

# Updated Guidance on Withdrawing Students

OSPI Webinar

June 2024



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

# Our Topics for Today

- Clarify that OSPI does not require or direct districts to withdraw students for Apportionment purposes or for CEDARS reporting
- Review state truancy and apportionment policies
- Provide updated 2024-2025 OSPI CEDARS Guidance
- Share some withdrawal and absence reports in CEDARS



# How to Submit Questions During Webinar

Please use the Q & A function in the webinar for questions to the panel



## Vision

*All students prepared for post-secondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.*

## Mission

Transform K–12 education to a system that is centered on closing opportunity gaps and is characterized by high expectations for all students and educators. We achieve this by developing equity-based policies and supports that empower educators, families, and communities.

## Values

- Ensuring Equity
- Collaboration and Service
- Achieving Excellence through Continuous Improvement
- Focus on the Whole Child



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# Equity Statement

Each student, family, and community possesses strengths and cultural knowledge that benefits their peers, educators, and schools.

Ensuring educational equity:

- Goes beyond equality; it requires education leaders to examine the ways current policies and practices result in disparate outcomes for our students of color, students living in poverty, students receiving special education and English Learner services, students who identify as LGBTQ+, and highly mobile student populations.
- Requires education leaders to develop an understanding of historical contexts; engage students, families, and community representatives as partners in decision-making; and actively dismantle systemic barriers, replacing them with policies and practices that ensure all students have access to the instruction and support they need to succeed in our schools.



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# ***Tribal Land Acknowledgement***

***We acknowledge the many Indigenous peoples and Tribes who have stewarded this land since time immemorial.***



# Our Team



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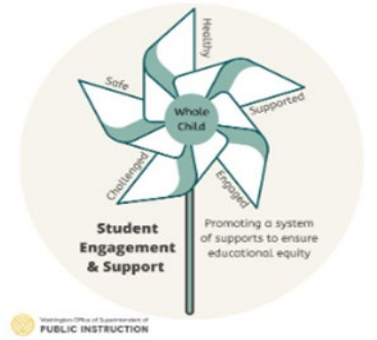


**Krissy Johnson**

Assistant Director of  
Attendance &  
Engagement

# OSPI Attendance Guiding Principles

- Attendance and engagement are foundational to **student learning**
- Absences tells us when a student has **not accessed instruction**, and therefore absences matter
- Absences are a critical **early warning indicator** that:
  - can reflect **inequities** that are caused by or perpetuated by our **systems** or
  - when a student and family might need more **support**
- We have an opportunity to get **curious** about why students aren't attending
- **Students** and **families** are our best partners to understand the barriers to attendance
- The purpose of attendance and truancy interventions are to **reduce barriers** to attendance and **support students to engage**; not to punish
- Schools and districts have lots of opportunity for **prevention** and **intervention** before involving the Court

