

# DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## 2021-2022 DSSF GUIDANCE FOR ON TRACK ATTENDANCE (CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM)



**This guidance document is designed to assist schools and districts in implementing the On Track Attendance (Chronic Absenteeism) measure of the Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF).**

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### **Contact Information for On Track Attendance (Chronic Absenteeism)**

Business Rules: Dr. Chantel Janiszewski

Contact Information: [chantel.janiszewski@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:chantel.janiszewski@doe.k12.de.us) or (302) 735-4090

eSchoolPLUS/Data Entry: DOE Help Desk

Contact Information: Submit ticket through IMS or (302) 735-4140

ASV and/or Data Considerations: Dr. Adrian Peoples

Contact Information: [adrian.peoples@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:adrian.peoples@doe.k12.de.us) or (302) 735-4090

### **Overview of Measure**

Chronic absenteeism from school, due to both excused and unexcused absences, represents instructional hours lost and is a predictor of lower levels of literacy by third grade, class failure in middle school, and higher numbers of high school dropouts (from [Preventing Missed Opportunity: Taking Collective Action to Confront Chronic Absence](#)). Chronically absent students include students who are absent for any reason (i.e., illness, medical clinic visits, out of school suspension, the need to care for a family member), *for 10% of a school's total membership between September 30 and May 31*, regardless of whether absences are excused or unexcused. Full day absences are utilized for this calculation, and the parameters for a "full day" are determined by local board policy. Early dismissals and late arrivals are not considered in this calculation.

This measure is represented in the accountability system as the percentage of students **not** chronically absent, which is the inverse of the percentage of students chronically absent, to represent school performance data in a positive manner.

### **Considerations for Data Entry in eSchoolPLUS**

While local board policy will determine what is considered a full day absence, as well as whether the absence is deemed "excused" or "unexcused", each school's eSchoolPLUS setup should reflect local board policy. The DDOE Help Desk can provide support for eSchoolPLUS setup upon request.

- The DDOE DSSF data system will pull attendance data from the DOEab view screen in eSchoolPLUS. Attendance codes as defined by local policy are *not* utilized by DDOE in the calculation of this measure.
- For unique educational opportunities that are **not considered “excused” absences** in the DOEab view screen in eSchoolPLUS (based on the school’s eSchoolPLUS setup), such as school-sponsored field trips and other school-sponsored academic activities, it is recommended that school personnel enter the appropriate attendance code consistent with local board policy to properly document the reason why a student is not physically in the building. While attendance codes are determined at the local level, examples could include: FT = field trip, COL = college visit, SS = school sponsored, AC = Academic Challenge.
- For absences as a result of doctor’s orders for homebound instruction, it is recommended that school personnel enter the appropriate absence code consistent with local board policy to properly document that the student is homebound. While attendance codes are determined at the local level, an example could include: HB = Homebound. *Please note that not all districts consider absences for homebound instruction as excused absences.*

## Considerations for Documentation for Appeals

The DDOE recognizes there are absences due to **extenuating circumstances** beyond the control of the family and/or beyond the control of the school. As a result, an appeals process through the existing annual Accountability Student Verification (ASV) process has been created for the following extenuating circumstances, each of which requires supporting documentation in order to be considered:

- Students who are homebound (**ONLY if local policy requires that this is counted as an excused absence** – please refer to board policy to ensure alignment with your eSchool setup).
  - Signed doctor’s note indicating **specific date(s) of treatment**. *Anticipated dates will not be approved during the appeals process.*
- Students who are out of school for the immediate treatment of concussions should be excluded from the calculation
  - Signed doctor’s note indicating date of concussion and **specific date(s) of brain rest immediately following the diagnosis**. *Follow-up doctors’ visits will not be approved during the appeals process.*
- Students who are placed in alternative residential facilities (e.g., Dover Behavioral Health)
  - Letter from the admitting facility with physician signature indicating **specific date(s) of service**. *Anticipated dates of discharge will not be approved during the appeals process.*
- Students who are out of school for a death in the family
  - Signed parent or guardian note indicating **specific date(s)** of absence.
- In accordance with the [Interstate Military Compact](#), students who are out of school as a result of a parent’s active deployment
  - Signed parent or guardian note indicating date(s) of absence(s) with Superintendent’s signature as an assurance
- Students who are out of school for reasons specifically and directly related to homelessness
  - Signed note from the Homeless Liaison indicating specific date(s) of absence(s) and rationale for each date
- Students who are out of school for reasons specifically and directly related to foster care
  - Signed note from the Foster Care Liaison indicating date(s) of absence(s) and rationale for absences (e.g., court date if full day absence)

- Students who are out of school **for a full day** for scheduled court appearance(s)
  - Court-issued documentation indicating date(s) of appearance(s)
- Students who are out of school for surgery and/or hospitalization
  - Signed doctor's note indicating **specific date(s)** of surgery and postoperative hospitalization, if applicable. *Follow-up doctors' visits will not be approved during the appeals process.*
- Students who are out of school to observe a religious holiday as per 14 *Del. C.* § 2707 and 14 *Del. Admin. C.* § 615-1.0.
  - Signed parent or guardian note indicating the absence was to observe a religious holiday and includes the date of the absence

For questions regarding any other extenuating circumstances that do *not* appear on this list, please contact Chantel Janiszewski at [chantel.janiszewski@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:chantel.janiszewski@doe.k12.de.us) or please call 302-857-3316.