



attendance  
**MATTERS**

**Attendance and Truancy  
School District of Philadelphia  
2014-2015**

**Policies and Procedures**

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# A Video To Get Started

<http://vimeo.com/63614396>

(First 2 Minutes 45 Seconds)



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Video courtesy of Attendance Works

Hedy Chang, Executive Director

# Attendance Tiers

## Tier 1

- School wide
- Every student is in school and in class every day
- Set behavioral expectations
- Incentive program

## Tier 2

- Some students
- Starts at the 3<sup>rd</sup> absence
- Mail out C-31 (Legal Notice)
- Meet with parents, guardians and students about root cause/s to absences

## Tier 3

- Few students
- Has 10 or more unexcused/illegal absences
- Truancy Court Referral Form
  - Department of Human Services (Grades K-3)
  - Truancy Court (Grades 4-12)

# 2014-2015 Attendance Process

| <b>When</b>                               | <b>What</b>                                  | <b>Who</b>                                | <b>How</b>   |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Absence                   | Phone Call Home                              | School Messenger                          | <div data-bbox="1398 665 1736 1046" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Determined by the Administrator</p> </div> |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Absence                   | Legal Notice (C-31)                          | School Team                               |  |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup> Absence | Interventions Recorded in Schoolnet database | School Team                               |  |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> Absence                  | Referral to DHS/ Court                       | Teacher, Attendance Designee<br>Principal |  |

# Definitions of Absences

- **Excused Absence:** An absence that has a written excuse from the parent/guardian.
- **Unlawful/Unexcused Absence:** An absence that does not have a valid written excuse from the parent/guardian. That means that either no written notice was submitted to the school upon the student's return or that the reason provided in the notice was deemed invalid.
- **Truant:** Ten (10) or more unexcused absences.

# Excused Absences

*Sometimes school must be missed...*

- Illness
- Recovery from accident
- Required court attendance
- Death in family
- Educational tours and trips, with prior approval
- Other urgent reasons (require Principal's authorization)
- Authorized school activities
- Religious holiday
- Quarantine

# School District's Attendance Policy

- All absences will be treated as unlawful/unexcused until the District receives a written excuse note explaining the reason for the absence.
  - The note must include a valid telephone number or other means of contact for verification purposes. Certification of illness/injury/delivery is required if the absence extends for three (3) or more consecutive days.
- All excuse notes must be provided within three (3) days of the absence.
- Failure to provide a written excuse within three (3) days will result in the absence being counted as unlawful/unexcused moving forward.

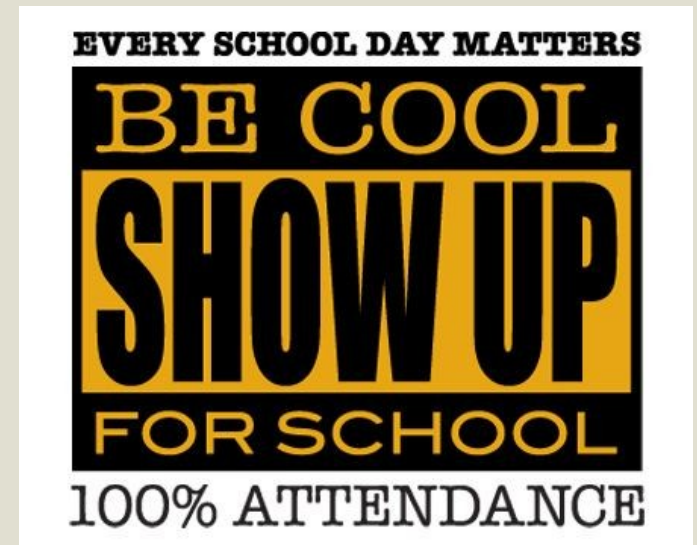
# Responses to Non-Attendance (Truancy)

- A student who is absent from school without a valid excuse is considered “truant.”
- A pattern of truancy can lead to a variety of interventions or penalties, depending upon the circumstances.
- On the school level, truancy can result in school-based interventions (home visits, truancy elimination plans, academic supports, social service referrals, etc.) or truancy court.
- Suspension from school or transfer to an alternative education setting is **NOT** a permissible response to truancy.



