the number of students who arrive late to class, the school will develop a program called "Rise and Shine" that will encourage students to be in-class on-time.

Students who arrive on-time each day will be entered in a drawing for one of two Apple iPods. The drawing will take place at the end of the Fall and Spring semester.

- ***Healthy Hands program and curriculum***
  - During flu season (October to January), posters will be hung throughout the school reminding students of the importance of washing their hands and covering their coughs. Teachers will be provided with anti-bacterial hand wash for use in class rooms. A science or health lesson will be devoted to explaining how germs spread from hands and how this causes illnesses to begin.

### **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 Elementary School has partnered with the Community Resource Office for the Sample City Police Department. Students who miss 11 or more days of school will be referred to the Community Resource Office. The Community Resource Office will work with the student and their family to identify potential barriers to school attendance and connect them with social services and/or other support services to enable regular school attendance.

### **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 Elementary School, the principal and her secretary will gather the following information.

- 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