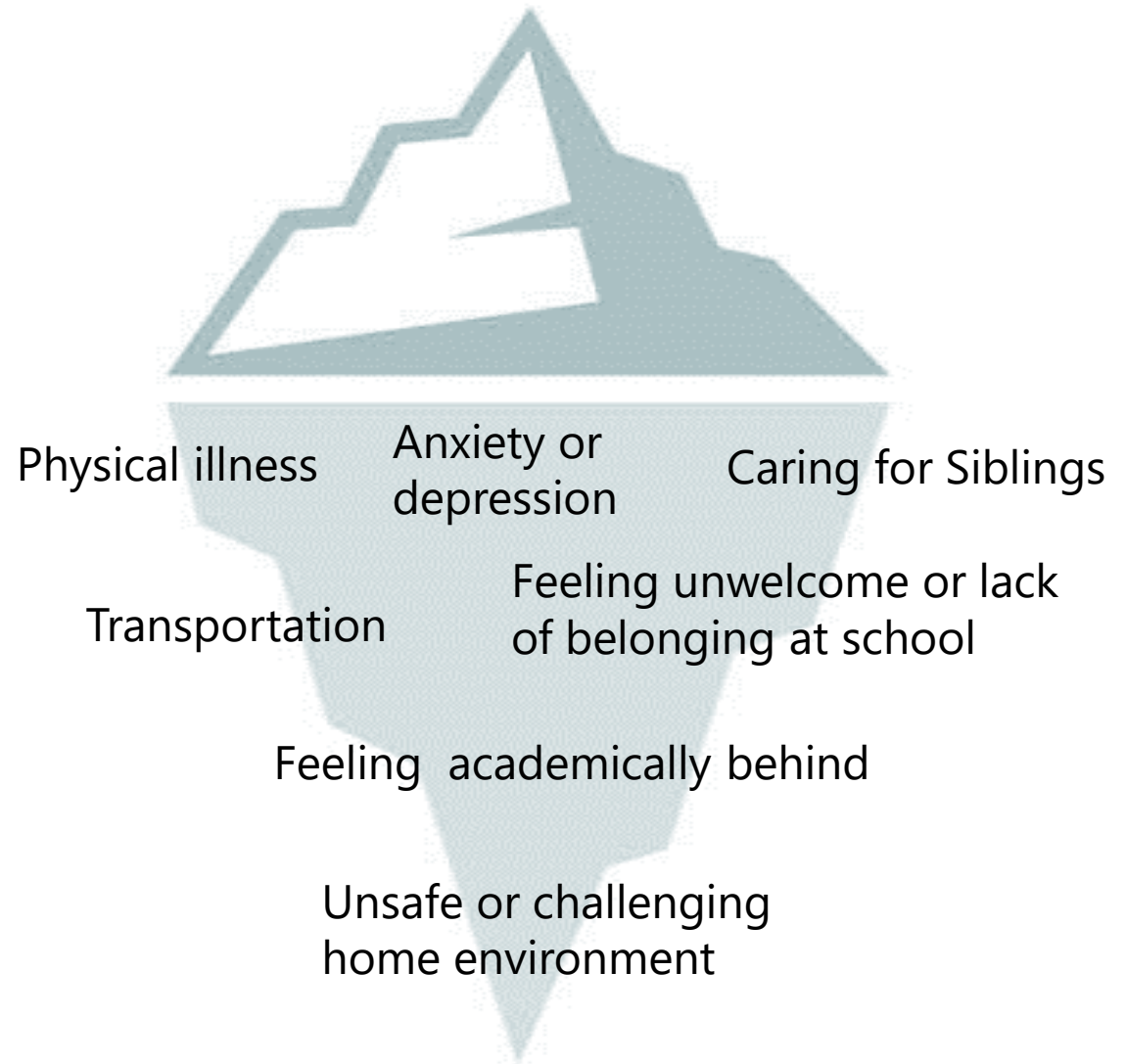






Why is the topic of withdrawing students important to us?

Absenteeism  
is an indicator  
with many  
underlying  
causes



# Root Causes that Impact School Attendance

## Barriers

- Chronic and acute illness
- Family responsibilities or home situation
- Trauma
- Poor transportation
- Housing and food insecurity
- Inequitable access to needed services
- System involvement
- Lack of predictable schedules for learning
- Lack of access to tech
- Community violence

## Aversion

- Struggling academically and/or behaviorally
- Unwelcoming school climate
- Social and peer challenges
- Anxiety
- Biased disciplinary and suspension practices
- Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations
- Caregivers had negative educational experiences

## Disengagement

- Lack of challenging, culturally responsive instruction
- Bored
- No meaningful relationships to adults in the school (especially given staff shortages)
- Lack of enrichment opportunities
- Lack of academic and behavioral support
- Failure to earn credits
- Need to work conflicts with being in high school

## Misconceptions

- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Missing 2 days per month doesn't affect learning
- Lose track and underestimate TOTAL absences
- Assume students must stay home for any symptom of illness
- Attendance only matters in the older grades
- Suspensions don't count as absence

# Differentiating Terms

## Chronic Absence

Excused and unexcused absences: a student missing 10% or more of their school days, excused and unexcused

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## Truancy & Compliance

Unexcused absences: 7 unexcused absences in a month or 15 unexcused absences in a year.

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## Shared Goal

Regular attendance, students accessing their education.

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# We have a gap

Common practice in Washington state has been to **involuntarily withdraw** students after **20 days of absences**.



