

What is Chronic Absence?

ADA

The % of enrolled students who attend school each day.

Truancy

In CA, missing 3 days of school without a valid excuse, or being late to class 3 times without a valid excuse.

Chronic Absence

Missing 10% or more of school for any reason – excused, unexcused, etc. Reflects research on level of absenteeism linked to lower academic performance.

Chronic Absence Patterns in SCUSD

- More than 1 in 10 students are chronically absent.
- Chronic absence rates are highest in Kindergarten and 12th grade and vary across populations and places. More than 1 in 3 Native American and Black/African American male students and almost 1 in 5 Latino male kindergarten students were chronically absent in 2014-2015.
- Approximately 1 in 4 students experiencing homelessness and/or foster care are chronically absent.

So what?

- Poor school attendance is associated with decreased academic learning, disconnection from peers and school, not completing high school, increased substance use, lower levels of physical fitness, incarceration, and higher rates of unemployment.
- SCUSD loses millions of dollars every year due to chronic absence.
- **We can use chronic absence as an early warning sign to trigger support and intervention, as well as school and community improvement.**

SCUSD Attendance Barriers and Motivators

A 2014 study of 191 chronically absent students found that on average they experienced ten barriers to school attendance. Positive relationships with adults and peers were by far the greatest attendance motivator.

Attendance Challenge	% of Participants Affected
Student Physical Health	36%
Parent/Caregiver Discretion	31%
Transportation	28%
Academic Issues	27%
Student Mental Health	24%
Relationships	22%
Parent/Caregiver Health	17%
Student Responsibilities Outside of School	17%
School Related Discipline	16%
Lack of Coordination with Other Services	15%
Unfulfilled Basic Needs	13%
Student Safety Concerns	10%
Student Access to Health Care	6%
Cultural Disconnect	2%

Attendance Motivation	% of Participants Affected
People/Relationships	81%
Learning	63%
Compulsory	62%
Stability	56%
Non-academic Programs	47%
Aspirations	46%
Performance	42%

What you can do to address chronic absence

- Promote attendance, let students know you are glad they're at school, and foster positive relationships with students and families.
- Reach out and communicate with students that miss school to express concern for their well-being and see if any resources are needed to support their re-entry and attendance.
- Discuss attendance and inquire about attendance barriers and motivators at points of contact with families.
- If you notice that a student is regularly missing school, communicate that to your front office, as well as your Student Support Center Coordinator if you have one, to ensure necessary follow-up occurs.

Additional Resources

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CHRONIC ABSENCE RESEARCH IN SCUSD, PLEASE VISIT:

<http://explore.regionalchange.ucdavis.edu/ourwork/projects/chronic-absence-in-the-sacramento-unified-school-district>

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CHRONIC ABSENCE EFFORTS WITHIN SCUSD, PLEASE CONTACT:

Jacqueline Rodriguez, Student Support Services, at Jacqueline-rodriguez@scusd.edu or 916-643-9141

FOR MORE RESOURCES ON ADDRESSING CHRONIC ABSENCE, PLEASE VISIT *ATTENDANCE WORKS*:

<http://www.attendanceworks.org>