

# Overview of Attendance Law Updates and Local Implementation Considerations

## AUGUST 2025

Chronic absenteeism remains an urgent issue statewide and nationally. To more effectively address this problem, state law will shift from focusing on unexcused absences to supporting early intervention for students at risk of becoming chronically absent beginning **September 30, 2025**.

## Updates to Attendance Law

### DEFINITIONS

#### **REMOVED:** *EXCESSIVELY ABSENT*

This definition is no longer in Ohio Revised Code, including the requirement to notify families when students missed 38 hours in a month or 65 hours in a year of unexcused or nonmedically excused absences. Differentiating between excused and medically excused absences is no longer necessary as all absences count toward chronic absenteeism.

#### **ADDED:** *CHRONICALLY ABSENT*

Ohio law defines “chronically absent” as missing at least ten percent of the minimum number of hours required in the school year under section 3313.48 of the Revised Code for the school a student attends. This definition allows for an appropriate timeline for early intervention with students at risk of becoming chronically absent.

- **Note:** This differs from the calculation used to determine a school or district’s chronic absence rate on the Ohio Report Card, which remains unchanged. More information is available on the Department’s [Report Card Resources](#) page.

### COURT FILING REQUIREMENTS

#### *HABITUALLY TRUANT*

The definition of habitual truancy and the requirement to file complaints in county juvenile courts remain unchanged. Schools and districts may still choose not to file if the student and family are making satisfactory progress toward improving attendance. “Satisfactory progress” is determined locally and may consider a variety of factors as each situation is unique.

- **Note:** Students who are habitually truant are **no longer required** to have an absence intervention team or plan. Instead, these teams will support early intervention that address chronic absenteeism for all students as designated by local policies.

## LOCAL BOARD ATTENDANCE POLICY REQUIREMENTS

[Ohio law](#) states that “not later than August 1, 2026”, schools and districts must adopt a policy with specific requirements to address chronic absenteeism.

The items above highlight the most significant changes to Ohio attendance law and are **not exhaustive**. For a more complete overview of all updates, refer to the [Department’s Attendance Law FAQ](#).

## Local Implementation Considerations

Implementation of changes to local policy will be required **beginning August 1, 2026**. For the 25-26 school year, the Department recommends schools and districts collaborate with their county juvenile courts to adopt practices that align to their upcoming policies and updated law rather than practices from past years.

Schools and districts can review and implement the considerations below to proactively prepare and ensure a smooth transition for staff, students, and families.

### EXCUSED ABSENCES

Schools and districts can determine how parents or guardians report absences and under which conditions they are excused. Policies may consider the following:

- Adjust traditional reporting methods for students with medically documented illnesses or other special considerations by collaborating with medical teams and families.
- Review absence documentation policies and consider adjustments for common student situations.
- Communicate changes in documentation requirements to prevent confusion.
- Review and update health-related attendance policies, including expectations for when students or staff should stay home due to illness.
- Collaborate with local medical offices or the county board of health to align school policies with broader community health guidance.

### ATTENDANCE COMMUNICATIONS

Schools and districts determine the timing, content, and frequency of communications regarding attendance policies and available supports for families and students. Consider incorporating language that builds and strengthens relationships and collaboration among the school community.

## Additional Resources

[Attendance Law FAQ](#) – updated August 2025

[Attendance Support Page](#)

[Stay in the Game! Attendance Network](#)