



Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Chris Reykdal, State Superintendent

*All students prepared
for post-secondary paths,
careers, & civic engagement*

November 4, 2019

() Action Required

(X) Informational

BULLETIN NO. 080-19 OFFICE OF SYSTEM AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents
School District Superintendents
School District Business Managers
School Building Principals
Charter School Administrators
Tribal Compact School Administrators
School District Student Services Directors
School District Special Education Directors
School District Truancy & Excessive Absenteeism Liaisons
School District Registrars
School Counselors

FROM: Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: District Responsibilities for Reporting, Claiming, Withdrawing, and Filing Truancy when Students are Absent

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PURPOSE

This bulletin clarifies and consolidates the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) guidance on district responsibilities for reporting, claiming and engaging students when absent.

BACKGROUND

OSPI regularly responds to questions from schools and districts about the state requirements on when to withdraw a student due to nonattendance. There is no state requirement on when to

withdraw students; this is determined by district policy. However, this bulletin does outline the requirements for claiming students for state funding, the guidance for reporting those students to the Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS), and the responsibility of the district to follow the required actions outlined in the compulsory attendance law.

CLAIMING STUDENTS FOR STATE FUNDING

Pursuant to [WAC 392-121-108 \(1\)](#), students who have not attended school within twenty consecutive school days prior to the monthly count day cannot be claimed on Form P-223 for state basic education funding. This includes both excused and unexcused absences.

There is one exception to this funding rule, as outlined in [WAC 392-121-108 \(1\)\(a\)](#). If there is an agreement in place between the district and the student's parents that the student will continue his educational progress while temporarily absent from school, the student can be counted for two months. However, the student must return to school by the end of the school year. This exception does not apply to ALE enrollment.

A student who is eligible for special education services but has not received special education services in the month prior to the count day, cannot be claimed on Form P-223H for special education funding. However, a district is not automatically relieved of its special education and Section 504 obligations if a student is not claimed for funding and is still enrolled.

Fiscal reporting does not define or govern when the student should be withdrawn. Even though a student cannot be claimed for state funding, a district is not required to withdraw the student. A district may keep a student enrolled and manually remove them from their Form P-223 and Form P-223H.

REPORTING FOR CEDARS

The CEDARS reporting guidance recommends students with 20 consecutive full-day unexcused absences be reported to CEDARS with a school withdrawal code of U1 – Unknown or D0 – Dropout Other. Full-day in this context is defined as the student failing to attend the majority of hours or periods in that student's average school day of seat-time classes (50 percent or greater of the day absent).

The full-day unexcused absences leading up to the student being dropped for non-attendance are to be submitted to CEDARS. These students must be included in a district's CEDARS submissions for the remainder of the reporting school year. For students enrolled in

courses/programs without seat-time requirements, refer to the CEDARS reporting guidance. See complete CEDARS guidance [here](#).

This reporting guidance is not intended to dictate local policies designed to reengage their students nor does it release the district from responsibility for the student if they have accumulated the legal threshold for truancy actions.

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISTRICT

If a student stops attending school and starts accruing unexcused absences, the school and district must follow the required steps outlined in the Compulsory Attendance law ([RCW 28A.225](#)) including the filing of a truancy petition with the local juvenile court when the student reaches 7 unexcused absences in a month or 10 unexcused absences in a year. A summary of these required steps can be found [here](#).

A district is still responsible for filing a truancy petition for a student that has met the definition of truant, even when the student is no longer enrolled.

BEST PRACTICES TO ENGAGE STUDENTS AND REDUCE BARRIERS TO RE-ENROLLMENT

In addition to the required steps outlined in statute, consider using these best practice strategies in attempt to re-engage students who have stopped attending:

- Designate someone at the school and/or the district to track students and engage in outreach.
- Establish a school-based, multi-disciplinary team to address academic and non-academic barriers to attendance and participation.
- Eliminate potential barriers to a seamless and quick reentry of students that have not been attending:
 - Eliminate conferences that delay reentry.
 - Use the student's previous enrollment and schedule information that may already be in your local system to avoid unnecessary enrollment paperwork and to maintain the student's previous class roster, if possible.

For other best practices to improve attendance in school settings, refer to the [OSPI attendance website](#).

CONCLUSION

The rules for reporting student enrollment for state funding differ from CEDARS Reporting Guidance; neither of these require that a district withdraw a student at a certain threshold. Districts should develop local policy that meets the needs of their students.

In order to support Washington's districts and schools to better track and re-engage students that have stopped attending, OSPI is reevaluating our rules and data collection to see where we can improve our supports to schools and districts in engaging with students. If you are interested in sharing your experience, thoughts or concerns, please contact us. We welcome your feedback.

For more detailed guidance on this topic that includes information relevant for specific student populations such as youth in foster care, see "District Responsibilities for Reporting, Claiming, Withdrawing and Filing Truancy when Students are Absent: Supplementary Guidance."

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For questions regarding this bulletin, please contact the following:

- Krissy Johnson, regarding attendance and truancy at 360-725-6045 or by email at krissy.johnson@k12.wa.us
- Becky McLean, regarding enrollment reporting for state funding at 360-725-6306 or by email at becky.mclean@k12.wa.us
- Lisa Ireland, regarding CEDARS reporting at 360-725-6358 or by email at askSI@k12.wa.us
- Anissa Sharratt, regarding ALE courses and programs at 360-725-4954 or by email at anissa.sharratt@k12.wa.us
- Peggy Carlson, regarding foster youth at 360-725-6505 or by email at peggy.carlson@k12.wa.us
- Equity & Civil Rights Office, regarding 504 Plans at 360-725-6162 or by email at equity@k12.wa.us
- Scott Raub, regarding students eligible or receiving special education services at 360-725-6075 or by email at scott.raub@k12.wa.us

The OSPI TTY number is 360-664-3631.

This bulletin is also available on the [Bulletins and Memos](#) page of the OSPI website.

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