



**SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

2024-2025

ATTENDANCE PLAN



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Overview

Based on research and experience, our students must be in school to be successful. While teachers, principals and SCPS continue to work diligently to provide exceptional learning experiences every day, when a student is absent from school, they lose the opportunity to engage in these experiences. Missed instruction, regardless of the reason, can have significant academic consequences. According to VDOE (2023), academic data show that students who were chronically absent scored 18% lower in math and 25% lower in reading. A shift in mindset focuses on everyone having a role in ensuring students attend school every day with schools leading this engagement effort.

Using the VDOE #AttendanceMattersVA campaign, SCPS will utilize a collaborative approach to reduce chronic absenteeism by empowering strong attendance teams to analyze student-level and school-level data and support the continued implementation of research-based strategies to ensure that student attendance continuously improves. Our efforts are intentional and will enhance the fidelity of our attendance planning using a four-step roadmap designed to customize attendance strategies that meet individual schools and the division's needs.

Our Motivation

When students are not in school, their academics will suffer. - Good attendance prepares students for the workforce and the expectations that come along with being part of an organization, community, and team. - Poor student attendance places a tremendous amount of stress on teachers.

Our Strategies

SCPS will utilize a team approach to address issues associated with absenteeism. Using funds from the All-in Grant, a division Attendance Officer will assist attendance teams and families. Roles and responsibilities for all team members will be defined. Immediate feedback & communication with families (beyond a robocall) will help to identify barriers students/families are facing during these personal connections.

Our Opportunities for Make-up

We will be strategic in providing meaningful engagement whether absences are excused or unexcused - Consider Saturday Academy, In-school remediation and After-school instruction (meals and transportation provided) - Additional counseling services will be offered to students and opportunities for immediate make-up of instruction with meaningful engagement after two consecutive missed days of school (Excused and Unexcused).

Our Wrap Around Efforts

Helping our community of stakeholders embrace our vision drives the success of combating chronic absences in our school division. From transportation to mental health professionals, food services, school counselors, mentors, instructors, security, community partners, volunteer, extracurricular and co-curricular activities, our goal of helping each other to help our students will foster positive relationships and a successful All-in approach.

Using a four step approach, this document will help to provide uniformity within the division in attendance action planning. Moreover, it will ensure that research-based approaches and compliance with VDOE prescribed practices are enforced through strong teaming, data analysis, and intervention implementation.

Step 1: Attendance Team Development and Expansion.

To increase the focus on chronic absenteeism, SCPS will reflect on and potentially expand the current role of division and school-based teams. This design could include creating a new team or folding this team's work into an existing team (Climate, Leadership, School Improvement etc.).



Who should be on the attendance team?

According to VDOE (2023), the first step to improving attendance is to make sure you have the right people at the table. Division-level teams are successful when they are cross-functional and cross-departmental. See below for best practices for teaming at both the division and school levels. Always consider including external partners in attendance teams, as they may have resources and help to build the capacity and reach of the school and school division SCPS attendance teams have been identified at each school. Refer to the link below.

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1NC10_cgBKaAccnWP7bYSgEUd43gcfmSB/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=116100568064603850846&rtpof=true&sd=true

Best Practices for Attendance Teams

Division Level	School Level
Review and refine attendance policies to be personalized and proactive	Analyze individual student data and attendance trends
Create structures that focus on improved attendance not just on perfect attendance	Organize a multi-tiered attendance strategy for prevention and intervention focused on localized data
Led by cabinet-level administrator that shows the importance of attendance in your school division	Led by a leader who has authority to implement strategies determined by the team
Cross-departmental that can meet the diverse barriers students may encounter	Develop and implement communications strategies that creates a school-wide and community culture of attendance
Regularly scheduled meetings that meet frequently enough to manage needs	Regularly scheduled meetings (at least every two weeks) with standard agenda

#AttendanceMattersVA – VDOE

School Attendance teams should meet regularly (ideally weekly when chronic absence rates exceed 10%) to review the school's attendance data and coordinate schoolwide efforts to reduce chronic absence. The team agenda should ensure that there is time to review and monitor the team's attendance strategy so that the team does not become overly focused on individual students with the highest levels of absence.

