



**Department of
Education &
Workforce**

When Policy Meets Practice

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The Results Are In:



Number 1 most common concern in webinar feedback!

Local Attendance Policies

District flexibility

Tier 1 Communication

How can families communicate
a student absence?

Definition of medically excused
absence

Attendance coding

Updated FAQ!

Update 1

Question: **Are schools required to use doctor notes to count an absence as medically excused?**

Answer: No. For auditing purposes, schools are required to maintain documentation to support an excused absence. This could be a note from a medical professional, a call log documenting a conversation with a parent/guardian, or evidence of some other locally-defined process.

[Auditor of State Resources](#)

Update 2

Question: **How can schools support students with chronic illnesses or other considerations?**

Answer: School and district policy can define ways an administrator may collaborate with parents/guardians and medical teams of students dealing with an acute or chronic physical or mental health challenge. The collaboration can develop individualized responses to the student's needs (e.g. create alternative ways for the school to document absences as excused or medically excused) and may seek mutually agreed-upon ways to educate school staff on these needs.

The Department provides additional resources for [supporting school wellness](#) and [school-based health](#).

Refresher

Question: **When students are tardy to school, is that time counted toward chronic absenteeism?**

Answer: Yes. Students can miss instructional time at any time of day, whether it is excused or unexcused. Being one hour late to school, leaving school two hours early, or leaving and returning midday for an appointment are all examples of hours away from instruction. These missed hours contribute to chronic absenteeism, and if they are unexcused, will also count toward habitual truancy.

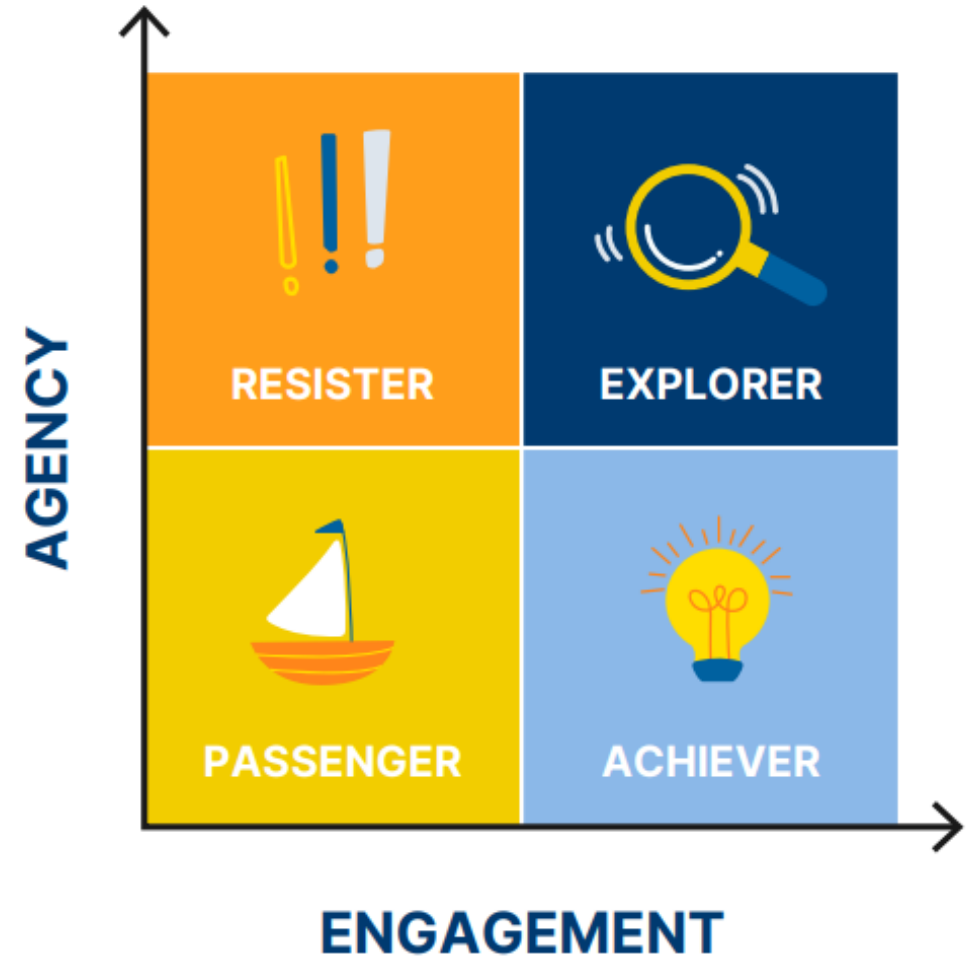
Announcements

- ❖ April webinar canceled
- ❖ Incoming Attendance information from [Ohio Ed Updates](#)
- ❖ SITG! and DEW [“Attend - Ohio” May 16th](#)

Attendance Is Engagement

The Four Modes of Engagement

- See more:
 - [The Disengagement Gap](#), 2025
 - *The Disengaged Teen* by Jenny Anderson and Rebecca Winthrop



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Additional Resources

[Stay in the Game! Attendance Network](#) – [district commitments](#) for 25/26 school year ends soon!

Professional Development

Ohio Department of Education & Workforce

Teaching Attendance Curriculum for School Leaders

Developed in partnership with Attendance Works



Attendance Calendar

Spring (March-April)

- ☐ Identify students with moderate chronic absence and conduct relationship-building home visits
- ☐ Analyze attendance trends to identify days with historically high absenteeism (e.g. April when the weather gets warm)
- ☐ Use data to identify students with moderate chronic absence for small group interventions.
- ☐ Implement a schoolwide approach to address the “Spring Slump” that affects all staff and students.
- ☐ Create school competitions to boost spring attendance (e.g. March Madness competitions).
- ☐ Send letters to families about the importance of returning to school after spring break.
- ☐ Ensure family attendance letters are friendly and easy to understand.
- ☐ Facilitate case management meetings with community partners for students needing more individualized supports.

QUESTIONS?

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