

What's the Big Deal?

Why Attendance Matters

A missed school day, excused or not, is a lost opportunity for students to learn. Students who attend school regularly have been shown to achieve at higher levels than students who do not have regular attendance. Poor attendance is also shown to have serious implications for later outcomes as well. High school drop-outs have been found to have a higher level of absenteeism than their peers. These differences in absentee rates were observed as early as kindergarten, and students who eventually dropped out of high school missed significantly more days of school in first grade than their peers who graduated from high school .

-NCES National Center for Education Statistics

At Patriot, we long for every child to feel like a valuable member of their classroom and school community. A child's sense of belonging can decrease as absences increase. Not only that, the stress of falling behind can compound, making school more difficult than it should be. Frequently arriving tardy can result in the same negative outcome. At Patriot, we want to work with families to help our Patriot Lions have high levels of attendance and therefore have the greatest opportunity for future success!

Attendance Intervention

Fountain Fort Carson School District has a few different categories of absenteeism. When your child falls into the following categories, the school may put a formal Attendance Plan in place for your child. These categories are:

Chronically Absent: 10% absent in a quarter or in a school year. Includes excused and unexcused absences.

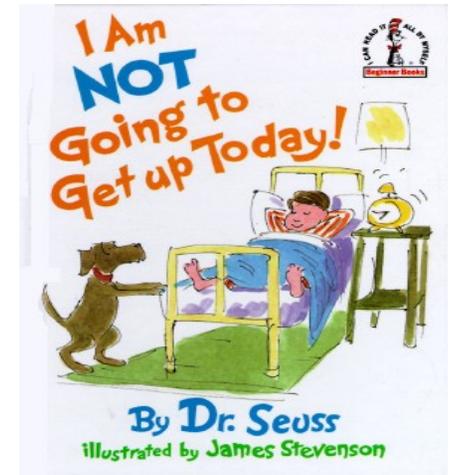
For example, at the end of the first quarter, if your child has missed 5 of the 40 days of school, your child may be considered chronically absent.

Habitually Truant: 4 days of unexcused absences in a 30-day period or 10 days of unexcused absence in a school year

For example, if your child is absent for any reason, and the parent or guardian does not call to excuse the child on 4 or more occasions in a month, or 10 occasions during the year, your child may be considered Habitually Truant.

Parental Responsibilities

Colorado's Compulsory Attendance Law was enacted to prevent truancy. The law states that it is against the law for students ages 6-16 to skip school. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school.



It is quite natural for a child to want to stay home from school. School can be hard work! As a parent, it can be very difficult when you have a child that is refusing to go to school. If you find yourself in this situation, feel free to contact our school counselor at 719-382-1472 for support. The school is happy to offer support and ideas to parents who are engaged in this type of power struggle.

When Your Child is Sick



Unfortunately, no matter how hard we try as parents, sometimes our children still get sick. If this should occur, we ask that you call the school to let us know that your child will not be attending school that day. This allows our staff to mark the absence as EXCUSED. (The only exception to this is if your child is already on an Attendance Plan, which will be addressed in a different section.) When you call the school, please simply let the secretary know your name, your child's first and last name, and state that your child will be absent due to illness. You may provide the school additional details at your own discretion.



OTHER REASONS FOR ABSENCES

We acknowledge that there are numerous other life events and circumstances that may lead to your child missing school. When this occurs, please call to ensure the absence is excused.

Attendance Plans

When a student has become either chronically absent or habitually truant, the school may decide to create a formal Attendance Plan for a child. An Attendance Plan helps provide parents with resources to address some of the factors that may be contributing to the student's absenteeism. It also changes the conditions by which absences are excused. When a plan is in place:

1. Parents become responsible for providing documentation for all absences.
2. School absences are no longer considered "excused" by a phone call.
3. After the plan is enacted, additional absences may lead to the school referring the student to the District Truancy Officer.
4. If non-compliance occurs, the truancy officer may elect to take further action to ensure that the child is compliant with state and district attendance expectations.

If you have any questions pertaining to District Policy, please do not hesitate to contact the District 8 Truancy Officer, Peter Babeu at pbabeu@ffc8.org, or at 719-358-4455. For Patriot attendance questions, please contact Kathrin Polyefko at kpolyefko@ffc8.org. You may also call the school at 719-382-1460 and request to talk to the counselor, Mrs. Niewinski, at any time. Thank you for letting us partner with you in your child's education. We consider ourselves privileged to play a role in your child's life.

Patriot Attendance Policy



- ⇒ **Why is attendance important?**
- ⇒ **What do I do when my child is sick?**
- ⇒ **What do I do if my child doesn't want to go to school?**
- ⇒ **When does the school intervene?**
- ⇒ **What is an attendance plan?**

Patriot Elementary

7010 Harr Ave.
Colorado Springs,
CO 80902

Phone: 719-382-1460
Fax: 719-576-4237
Email:
kpolyefko@ffc8.org