

Student Attendance

FACT SHEET

Students need to be in school to learn

The State of California law requires that all children between the ages of six and 18 attend a public school. Students who miss school on a regular basis are considered truant and face consequences prescribed by law. If a student is not ill, they should be in school.

Attendance critical for academic success

Students who are absent miss important instructional time and can fall behind. Studies show that high absences result in poor academic performance, requiring more individual attention by teachers. Regular school absences have an impact on the socialization of students.

Impact of absences

The State of California provides funding to the district based on attendance. Attendance-based funding is nearly \$350 million each year. The district loses \$32 of revenue per student each day they are absent.

Helping students attend school regularly

Fresno Unified School District invites parents to help improve student attendance by doing the following.

- Ensure that your children are healthy with a well-balanced diet, exercise and adequate rest
- Make sure your child receives proper vaccinations
- Plan vacations around the school calendar
- When a situation requires extended absence, request independent study in advance of the planned absence (absence must be a minimum of five days and a maximum of 15 days)

At-a-Glance

- Fresno Unified School District lost \$20 million during the 2006/07 school year due to absences
- It costs the district \$32 per student each day they are absent
- Attendance is lower on Mondays and Fridays
- School attendance decreases around holidays and breaks
- Flu season has an impact on student attendance generally during the winter months
- Students who are absent two or more days each school month struggle more academically than their classmates
- California Education Code determines students “truant” if they are absent from school three times in the same school year without a valid excuse
- Since 1997 with the passage of Senate Bill 727 schools do not receive funding for excused absences – only actual attendance

Source: *School Attendance Improvement Handbook*, California Department of Education

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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