Currently, attendance is reported to the central office daily under the attendance tab for each school found at the link below. In addition to attendance, barriers that may impact student attendance may be identified under other daily data tabs.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/18CZ2t0NILPVtSrooYdYyWYb3i0ea9d1Y/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=116100568064603850846&rtpof=true&sd=true>

In order to effectively and uniformly combat chronic absenteeism in SCPS, adhere to the steps outlined in this document and adhere to the attendance procedures outlined on the next page. SCPS forms are included for official documentation purposes.

Southampton County Public Schools

Attendance Procedures

<i>Number of Absences</i>	<i>Required Action</i>
<i>Each Absence</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instant Alert 2. Make and document Personal contact with parent/guardian 3. Scan and upload documentation in google folders.
<i>3rd Absence</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make and document personal contact with parent/guardian 2. Mail 1st attendance letter to parent- Send via Certified Mail. 3. Scan and upload documentation in google folders.
<i>5th Absence</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make and document personal contact with parent/guardian 2. Mail 2nd attendance letter to parent/guardian.- Send via Certified Mail. 3. Schedule face-to-face or zoom conference. 4. Develop an Attendance Plan (AP). Invite school-based attendance team/multi-disciplinary team to participate and assist in meeting. 5. Document and file minutes from meeting with signatures of attendees, if applicable. 6. Scan and upload documentation in google folders.
<i>7th Absence</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make and document direct contact with parents/guardians. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Review consequences as discussed in attendance/multidisciplinary team meetings.
<i>10th Absence</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make and document direct contact with parents/guardians. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Review consequences b) Warning of CHINS 2. Mail 4th attendance letter to parent/guardian.- Send via Certified Mail 3. Schedule face-to-face or zoom Attendance Conference within 10 days of the 10th unexcused absence. 4. Document due diligent attempts to notify parent/guardian. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) If the parent/guardian is not accessible or fails to respond, hold an attendance conference with the attendance/multidisciplinary team and community service provider(s). b) Document violation of Attendance Plan (AP) c) Document warning of CHINS, d) File minutes from meeting with signatures of attendees. e) Schedule follow-up meetings, if necessary. 5. Scan and upload documentation in google folders. 6. Notify Mr. Jalen Boone, Attendance Officer, via email.
<i>12th Absence</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make and document direct contact, review of consequences and warning of CHINS with parent/guardian. 2. Mail 5th attendance letter to parent/guardian.- Send via Certified Mail

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| | 3. Principal will make an official student/parent/guardian referral to the School Board Attendance Review Committee (ARC) to Dr. Gwendolyn P. Shannon, Division Superintendent and Dr. MeChelle S. Blunt, Director of Accountability & School Improvement on school letterhead, and Mr. Jalen Boone, Attendance Officer. |
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Step 2: Data Focused Support

The attendance team can review the data from the previous year to set a school-wide attendance goal for the current academic year. This goal allows schools to track and celebrate improvements in attendance. Refer to the link below to review previous school data that was shared.

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1NC10_cgBKaAccnWP7bYSgEUd43gcfmSB/edit?usp=sharing&oid=116100568064603850846&rtpof=true&sd=true

School Attendance Teams should:

- Review data that tracks student barriers to attendance, and
- Develop a plan to engage the people and resources needed to remove those barriers.
- Create partnerships and access community resources to assist families and students with any needed wrap-around services.
- Monitor progress regularly allows you to make adjustment to your supports as necessary

Qualitative and quantitative data are both options to assist teams in understanding attendance challenges, as well as use trend data to support students who are most vulnerable to absenteeism.



What data will the team need prior to each scheduled meeting?

It is beneficial for teams to have high-level attendance data at each meeting. When looking at the data, consider the following questions:

- Why are our students missing school?
- Do we know the barriers?
- Are there simple first steps we can take to help improve attendance?
- What are the trends of lower attendance at certain schools and certain grade levels?

