

## **Corrective Action for Attendance Concerns** ***Expectations and Best Practices for Enhancing*** ***Home to School Connections***



### **PURPOSE**

- Develop/enhance the partnership between home and school.
- Identify potential barriers to student attendance and access.
- Specify commitments by both the family (including the student) and the school to address identified barriers.
- Review the importance of school attendance.

### **EXPECTATION**

Please note the **entire** process is required in order to make a genuine effort to address attendance and truancy concerns. The process is a conversation and collaboration that takes a little time, but proactive and genuine efforts can save time later.

### **PARENT CONTACT vs. CAP**

A HERE Contact/Parent Contact is an opportunity for the school staff to (1) bring the attendance concern to the parent/guardian's attention; (2) review the attendance policy including expectations for the student to attend all classes; and (3) share the expectation and ways the parent/guardian will need to communicate with the school about absence information and documentation. The parent should be asked about causes for the absences. Things that can be addressed quickly (e.g., transportation questions, schedule changes, internet access, Chromebook issues, Homebound applications, parent monitoring, etc.) should be documented and addressed during the early HERE Contacts.

A CAP is supposed to go beyond the results of a Parent Contact. The CAP is a contractual commitment by school and family to address barriers to school attendance. The Recommendations to Improve Attendance need to include actions the parent AND the school will take to address the barriers or challenges identified in the CAP discussion. If the parent/guardian was not responsive to multiple prior HERE Contact/Parent Contact efforts, that is a barrier worth exploring through a full CAP. The CAP clarifies that these recommendations should *"List very specific actions the student, parent, and administrator will take to improve attendance, other than parent contacting school and administrator monitoring attendance. Be sure to address current barriers at home, school, and in the community."*

### **CAP PROCESS**

1. **Demographics:** Check the demographic information with the families. Update contact information in PowerSchool.
2. **Attendance Details:** Review the attendance details automatically populated from PowerSchool. Check if the daily attendance needs to be corrected.
3. **Truancy Interventions:** Collect from PowerSchool and RtI.
  - What has been done previously?

- HERE Actions (especially at the 3rd, 4th, and additional unexcused absences)
  - Prior parent contact/communications (calls, emails, letters) by school personnel  
(*administrators, dean, attendance designees, graduation specialist, family engagement specialists, BASE personnel, counselors, teachers, nurse, etc.*)
  - Meetings or conferences with the student
  - Mentoring
  - Counseling support
  - Transportation supports
  - Include who made the contact or took action, when, what the action was, and the results.
  - Is the student missing whole days or some classes? Discuss reasons for absences.
4. **Behavior at School:** Collect positive and concerning behavior information from PowerSchool, RtI, staff, student, and family.
- What are the student's behaviors in school or in school activities? (Include observed and documented behaviors and potential interventions)
  - Has the student received referrals for conduct?
    - For what behaviors? What were the results?
  - What is the student's attitude or feeling toward school?
    - Toward academics
    - Toward peer relationships
  - What is the student's academic performance - current and historical?
    - Are concerns related to comprehension, attitude, effort, specific frustrations?
    - Are opportunities for grade recovery needed?
  - Does the student receive SPED services or 504 accommodations?
  - Does the student participate or have interest in extracurricular activities?
  - What are the student's school and future goals?
5. **Behavior at Home:** Solicit from family and student.
- With whom does the student reside? Who else lives in the residence?
  - What type of residence?
  - Are their residency concerns?
  - Does the school have the correct address and contact information?
  - Is there any family history that has created challenges?
  - How does the student behave in the home? Are there any behavior concerns? Does the student listen and follow directions/rules?
  - Does the family have a connection with any community agencies or service providers?
  - Does the family have a support system (e.g., extended family, church connections, friends)?
  - Are there concerns with or supports to address substance abuse (student or family members)?
  - Have there been any traumatic events (recent or past) that may have had an impact (i.e. deaths, any kind of violence-domestic, assault, robbery)?
  - Are there any specific challenges or barriers that have contributed to absences?

**6. Community Involvement.** Ask the family and student for specific information.

- Does the student have friends at school, a social circle?
- What are the student's feelings toward peer interactions?
- Has the student had any court involvement?
  - For what? What are/were the outcomes?
- Does the student participate in sports, recreational activities, hobbies?
- What are the student's academic, personal, career/future goals?
- Are there any positive community connections?
- Are there any community or safety concerns?

