

What alternate learning opportunities may be assigned if students are absent too often?

Students could be assigned to one or more of the following options:

- Change enrollment in one or more classes in which absence has been significant
- Attend the school's academic center during part of the school day
- Attend credit recovery sessions after school
- Attend sessions at the Kanesville Transition Classroom to catch up or prepare for the trimester

**Be in School!
Stay in School!
Succeed in School!
Graduate!**



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What Happens if a Student is Absent Too Often?

- School representatives will attempt to contact parents by phone or in person when students have been absent from school, especially when the absences suggest that the student will not be successful.
- Students who have 9 unverified absences for full days or partial days (3 periods or more) may be removed from traditional classes and placed in alternate opportunities.
- Students who have 9 verified absences for full days or partial days (3 periods or more) may meet with an Attendance Committee to determine if credit can still be earned, if additional help is needed, or if alternate assignments would help the student be more successful.
- Students who have 9 verified absences for specific periods may meet with the teacher(s) and administrator to determine if the student may remain in the class.
- When alternatives are offered or extensions are given, the student will be expected to comply with the decision.

School Attendance Matters

Abraham Lincoln High School
Thomas Jefferson High School
Kanesville Alternative Learning Center



Why School Attendance Matters

Administrators and teachers know that regular attendance at school is extremely important. On a daily basis, 91% of our students are in school. However, the national standard is 95%. There is no practical reason for Council Bluffs students to miss more days of school than others in the nation. Students with poor attendance have lower academic achievement than students who attend school on a regular basis, and have a smaller chance of graduating on time, if at all.

In addition, students who are not in school on a regular basis frequently end up in trouble with the police and the juvenile court system.

Educators are partnering with families and the entire community to address school attendance problems so that our students can be productive in and out of the classroom.

"We expect students to attend school and class on time every day. We strive to have students attend school 95% of the time. This means that a student should have no more than 8 absences per year."

—Dr. Martha Bruckner,
Superintendent of Schools

What is Compulsory School Attendance?

Students must attend school if they have reached age six and are under age 16 by September 15. Council Bluffs Community School District students are expected to be in school daily. Excused reasons for missing school include illness or injury, funeral, medical appointments, required court appearance, absences related to religious services, or other reasons excused by the principal. Examples of unexcused absences are needing to babysit, missing the bus, oversleeping, or the car not working.

What is the Legal Responsibility of a Parent or Guardian?

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to assure that the student is in school. Under Iowa Law, it is the parent, not the child, who is reported to the county attorney if the child is repeatedly absent without an excuse, approved by the building principal. The parent must notify the school of an absence and provide written documentation.

What is the Role of the School When a Child is Truant?

School officials will inform parents/guardians of a student's absence and will work with adults to help the student return to school. If truancy continues, court-supported mediation may be required. If a student's absence from class goes beyond a reasonable limit (9 per trimester), the student may be assigned to alternate learning opportunities.

What is the Limit for Absences?

Students will have changes made in their program of studies as they reach 12 absences in a trimester. When students have been gone that many days, it is difficult to keep up with their classmates.

What is the Role of the Attendance Officer/Mediation Specialist?

The mediator's role is to develop further problem-solving steps to improve the child's attendance. The school official and parent must sign a contract. If the parent refuses to sign the contract or violates the contract, the school notifies the county attorney and an arrest warrant is issued. The county attorney determines what further action is recommended to the court.

How Does School Attendance Affect Drivers Licenses for Minors?

The Iowa Department of Transportation requires students between 16 and 18 years of age to attend school to have a valid driver's license. Students who drop out of school are reported to the DOT which will revoke a license or deny an application. The DOT does not accept GED enrollment as a substitute for high school enrollment.

Non Discrimination Statement

The Council Bluffs Community School District shall not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, gender, marital status, citizenship, geographic location, socioeconomic status, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other protected trait or characteristic in its educational programs, activities or employment practices.

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