The division-level team will review the data from each school and celebrate schools that are implementing practices that are reducing chronic absenteeism.

Currently, schools are recognized for the highest attendance by the division superintendent during monthly school board meetings.

Tuesday Talks has included a session on “Attendance Matters.”

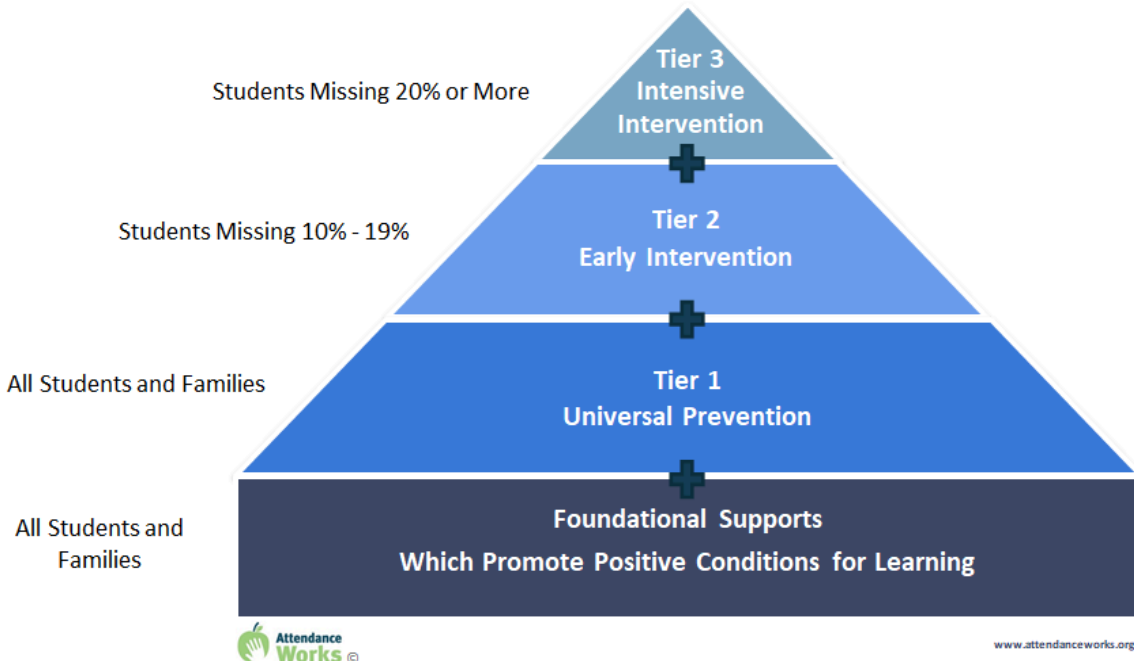
Step 3: Evidence-Based Practices for Improving Attendance

Attendance teams will lead their school in using a multi-tiered approach for selecting strategies to improve attendance. (See graph below)

Tier 1 strategies are aimed at encouraging better attendance for all students and at preventing absenteeism before it affects achievement.

Tier 2 interventions are designed to remove barriers to attendance for students at greater risk of chronic absenteeism, such as those who missed 10% of the school year, the standard definition of chronic absenteeism. These students and families should receive personalized attention as part of the engagement strategy.

Tier 3 interventions provide intensive support to students missing the most school, often involving not just schools but other agencies such as health, housing and social services, and typically requiring case management customized to individual students’ challenges. Students missing 20% or more of the school year benefit from the addition of this intensive level of support.



While elevated levels of chronic absence will not be eliminated overnight, an “All Hands on Deck” approach will position SCPS to re-engage students and ensure an equal opportunity to learn using investments of commitment, time,

compassion and data to improve student attendance. The following are examples of tiered practices provided by Attendance Works (Retrieved January 18, 2023)

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/todays-chronic-absenteeism-requires-a-comprehensive-district-response-and-strategy/>

Examples of Tiered Practices

Foundational Supports Which Promote Positive Conditions for Learning

Physical and Emotional Health and Safety

- Healthy learning environments
- Welcoming, safe school climate
- Access to food and other basic needs
- Restorative circles

Belonging, Connection and Support

- Active student and family engagement
- Advisories/meetings to build community
- Enrichment and clubs
- Positive peer connections

Academic Challenge and Engagement

- Access to tech and internet
- Learning supports
- Project-based learning
- Credit recovery opportunities
- Internships/community service
- Alternative scheduling options

Adult and Student Well-Being and Emotional Competence

- Restorative check-ins
- Access to health care and mental health supports
- Trauma-informed practice
- Staff self-care



What evidence-based strategies can the attendance team use to improve student attendance?