**7. Medical Conditions**

- Have any of the absences been related to illness?
- Are there any medical (physical/mental health) conditions, diagnoses, services?
- Does the student take medication(s)? If so, for what?
- Does the student have any chronic medical conditions that indicate the need for a 504 plan?
  - If the student has a 504 plan, are accommodation revisions needed?
- Is the school nurse aware of any medical conditions?
- Is the school counselor aware of any mental health conditions?
- Are the conditions parent reported or are diagnoses available?

**8. Health Insurance**

- Does the family have insurance?
- Explain that you only want the insurance company's name so that when you provide suggestions for services, you can refer the family to an agency that accepts their insurance.

**9. Recommendations**

- Recommendations should be:
  - Specific actions.
  - Relevant and aligned to specific barriers and concerns.
  - Realistic and accessible by the family.
  - Appropriate school efforts to address the specific needs of the student and family.
  - Actions BEYOND the expectation for a parent/guardian to contact the school to report absences and/or the student to attend all classes everyday.
- Sample actions (*list is not exhaustive and selections should align to student needs*):
  - Refer to School Social Worker
  - Refer student to a specific community agency
  - Provide mental health community agency list
  - Complete and submit McKinney-Vento paperwork (to address homelessness)
  - Complete the Chronic Illness form and submit to the school nurse
  - Complete and submit a Homebound application

- Complete and submit the Internet Assistance form
- Refer student to the Child Study/Child Find team
- Refer student to the 504 Eligibility team
- Refer student to IEP/504 Case Manager to review/revise existing accommodations
- Develop a Behavior Plan
- Assign a mentor for specific support
- Assign a mentor to check-in with the student weekly
- Schedule daily/weekly check-ins with school counselor
- Assign student to participate in individual or small group sessions with school counselor
- Adjust student's daily or class schedule
- Identify specific opportunities for academic/grade or credit recovery
- Schedule AM wake-up calls by a specific individual
- Schedule morning check-ins (e.g., mindfulness activity)
- Purchase an alarm clock; set a daily alarm
- Identify family supports to assist with checking on student

#### **10. Print**

- Document in the fillable parent signature space if the CAP was held by phone/virtually.
- Hand/mail/email a copy to the family.
- You don't have to solicit a parent's signature as long as you document parent participation.

11. **Scan** a copy and **upload** as an [attachment](#) into PowerSchool.

### **BEST PRACTICES FOR ADDRESSING CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM AND TRUANCY**

#### **Be proactive.**

- Pull the list of students with a CHINS or pattern of attendance issues in previous year(s) and conduct proactive contacts to students and families. If appropriate, remind them of positive changes or actions that helped previously. Ask about changes and plans to maintain good attendance. Remind of next steps if improvements were not evident.


#### **What if I can't reach the parent by phone?**

- Try all available phone numbers and emails to get a message to the parent/guardian.
- Send a letter to the parent/guardian.
- Call the student to the office and ask him/her to contact the parent him/herself as they often know updated phone numbers.
- Communicate individually following a Zoom class to solicit appropriate contact information.
- Mail a letter to the parent. If returned because the address is wrong, consider home visits - Dean, Base Worker, SRO, SSO, Grad Specialist.

#### **Where do I document HERE! actions?**

- Enter all [HERE! actions](#) under the **HERE! Actions** section of PowerSchool. That information automatically populates to the Rtl database.
- Teachers and counselors document additional parent communications and interventions in Rtl.

#### **How do we know who has a CHINS and how long does it last?**

- There is a CHINS icon in PowerSchool 
- Click on the icon to access information about the CHINS.
- Populate the list of students with CHINS from PowerSchool.
- A CHINS lasts until the student turns 18 or completes his/her educational program.
- Check the notes in HERE! Action to identify what the CHINS order requires.

#### **Why is the timeline so important?**

- HERE actions are only effective if efforts are timely and made with genuine intent.
- It is imperative to be timely because HCS is required by law to provide for the family to meet with the TRT (Truancy Response Team) within 10 business days of the 10th unexcused absence.
- Judges in Hampton will not be tolerant if we miss these deadlines and we cannot hold students and families more accountable than the school division.