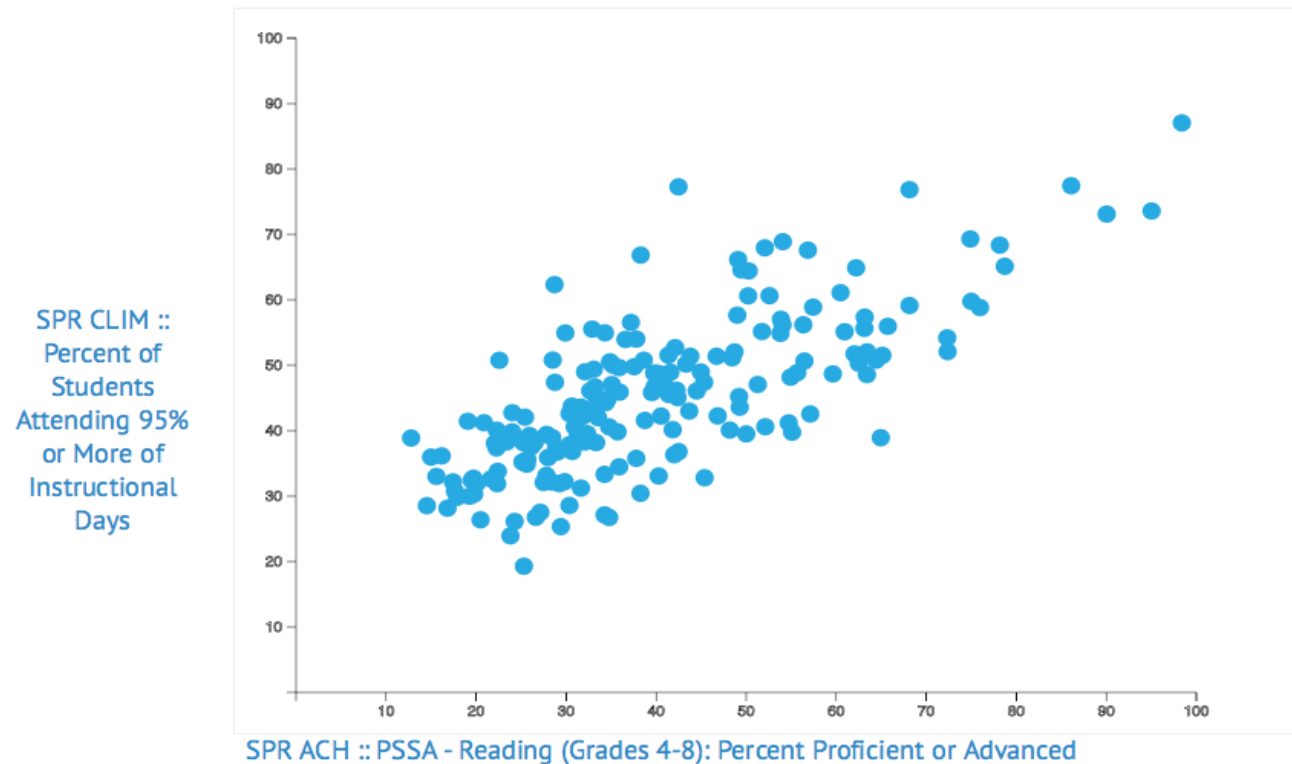
# Pennsylvania and Philadelphia Mandatory Attendance Requirements

- In Pennsylvania, mandatory school age is between 8 and 17 years of age.
- In Philadelphia, mandatory school age is between 6 and 17 years of age.



# Positive attendance = Positive test scores

SPR ACH :: PSSA - Reading (Grades 4-8): Percent Proficient or Advanced & SPR CLIM :: Percent of Students Attending 95% or More of Instructional Days



# Why attendance matters...

## Benefits of daily attendance:

**Achievement:** Students who attend school regularly are more likely to pass reading and math assessments than students who don't attend school regularly.

**Opportunity:** For older students, being in school every day gives them a chance to learn more about college and scholarship opportunities, and to take the important exams they need to build a successful academic record.

**Exposure to the English language:** Regular school attendance can also help students who are learning English by giving them the chance to master the skills and information they need more quickly and accurately even in other subjects.

**Being part of the school community:** Just by being present at school, children learn how to be a good citizen by participating in the school community, learning valuable social skills, and developing a broader world view.

**The importance of education:** Your commitment to school attendance will also send a message to your child that education is a priority for your family, going to school every day is a critical part of educational success, and that it's important to take responsibilities seriously including going to school.

# For Attendance and Truancy support...

*Please contact your Attendance Coordinator*

## Learning Network 1 - 4

Kelly Aichele  
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## Learning Network 5 - 8

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# My Contact Information

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