While improving student attendance is a complex and locally unique task, a strong and consistent team that analyzes the attendance data and reviews and implements localized strategies can improve attendance.

Click on the link that follows to review Evidence-based strategies in the Attendance Playbook by Phyllis Jordan [Attendance-Playbook.5.23.pdf \(future-ed.org\)](#)

Step 4: Reflect, Adjust, and Celebrate

Success in attendance is increased when attendance teams have

- clear roles,
- assigned responsibilities,
- timelines, and
- regular meetings.

The attendance/multi-disciplinary teams should:

- Monitor student attendance,
- Meet with the parent/guardian and student to address concerns

After reasonable efforts have been made by the attendance team and the principal or their designee are unable to contact the parent/guardian, proceed to hold a conference to address the student's attendance.

Should efforts to rectify the attendance issues are unsuccessful, a referral to the Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT) is made.

A Child in Need of Services/Supervision (CHINS) is initiated, a court date will be scheduled. Notification will be rendered by court officials.

Notification of the student's return to school via email and call should be made to Dr. MeChelle S. Blunt.

Update the student's attendance plan with the parent and student. Obtain signatures to document their participation.

Attendance teams should consider the following questions throughout the year as they review progress and adjust supports.

- Are the identified students (needing assistance) accessing supports?
- Are supports or interventions being done with fidelity and consistency?
- Does the data indicate the supports are effective?
- Do we need to expand or offer additional training?
- How can we improve our practices as we move forward?
- How do we celebrate students, families and school staff as we move closer to meeting our

Documentation

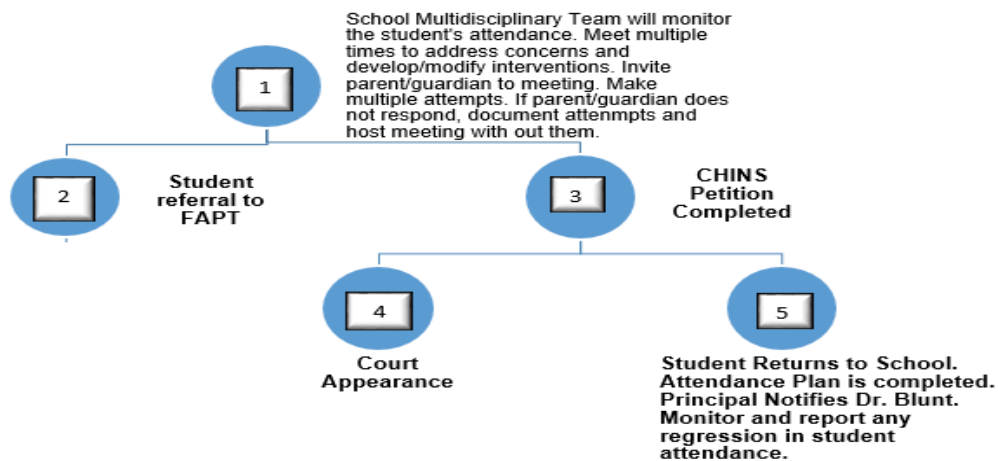
In Virginia, chronically absent students are defined as those who miss 10 percent or more of the school year, which typically measures out to missing 18 or more days.

Referral packets to Mr. Jalen Boone must include copies of the following:

- ☐ All attendance/truancy letters mailed to parents/guardians.
- ☐ Attendance Plan (Completed and with Signatures)
- ☐ Parent Communication Log
- ☐ Current Attendance Record
- ☐ IEP/504
- ☐ Other information that may be deemed important for student assistance

Protocol

Outlined below is the protocol that will be followed to address chronic absenteeism.