**This is a gap in our social safety net.**





# Benefits of Keeping Students Enrolled

Keeps students front and center

Reduces barriers to reengagement

Opportunity for communication channel between district and student/family

Access to education:  
All students living Washington State have the right to access public education

Reduced cost for public services and supports when students complete their education

Districts will receive funding if students start attending school



# Reasons Districts Withdraw Students

Can't claim the students for funding

Think that the State requires it (either CEDARS or Apportionment)

Easiest option due to how data systems are set up

Don't want absences reported to OSPI

Don't want inflated classroom numbers for overload pay

Student is out of sight out of mind, and there are a lot of students present needing a lot of attention





# State Requirements – Compulsory Attendance

# Parents/guardians and children have a legal responsibility to enroll in education and attend

Ages 8 – 18

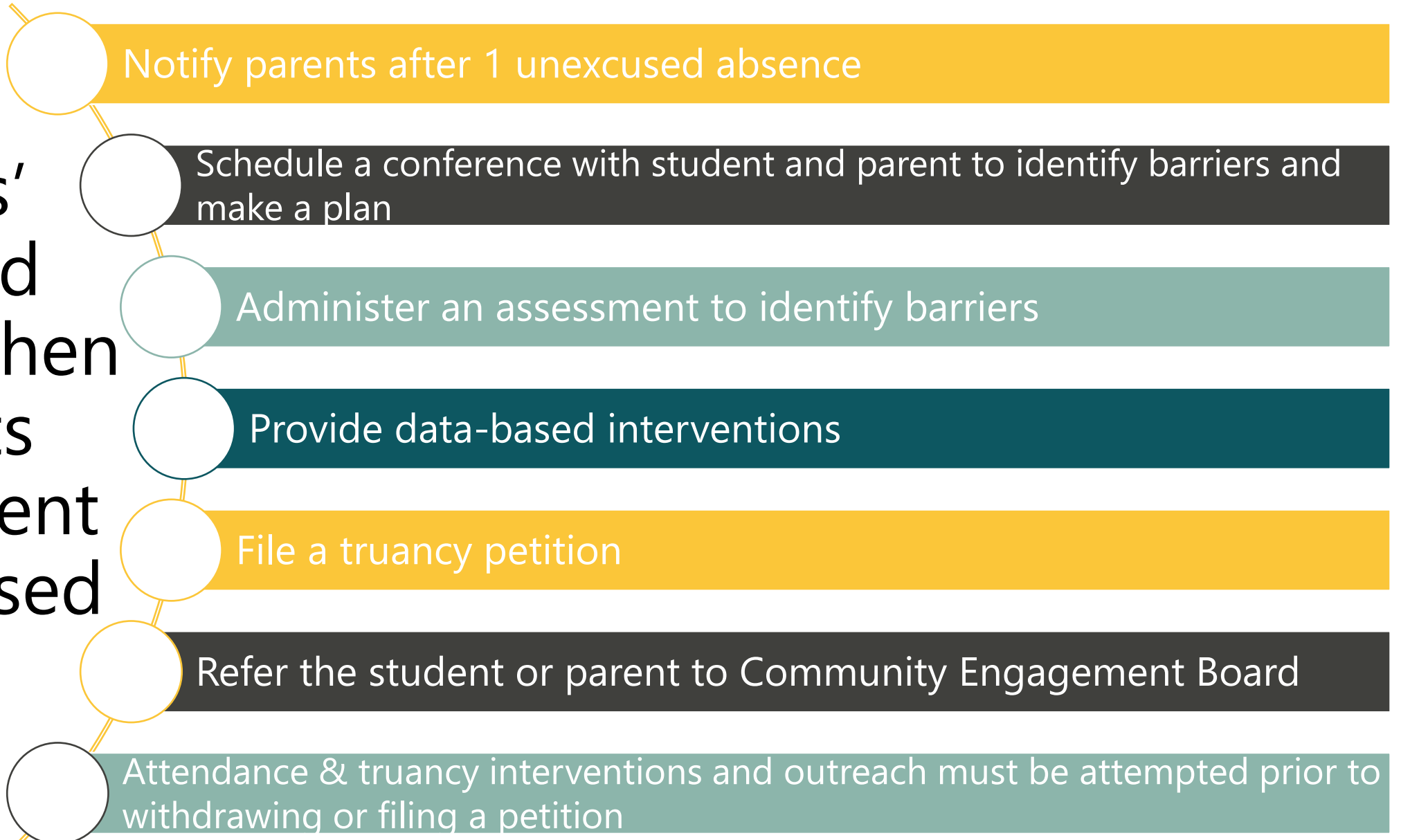
Public, private or  
home-based  
instruction  
(homeschool)

With some  
exceptions

[RCW 28A.225.010](#)



