**Your Child’s**

 ***Attendance Counts Today***

Why Does Attendance Matter?

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.

A California study found that children who were chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade were far less likely to read proficiently at the end of 3rd grade.



The law requires parents to report the reason for absence. Based on the excuse given, the school records the absence as excused or unexcused. However, in terms of learning, all types of absences are equal.

**When Do Absences Become a Problem?**

Based on a 180 day school year, the following definitions apply:



Number of Absences

**At-Risk:**

9-17

**Chronic:**

More than 18

**Satisfactory**: Less than 9

**Attendance Meter**

**Did You Know?**

* Starting in kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school
* Missing 10 percent (or 18 days) can make it harder to learn to read
* Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two every few weeks
* Being late to school may lead to poor attendance
* Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up
* Students should miss no more than 9 days of school a year to stay on track to graduation
* Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with school work, dealing with a bully or some other serious situation
* By 6th grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that a student may drop out of high school
* By 9th grade, regular attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than 8th grade test scores
* Students can be chronically absent if they only miss a day or two every few weeks
* Attendance is an important life skill that will help your child graduate from college and keep a job.

**Good attendance will help children do well in high school, college, and at work.**

**What You Can Do**

**Elementary**

* Set a regular bed time and morning routine
* Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before
* Introduce your child to her teachers and classmates before school starts to help her transition
* Don’t let your child stay home unless she is truly sick. Complaints of a stomach ache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home
* If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to teachers, school counselors, or other parents for advice on how to make her feel comfortable and excited about learning
* Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor, or another parent.
* Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.

**Junior High and High School**

* Talk about the importance of showing up to school every day, make that the expectation
* Help your child maintain daily routines, such as finishing homework and getting a good night’s sleep
* Try not to schedule dental and medical appointments during the day
* Don’t let your child stay home unless truly sick. Complaints of headaches or stomach aches may be signs of anxiety
* Find out if your child feels engaged by his classes and feels safe from threats. Make sure he’s not missing class because of behavioral issues or school discipline
* Stay on top of academic progress and seek help from teachers. Make sure teachers know how to contact you
* Stay on top of your child’s social contacts. Peer pressure can lead to skipping school, while students without many friends can feel isolated.
* Ask for help from school officials.

**Responsibilities**

**Parents**

As a parent you are responsible for making sure your child develops the habit of regular attendance.

**School District**

Per Education Code 48260.5, AUSD is required to notify parents of student absences. We notify parents according to the following schedule:

Notification of Unexcused Absences at 3, 5 and 7 absences.

Notification of Excused Absences at 5, 10, and 15 absences.

A student who misses more than 30 minutes of any given school day is considered absent.

**Pre-SARB Conference**

After five unexcused or ten excused absences, families are invited to an information meeting designed to ensure families are aware of current laws related to school attendance and the consequences for failing to meet school attendance requirements. The goal is to increase student attendance and connect the school to the family.

**SARB Hearing**

Student Attendance Review Board hearings are formal proceedings intended to provide solutions for students who have failed to respond to the normal avenues of school intervention.

**EDUCATION CODE PENALTIES (PARENT)**

The penalties against parents listed in Education Code §48293 is a fine or, in lieu of a fine, the court may order the person be placed in a parent education or counseling program.

**PENAL CODE PENALTIES (PARENT)**

Parents are subject to Penal Code § 270.1; a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not exceeding two thousand dollars ($2,000), or by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding one year, or by both that fine and imprisonment.

**EDUCATION CODE PENALTIES (STUDENT)**

Penalties against students who are truant, pursuant to Education Code §48262, are as follows:

* Completing 20-40 hours of community service
* Paying a maximum fine of $50.00
* Suspension of or delay in issuance of a driver’s license, VC §13202.7

**LOCAL RESOURCES**

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| **EMERGENCY NUMBERS** |
| **San Luis County 24-hour Hotline** | **211** |
| **Police – Fire- Ambulance** | **911** |
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| **AUSD CONTACT INFORMATION** |
| **AUSD District Office** | **(805) 462-4200** |
| Atascadero Fine Arts Academy | (805) 460-2500 |
| Atascadero High School | (805) 468-4300 |
|  24-hour Attendance Line | (805) 462-4320 |
| Atascadero Junior High School | (805) 462-4360 |
|  24-hour Attendance Line | (805) 462-4432 |
| Carrisa Plains School | (805) 475-2244 |
| Creston Elementary | (805) 238-4771 |
| Del Rio Continuation | (805) 462-4350 |
| Monterey Road Elementary | (805) 462-4270 |
| San Benito Elementary | (805) 462-4330 |
| San Gabriel Elementary | (805) 462-4360 |
| Santa Margarita Elementary | (805) 438-5633 |
| Santa Rosa Elementary  | (805) 462-4290 |
| West Mall (K-6) | (805) 438-5633 |
| West Mall Alternative (7-12) | (805) 462-4393 |
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| **COMMUNITY RESOURCES** |
| AL-ANON | (805) 466-0959 |
| Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) | (805) 466-0959 |
| Child Care Resource Connection | (805) 544-4355 |
| Community Health Center | (805) 792-1400 |
| County Drug and Alcohol Services | (805) 461-6080 |
| County Mental Health Service | (805) 461-6062 |
| ECHO Homeless Shelter | (805) 462-3663 |
| Healthy Families | (805) 466-5404 |
| Hospice | (805) 544-2266 |
| Loaves and Fishes | (805) 461-1504 |
| Operation School Bell | (805) 462-4254  |
| Parent Connection | (805) 543-3700 |
| Parenting Help Line | (805) 904-1411 |
| The Link Family Resource Center | (805) 466-5404 |

**A.C.T.**

**A**TTENDANCE **C**OUNTS **T**ODAY



### OUR MISSION

*To support the District’s Mission to empower students to be critical thinkers, lifelong learners, responsible citizens, and effective communicators by encouraging excellent attendance and reducing chronic truancy.*