



Hackberry Elementary School District's goal is to ensure the attendance of students and to promote a school culture of academic achievement. We believe that daily participation in school is very important to student achievement. **Research repeatedly shows that regular attendance is directly related to successful academic achievement.**

**Student Absences:**

Parents/Guardians should call (928) 692 – 0013 or email the front office [acherry@hesd.net](mailto:acherry@hesd.net) ***within 24*** hours of a child's absence to report or verify their absence and provide the following information:

1. Parent/Guardian Name and Phone Number
2. Student Name
3. Teacher Name
4. Reason for Absence (i.e. illness, doctor appointments, bereavement, family emergencies etc.)

***Any unverified absence is an unexcused absence.*** Reporting an absence does not automatically excuse the absence. Parents may be asked to verify absences in writing. The following reasons are defined by the Arizona Department of Education as excused absences:

1. Verified legal appointment (such as court)
2. Religious holiday
3. Funeral/death in the family
4. Verified illness or hospitalization
5. Communicable diseases (Flu, Measles, etc).

Please arrange doctor's and dentist appointments after school as often as possible. Plan family events and vacations during breaks and when school is not in session. If a student accrues 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences, the state of Arizona requires the school to withdraw the student.

HESD policy, after three or more absences, Cedar Hills will send an attendance letter notifying Parents/Guardians of missed days. The intent of these letters is to inform Parents/Guardians of their child's absences and that their grades may be affected due to absence. These letters are sent every month regarding students who have reached the following thresholds: 3, 5, 8, and 10 absences.



### **Why Attendance Matters:**

Each minute of the school day provides opportunities for learning, and it's noticeable when students miss time. When a child doesn't show up for school regularly, they miss out on:

1. vital instruction (fundamental reading and math skills) that can make it difficult for them to catch up when they return
2. building a habit of good attendance to carry them throughout their schooling and beyond
3. forming meaningful relationships with peers and staff that can help them feel better about school and themselves.

Start building good attendance habits early, so children learn that going to school on time every day is important. Eventually, good attendance will be a valuable skill that will help them succeed in middle and high schools, college, and beyond.

A student who misses **10%** of the school year (14 days, or an average of 2 days per month), regardless of the reason, is considered **chronically absent**. Studies consistently show that chronically absent students are less likely to read proficiently by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. By middle school, absenteeism is a major predictor that a student may drop out of high school.

### Student Tardiness:

HESD recognizes the importance of students assuming the responsibility of being on time for class. A student is considered tardy if they are not inside the classroom at 8:00am. Students are welcome on campus starting at 7:00 AM.

Students who arrive late should be accompanied by a parent/guardian and signed in with the front office.

Students need a full instructional day, and the start of the school day is essential to setting your child up for success all day. If a child arrives an average of 20 minutes late each day, they are missing vital academic instruction in the following ways:


1. 100 minutes (nearly **2 hours**) of lost instruction each week.
2. 400 minutes (**6 hours**) of lost instruction each month.
3. 3200 minutes (**over 8 days**) of lost instruction each year.

It is essential that your child avoids excessive tardiness. School personnel are dedicated to working with you and your child to create a positive educational experience. Please contact us to let us know how we can assist with issues that contribute to your child's late arrival.

## ATTENDANCE

in the early grades

Many of our youngest students miss 10 percent of the school year—about 18 days a year or just two days every month. Chronic absenteeism in kindergarten, and even preK, can predict lower test scores, poor attendance and retention in later grades, especially if the problem persists for more than a year. Do you know how many young children are chronically absent in your school or community?




www.attendanceworks.org


### Who Is Affected

Kindergarten and 1st grade classes often have absenteeism rates as high as those in high school. Many of these absences are excused, but they still add up to lost time in the classroom.


**1 in 10 kids** in kindergarten and 1st grade are chronically absent. In some schools, it's as high as 1 in 4.<sup>1</sup>




**2 in 10** low-income kids miss too much school. They're also more likely to suffer academically.<sup>2</sup>



**2.5 in 10** homeless kids are chronically absent.<sup>2</sup>



**4 in 10** transient kids miss too much school when families move.<sup>2</sup>




### Why It Matters

If children don't show up for school regularly, they miss out on fundamental reading and math skills and the chance to build a habit of good attendance that will carry them into college and careers.


Preliminary data from a California study found that children who were chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade were far less likely to read proficiently at the end of 3rd grade.

**Who Can Read on Grade Level After 3rd Grade?<sup>3</sup>**




Attendance Status	Percentage of Kids
Good attendance (missed 9 or fewer days both years)	84%
At-risk attendance (missed more than 9 days both years)	43%
Chronically absent in K or 1st (missed 18 or more days one year)	41%
Chronically absent in K and 1st (missed 18 or more days both years)	27%

### What We Can Do




**Engage Families**

Many parents and students don't realize how quickly early absences can add up to academic trouble. Community members and teachers can educate families and build a culture of attendance through early outreach, incentives and attention to data.




**Fix Transportation**

The lack of a reliable car, or simply missing the school bus, can mean some students don't make it to class. Schools, transit agencies and community partners can organize car pools, supply bus passes or find other ways to get kids to school.



**Address Health Needs**

Health concerns, particularly asthma and dental problems, are among the leading reasons students miss school in the early grades. Schools and medical professionals can work together to give children and families health care and advice.



**Track the Right Data**

Schools too often overlook chronic absence because they track average attendance or unexcused absences, not how many kids miss too many days for any reason. Attendance Works has free data-tracking tools.

These are a few steps that communities and schools can take. How do you think you can help?

<sup>1</sup> Chang, Hedy; Romero, Maria Jose. Present, Engaged and Accounted For: The Critical Importance of Addressing Chronic Absence in the Early Grades, National Center for Children in Poverty, NY, NY, September 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Chronic Absence in Utah, Utah Education Policy Center at the University of Utah, 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Attendance in Early Elementary Grades: Association with Student Characteristics, School Readiness and Third Grade Outcomes, Applied Survey Research, May 2011.

To download a copy of this infographic, please visit [www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org)

© Joanne Shieh | The Hatcher Group