SCPS Student Attendance Plan

Capron Elementary School

Mrs. Davonda Gary

Date: November 18, 2024.

Student's Name: Gracie Ferguson. **Grade:** First

Student's Date of Birth: **Gender:** Female.

Parent/Guardian's Name: Mackenzie Ferguson

Telephone Number: 757-818-4918.

Email:

Goal: To increase school attendance by %

Special Needs/Concerns:Gracie gets sick often with a fever.

☐ **Reason for Attendance Plan:** __*_Sickness ____Suspensions ____Other

Date of Absence	Excused Absence	Unexcused Absence	Reason for Absence	Action Taken
			see attached list	

Attach Attendance Report.

Page 1 of 2 - Attendance plan

Attendance Plan Intervention Strategies/Assessment Information

Description	Solution	Responsible Party	Timeframe

Consequences for Non-Compliance

1. Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Click or tap here to enter text.

Follow up meeting date: Click or tap here to enter text.

Comments: Click or tap here to enter text.

This Attendance Plan was created collaboratively to assist the student in improving school attendance. It is meant to enlist the support of the parent/guardian and to document the school's attempt to provide resources and to promote the student's success.

Location of Meeting: Click or tap here to enter text.

Sign to confirm participation.

Student:

Date:

Parent/Guardian:

Date:

School Representative:

Date:

Southampton County Public Schools

Truancy Referral

Student's Name:

Student ID:

School:

Principal:

Compile and include the following documents in the Truancy Referral packet. Click on the box to confirm that the documents listed are included in the referral packet prior to sending to Mr. Jalen Boone.

- ☐ List of dates parents were contacted by telephone regarding student attendance.
- ☐ Copies of all letters sent to parents regarding student attendance.
- ☐ List of dates when the Attendance Plan was developed and reviewed.
- ☐ Copy of Letter sent to parents which states the school is making a Truancy Referral to the Attendance Review Committee.
- ☐ Grades, discipline reports, actual attendance records
- ☐ School Personnel Involved:
- ☐ Outside Agencies Involved:

Signature of Principal:

Date:

SCPS Attendance Waiver Request Form

School:

Date of Request:

Student:

Student ID#

Grade:

Counselor:

Parent/Guardian:

Phone:

Students with 8 absences or greater in any course within a given semester will receive a failing grade (59/F) for that semester or the actual class grade, whichever is lower. Each waiver will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Parent Responsibility: A parent may request a waiver of the attendance regulation for extenuating circumstances beyond the parent's and/or student's control.

Timeline: The waiver request may be submitted to the principal prior to the close of a semester but no later than one calendar week from the close of the semester. The parent or guardian will receive a decision in writing within 10 business days of submitting the waiver to the building principal.

Eligibility: To be eligible for an attendance waiver, the student must have a passing grade in the class for which the waiver is submitted. Attendance waivers will not be considered for any class in which the student does not have a passing grade.

Waiver Request (Check One)

School Year:

- ☐ Fall Semester
☐ Spring Semester

List all courses/classes for which an attendance waiver is requested

Course/Class	Teacher	Number of Absences	Course Grade	Principal Decision

Does student have an attendance Intervention Plan

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

(continued on next page)

Describe in detail the extenuating circumstance(s) to support this attendance waiver request. Attach any appropriate documentation that has not already been provided to the school at the time of the absence(s).

Student Signature:

Date:

Parent Signature:

Date:

SCPS Office Use Only

Date Request Received:

Date Request Acted Upon

Comments:

Principal's Signature

Resources/References

Chronic Absenteeism Task Force 11/7/23



[Virginia Department of Education](#)
6.04K subscribers

https://www.youtube.com/live/sBpBp7KQ_HY?si=teY7BgcgrFUmJqhy

SCPS Code of Conduct (2023-2024)

Superintendent's "Actionkit" for Improving Attendance

<https://www.doe.virginia.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/51954>