

AHSTW COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Proudly serving the communities of Avoca, Hancock, Shelby, Tennant, and Walnut

AHSTW Community School District Attendance Letter

Hello everyone,

During the 2024 legislative session, the Iowa House of Representatives and Senate passed legislation discussing chronic absenteeism among Iowa students. I share the following information to describe the contents of the approved legislation and the differentiation between chronic absenteeism and truancy.

Definitions:

Chronic Absenteeism is the failure to attend school for the minimum number of days or hours by the board in guidance from the Department of Education.

- A student missing 10% of school days or hours in a grading period will be identified in this category.
- After missing 8% of the expected hours and/or days, parents and students will receive a notification from the building principal provide the first warning in regard to becoming chronically absent.
- The district is also required to contact the County Attorney after a student's number of absences equal 10% of the days or hours required.
- The letter will be sent via mail and/or verified parent email.
- After missing 15% of the expected hours and/or days, parents, students, AHSTW Student Resource Officer, and principal will gather in a school engagement meeting designed to develop a plan to remedy the student's chronic absenteeism.
 - The building principal will then follow-up weekly to monitor the progress towards meeting the expectations of the plan.
 - Failure of adherence to the plan or failure to meet to participate in creation of the plan, will require the county attorney to initiate a proceeding.

Truancy is the act of being absent without a reasonable excuse. These absences include, but are not limited to, tardiness, shopping, hunting, concerts, preparation or participation in celebrations, and employment. Truancy is not tolerated by the Board and Iowa Code.

- A student missing 20% of school or hours in a grading period will be identified in this category.
- After missing 20% of the expected hours and/or days the county attorney/law enforcement will be involved in providing consequences. Potential consequences could include up to 10 days of community service, 10 days in jail, or a \$100 fine for the parents, and/or loss of a students' driver's license for the student. The loss of license would be applicable until the end of the school year in which a student turns 16 years of age
 - The enrollment of all Open enrolled students who are truant will have their enrollment reviewed with the potential to have such enrollment rescinded and required to return to their resident district.

AHSTW Community School District
768 South Maple Street, Avoca, Iowa 51521
School Phone: (712) 343-6364
District/Elementary Fax: (712) 343-2170
Secondary Fax: (712) 343-6915

Mr. Darin Jones, Superintendent
Mr. Davis Pattee, High School Principal
Mrs. Cristin Rold, Intermediate Principal
Mrs. Sarah Kock, Primary Principal
Mr. Ryan Smith, Technology Director
Mrs. Alisha Cook, School Business Official

The following table demonstrates how the number of days and hours will be counted towards each category. Days will be accumulated across semesters for truancy.

Total School per 25-26 calendar (Days)	Total School per 25-26 calendar (Hours)	10% [Days]	10% [Hours]	15% [Days]	15% [Hours]	20% [Days]	20% [Hours]
1st Semester							
40 days	260	4	26	6	39	8	52
60 days	390	6	39	9	58.5	12	78
90 days	580	9	58	13	87	18	116
2nd Semester							
40 days	260	4	26	6	39	8	52
60 days	390	6	39	9	58.5	12	78
90 days	548.5	8.5	54.5	12.3	82	17	109.6

The following table describes how absences will be counted towards both chronic absenteeism and truancy.

Type of Absence	Definition of Absence	Counts towards Chronic Absenteeism & Truancy
Absent – State Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> have completed the requirements for graduation in an accredited school or have obtained a high school equivalency diploma; are excused for sufficient reason by any court of record or judge; are attending religious services or receiving qualifying religious instruction in accordance with relevant laws; are unable to attend school due to legitimate medical reasons; has an individualized education program that affects the child's attendance; has a plan under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. §794, that affects the child's attendance; are attending an approved or probationally approved private college preparatory school; are attending an accredited nonpublic school; are receiving independent private instruction; are receiving competent private instruction; are a military applicant undergoing military entrance processing; are engaged in military service; are traveling to attend a funeral; or are traveling to attend a wedding. 	No
Absent – School	Field trips, sporting events / activities with school staff	No
Absent – College Visit	Up to 3 per year for Juniors and Seniors	No
Absent – Sick Excused	1 st 5 sick days communicated by parents / semester <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doctor's note or evaluation by our AHSTW School Nurse after 5 sick days in a grading period. 	No
Justified / Excused	<i>Parent communicated - Family Trips / Vacations, sick days without a doctor's note, tardiness, etc....</i>	<i>Yes</i>

Unjustified / Unexcused	<i>No parent communication or no reason given Parent's unaware – Skip class, left school, etc.: Shopping, concerts, employment, haircuts, etc....</i>	Yes
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Make-up Policy:

If a student is absent for any of the above reasons all missed schoolwork must be made up and the length of time to complete the assignments will be determined based on the type of absence. However, the general rule allows for the number of days absent plus one to complete the expected assignments for the class. In some cases, the time allowed for make-up work may be extended at the discretion of the classroom teacher and the content covered on the day absent.

Type of Absence	Time Allotted for Completion of Homework
Absent – School	1 day absent = 2 days to complete work, 3 days absent = 4 days to complete work
Absent – College Visits	1 day absent = 2 days to complete work, 3 days absent = 4 days to complete work
Absent – Sick Excused	1 day absent = 2 days to complete work, 3 days absent = 4 days to complete work
Justified / Excused	1 day absent = 2 days to complete work, 3 days absent = 4 days to complete work
Unjustified / Unexcused	All assignments are expected to be turned in on time with no opportunity for extension.

If you have any questions regarding the expectations for attendance, please call Mr. Darin Jones, Superintendent, or your building administrator for clarification.

Respectfully,

Mr. Darin Jones
Superintendent
AHSTW Community School District