# Districts' Required Steps when Students are Absent Unexcused







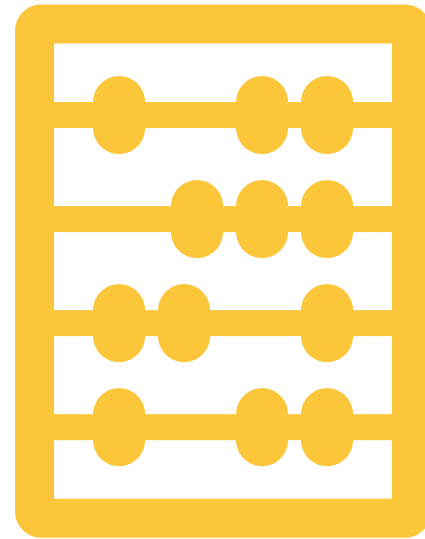
# State Requirements: Apportionment

Apportionment rules do not require or direct districts to withdraw students from enrollment. They direct districts not to claim students.



# Monthly Count Rule

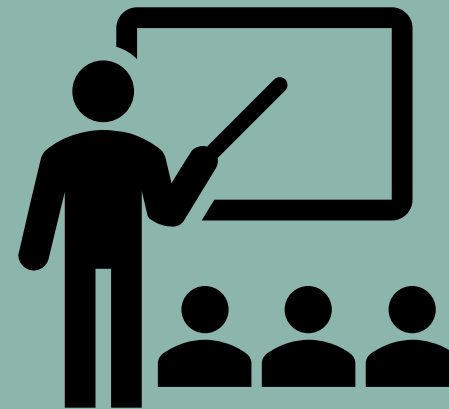
Counting students is based on the monthly count day, which is the 4th school day of September and the first school day for the months, October through June.



# P223 & Basic Ed Funding

For P223 reporting, an eligible student must have attended:

- Be enrolled in the district on or before the count day, and
- Attended within 20 consecutive school days.
- For the September count, must have attended by the fourth school day of September.



# Exception to 20 Day Absence Rule

## • **When...**

- A student has been attending school during the school year, but becomes temporarily absent,
- An agreement is immediately in place between the district and the parents/guardians where the student will continue their educational progress while absent, **and**
- the student returns to school by the end of the school year

## • **Then...**

- The district can claim the student for up to two months.
- IF, the student does not return, the student's count for the two months must be removed.





# P223H & Special Education Funding

For P223H reporting, an eligible student is one who meets the following on the monthly count day:

- Is enrolled in the district,
- Has a current IEP and evaluation in place on the count day,
- Received special ed services on or before the count day but in the prior month.

The 20 consecutive days of school days of absence rule **does not** apply to the P223H and Special Education Funding. Receiving special ed services in the prior month **does**.



# A Note on Special Education

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.

School districts are still obligated to provide Free and Appropriate Public Education for students that are not enrolled in their district.

Maintaining student enrollment for students with an IEP is important because the family and IEP team should be working on identifying reasons behind any prolonged absences or school refusal.

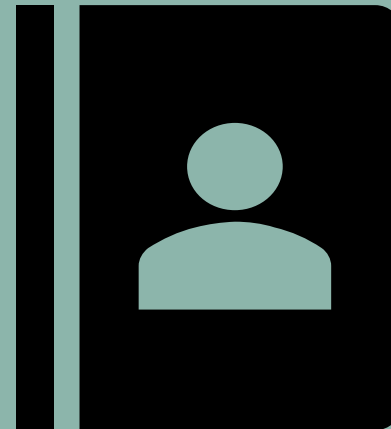
Unenrolling a student breeds conflict and potentially calls the FAPE obligation into question for the district.





## State Requirements: CEDARS

CEDARS Guidance does not require or direct districts to withdraw students from enrollment



# When to Report Students as Withdrawn to CEDARS

Districts have authority to determine minimum enrollment thresholds (e.g. how long to keep students enrolled) in policy and procedure.

OSPI recommends that districts keep students enrolled for a minimum of 20 consecutive full days of unexcused absences prior to withdrawing for non-attendance.

OSPI recommends that districts **do not** withdraw students that are absent from school for known reasons (excused absences).



