



MODULE 08: SETTING UP A CAMPUS ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE



School administrators should establish a team of campus personnel to meet weekly to determine the best action for students who reach a predetermined number of absences. The administrator must select an attendance committee lead person with predetermined goals and objectives for these sessions and responsibilities for each attendance committee team member. In addition, the team should comprise all personnel who are accountable for student attendance, data, withdrawals, and all other pertinent information.

The attendance committee should look at students' attendance profile when they reach a certain number of unacceptable absences during a particular time frame. They should review students' overall attendance and trends at their location. Finally, one team member should bring the attendance data reports with students' names and numbers of absences to decide what intervention are necessary.

Below is a list of actions needed to be discussed at these attendance meetings.

- Review each student's attendance profile.
- Discuss information staff knows about nonattendance.
- Begin developing intervention plans for bad attendance.
- Decide which students' parents need to be contacted.
- Decide which students need individual parent-student conferences.



- Determine students who need attendance agreements.
- Identify students whose attendance has improved from the previous weeks.
- Identify patterns of cutting or skipping class.
- Decide the academic status of students with attendance issues.
- Ask if students/parents are following the intervention plan or attendance agreement.
- Ask if parents are checking student attendance.
- Identify students with absences for no reason.
- Identify students who withdrew and never enrolled at another location.
- Identify students with sudden changes in attendance.
- Determine if students are following intervention plans or attendance agreements.
- Identify which students need a home visit.

Check with all school administrators and pertinent staff regarding truancy cases. Review court disposition after parent/student attends court with the committee. Discuss planning truancy court results with parents and students to ensure follow-through. The school administrator designated as the facilitator should always ensure that the student's attendance data is available each week for team members, whether they attend the meetings or not.



LESSON 01: INTERVENTION/PREVENTION PLANNING

Campus Intervention /prevention strategies need to include three components—the individual, the student’s family, and the school campus.

1. The Individual Student

Individual prevention strategies for students must focus on the student’s mental health and well-being regarding truancy. It is known that many students have very low self-esteem and demonstrate a lack of appropriate behavior when dealing with other students and adults. Working with some individual students who choose not to attend a school or do not have relationships with other students, their families, or teachers can be highly complex.

Those students will need a holistic approach to find effective strategies to help them. Often these behaviors are an indication of family dynamics that are occurring outside of school. These issues may have manifested from mental health issues in the home, drug-related problems, or parents in and out of incarceration. Successfully intervening with these students involves internal district agencies and outside agencies to deal with the complex issues affecting them effectively.

2. The Family

For schools to successfully improve a student’s attendance, getting the family involved is a crucial component. We know that students are dealing with many family issues, and quite often, when they return to the classroom, these issues are not resolved. This can lead to poor grades, inadequate testing, and poor concentration during the academic school year.



Therefore, when campus personnel reach out to assist students, they must include the entire family, offering assistance and resources for student absenteeism to solve these issues.

3. The Campus

One of the significant issues with schools regarding student attendance is the student and teacher relationship. Teachers need to be better prepared through proper training to deal with at-risk students, cultural issues, recognize mental health problems, and work with challenging parents. After all, teaching is not an easy job. The school district's responsibility should be to provide training on dealing with challenging multicultural families and at-risk students to help students feel more invested in their campus. This results in better attendance. Campuses also need to provide students with attendance awards for perfect attendance and students who greatly improved attendance from one semester to another. These awards need to be a priority consistently.



WORKBOOK SECTION

1. Why school administrators should establish a team of campus personnel?

2. List 5 actions needed to be discussed at these attendance meetings.

3. Why is getting the family involved is a crucial component in school?