# Summary of Changes to CEDARS Guidance 2024-25



How to report students at the beginning of the year that do not attend



How to report students that enroll mid-year and do not attend



# Students Who Are Expected to Start the School Year, but Do Not Attend



OSPI recommends that districts maintain enrollment until the student is confirmed to be enrolled in another approved educational program, or through the last school day of September



OSPI requires full day unexcused absences be reported for each day through September 30th or when student is withdrawn



The district must follow the truancy requirements outlined in Chapter 28A.225.RCW (see Legally Required Steps [here](#) and [here](#))



# Students Who Enroll During the School Year but Do Not Attend



OSPI recommends that districts maintain enrollment until the student is confirmed to be enrolled in another approved educational program, or through a minimum of 20 serving days



Full day unexcused absences must be reported for each day the student is enrolled and not in attendance.



The district must follow the truancy requirements outlined in Chapter 28A.225.RCW (see Legally Required Steps [here](#) and [here](#))



# Why September 30?



Keeping students enrolled beyond the first few days of school allows for a more reasonable time for districts to attempt to locate and re-engage students.



If the district is going to keep students enrolled that are not attending beyond Sept. 30., be aware that there are potential downstream impacts.



# Programs and Attributes for Students Who Do Not Attend at Beginning of the Year

If your district chooses to submit students who do not attend at the beginning of the year as enrolled (not exited), remember:

**Do not** submit program or attribute records for these students, e.g., Special Education, LAP, etc. **until student begins attending and participating in services.**



# Reporting Absences to CEDARS

If a district **does not** report a student to CEDARS as withdrawn (not exited and no withdrawal code), then:

- Still considered enrolled for CEDARS purposes, and
- Absences must be submitted to OSPI

If a district **does** report a student to CEDARS as withdrawn (exited with a withdrawal code), then:

- They no longer submit absences as of date of withdrawal
- Continue to submit the student record to CEDARS for the remainder of the year



# Exiting Students with Excused Absences



Students who are absent from school for known reasons, excused absences, should not be reported to CEDARS as withdrawn.





# Attendance & Withdrawal Reports in CEDARS

# P210 Withdrawal Preview

- The P210 Withdrawal Preview report is found in Reports>Enrollment>P210 Withdrawal Preview
  - The report allows user to select specific grade levels and school withdrawal codes, or withdrawal groups to view student level data
    - If negative leavers are viewed, if the student has become enrolled anywhere else in Washington public schools
      - Districts can use this data for confirmation of transfer
  - The report can also be used to review students submitted as graduates / completers

[How to Use the P210 Withdrawal Report in CEDARS EDS Application](#)



# P210 Withdrawal Preview

Home	Submissions	SSID	Reports	Students	Courses	Staff	Location	Student Records Exchange	Search Stu
Enrollment	State/Federal	CTE	Bilingual	Attributes and Programs	Absence and Discipline	Data Quality			
Staff	Records Loaded	Tableau							

All Students

District Student  
Attribute  
Enrollment

P210  
Withdrawal  
Preview

## Enrollment Reports

### P210 Withdrawal Status Report Preview

School Year :

Organization :

# P210 Withdrawal Preview

## Grade Level

- All
- PK
- K1
- K2
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12

## Withdrawal Code

- Dropout**
  - U1: Unknown
- Dropout (Involuntary)**
  - U2: Enrolled in prior year, but no show this year
  - U3: Transfer reported by student (not confirmed)
  - U4: Involuntarily withdrawn due to nonattendance
- Dropout (Voluntary)**
  - C1: Confirmed receipt of General Education Development (GED) certificate
  - D0: Other
  - D1: Expelled or suspended and did not return or returned during the same school year
  - D2: Attended 4 years or more and did not graduate (student drops or ages out)
  - D3: Lack of academic progress or poor grades
  - D4: School not for me
  - D5: Married or needs to support family
  - D6: Pregnant or had baby
  - D7: Offered training or chose to work
  - D8: Chose to stay home
  - D9: Drugs or alcohol related
  - DM: Student exited school to medical reasons, is not receiving educational services

## Graduate

- C2: Graduated with a High School Diploma with modifications identified in student's Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- G0: Graduated with regular High School Diploma
- GA: Graduated with Associates Degree
- GB: Graduated with International Baccalaureate High School Diploma
- GM: Graduated with both regular High School Diploma (issued from district) and an Associate's Degree

Display :  Summary  Details

Search



# Absence Data

- Absence data can be viewed in Reports > Absence and Discipline > Absence
  - Data can be viewed by
    - District or school level
    - Excused / Unexcused / Both
    - Part Day / Full Day / Both
  - Users can select to view all absences or view students with a designated number of absences, e.g., 5 or more

# Absence Data



Home	Submissions	SSID	Reports	Students	Courses	Staff	Location	Student Records Exchange	Search Students
Enrollment	State/Federal	CTE	Bilingual	Attributes and Programs	Absence and Discipline	Data Quality			
Staff	Records Loaded	Tableau							

## Absence

Please select your search criteria, then click "Search".

School Year:

Organization:

As of Date:   

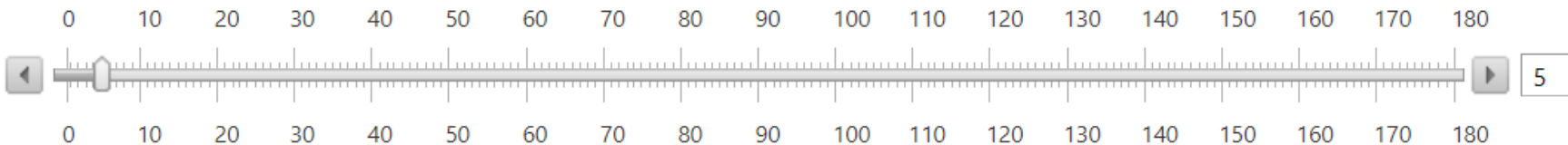
Unduplicated Count:  Yes  No (If Yes is selected, only students in their school of primary responsibility will be counted.)

Display:  Summary Counts  Student Details

Absence Types:  Excused  Unexcused  Both

Full Day  Part Day  Both

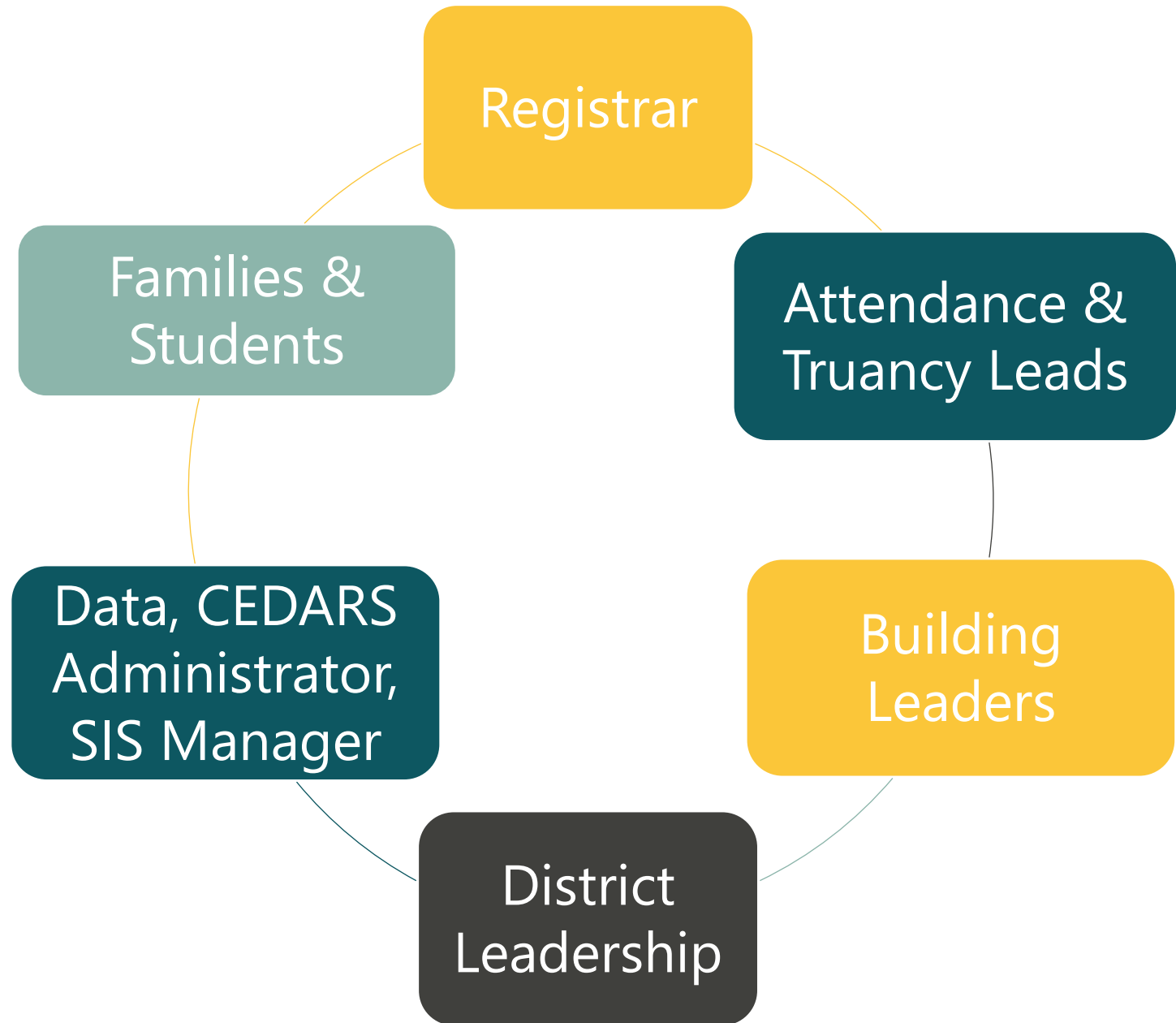
Minimum Number of Absences:





# Implementation Guidance for Districts

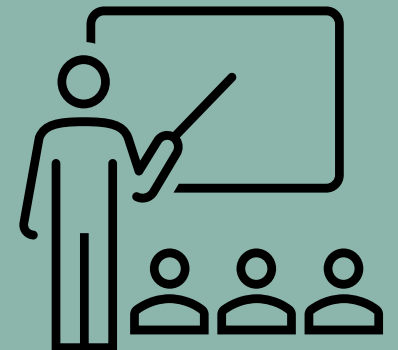
Who should be included in assessing district policy & practice regarding withdrawing students?



# Option for Keeping Students Enrolled

## Create a Welcome Back Course

- Withdraw student from current active schedule for 20 consecutive days non-attendance (unexcused)
- Enroll in a non-credit-bearing Welcome Back Course in Student Information System and Canvas
- Assign designee for reengagement efforts
- Conference invitations, public information, school and district announcements





# Outreach and Intervention Requirements



[WAC 392-401-045](#) states:



A district must have a process for outreach and reengagement for students who have been withdrawn due to nonattendance and there is no evidence that the student is enrolled elsewhere.



# Outreach & Reengagement Tips & Tricks

- Communication between school staff, registrar, and district attendance & truancy liaison
- Inform parents of district policy and procedures for absences
- Assign staff to conduct outreach
- Define minimum effort in outreach looks like (4 attempts in multiple modes of communication)
  - Phone Call, Text, and Email
  - Try emergency contacts
  - Conduct a home visit
  - Mail a certified return receipt letter
- Refer student to a Community Engagement Board





# Frequently Asked Questions

# Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Withdrawing Students Continued

Should a school district withdraw a student when the family requests for their student to be withdrawn?

Yes. The district should continue to attempt to verify that the student is enrolled elsewhere in an approved educational program. The student should be reported to CEDARS as an Unconfirmed Transfer.

RCW 28A.225.010 Washington's compulsory attendance law requires students from ages 8 and under the age of 18 years old to attend full time the public school in the district in which they reside with exceptions. If there is no evidence that the student has enrolled elsewhere, districts have a responsibility to conduct outreach and interventions including filing a truancy petition as mandated in [WAC 392-401-045](#).



# Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Withdrawing Students Continued

Should school districts withdraw students when the family has communicated that they will be on vacation for 20 or more days?

OSPI's updated CEDARS guidance states students who are absent from school for known reasons, excused absences, should not be reported to CEDARS as withdrawn.

Students who are expected to physically live outside of the state for 20 days cannot be claimed for state funding but there is no requirement to withdraw them.

Districts are encouraged to establish a learning agreement to maintain the student's educational progress.



# Questions and Answers



# Where do I find OSPI Guidance?

## Attendance & Truancy

- [Main webpage](#)
- [Policies, Guidance & Data Reporting](#)

## Apportionment

[Enrollment Reporting Guidance](#)

## CEDARS

[CEDARS Manual and Reporting Guidance](#)





# OSPI Attendance Resources



[ATTENDANCE NEWSLETTER](#)



[ATTENDANCE & TRUANCY FAQ](#)



[OSPI ATTENDANCE WEBPAGE](#)



[ATTENDANCE YOUTUBE PLAYLIST](#)



[ATTENDANCE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE](#)



# Summary

- OSPI does not require or direct districts to withdraw students for Apportionment or CEDARS reporting.
- Attendance data is a critical way for us to know when students are not accessing their education and to support them and their families.



# Contact Information



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Student Information

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