#### **Who makes the 3rd Unexcused Absence calls and what should they discuss?**

- Attendance Designees (attendance clerk, attendance officer), Deans, Graduation Specialists, Counselors, and Administrators can make the official 3rd call.
- The Attendance Designee should schedule time daily to make phone calls and check attendance.
- Explain the purpose of the call is to assist families with addressing the barriers and reasons students have not had access to learning experiences and school.
- Review the expectations of compulsory attendance law.
- Ask about changes in the home, living situation, medical conditions, family dynamics, etc. that could be impacting attendance.
- Consider including the student in the conversation (on speaker with the parent), when appropriate and approved by the parent, to solicit information from the student and parent collectively.
- Consider referring the student to the school counselor to have a conversation in follow-up.

#### **When can we conduct a CAP?**

- A corrective action plan **MUST** be conducted/attempted once a student reaches a 5th unexcused absence, however the school does not have to wait until that point to be proactive.
- A CAP can be a proactive tool for students with:
  - Historical patterns of truancy;
  - A previous CHINS in place;
  - Chronic absenteeism.

#### **Who can conduct a CAP?**

- Corrective Action Plans can be developed with a single staff member and the family (student and

a parent/guardian minimum) or they can be developed by a team.

- Administrators, deans, BASE workers, Graduation Specialists, School Social Workers, and school counselors can facilitate a CAP meeting.

### **What is a CAP-No?**

- If you schedule a CAP with a family and the parent/guardian does not answer the phone, attend, etc. This is documented as a CAP No.
- If the parent/guardian does not attend the first attempt, make a follow up call as a 2nd attempt and document the second effort.
- If despite many efforts, you cannot reach the parent, document efforts to schedule a CAP meeting with the family. If Student Services is able to reach the family on behalf of the school, they will refer the family back to the school to conduct a CAP.
- Schools should attempt to conduct a CAP by phone or virtually when in-person is not an option.
- If you reach the parent and determine the barrier to attendance is something that is easily resolved or already resolved, you will document that as a Parent Contact and not a CAP or CAP No. Any additional Unexcused Absences would require a formal CAP.

### **How can we help families understand truancy and compulsory attendance are serious?**

- Share the potential court consequences
  - Detention for youth
  - Jail time for parent
  - Loss of TANF payments
  - Driver's license suspension
  - CHINS remains active until 18 or completes the educational program
- Explain the next steps if the student continues to be absent
  - CAP meeting at the school
  - Sheriff will come to the house with a letter for the Truancy Response Team (TRT)
  - Sheriff will come to the house with a Court summons, if no response to TRT letter
  - Court - arraignment, trial, H-CAT meeting, disposition
  - CHINS Order entered

### **What can we document?**

Documentation in PowerSchool, RtI, and CAPs needs to be made a professional manner as it may be read aloud in court. Quote if there is disconcerting information - e.g., If the parent shares they block the school's calls; the parent uses profanity or refuses to participate in the meeting.

### **Can students recover attendance?**

Yes. The intent of the Alternative Instructional Session (AIS) initiative is to provide opportunities for students to receive meaningful learning experiences that will help them recover skills and time in order to avoid giving up. Students can receive direct instruction, work on alternative learning experiences or assignments, complete enrichment activities, and/or receive skill recovery for courses or assessments to

make the time meaningful. It is not meant to be a long-term alternative to regular school attendance, because students cannot receive equitable educational experiences exclusively in the alternatives.

Students need to have limits and the root cause of the attendance concerns needs to be addressed simultaneously with the recovery. Options include:

- Saturday School, Twilight School
- Field Trips/Experiences (outside of regular school hours)
- 90 consecutive minutes outside of the regular school day: 90 minutes = 1 day; 3 hours = 2 days
- Absence Forgiveness through HERE parenting workshops

### **How do we know what others have tried?**

It is IMPERATIVE to build a culture around the use of the RtI database for all parent communications, academic interventions, behavior interventions, etc. Make sure the staff understands that many teams and individuals may need access to the myriad of historical and current efforts made on behalf of individual students. HERE actions automatically populate to RtI.

### **Who can we contact to help a family?**

- Access the division and community resources available through the Student Support Services HQ on the [HCS Administrator Launchpad](#).

### **CRITICAL PRACTICES TO HELP COMBAT CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM**

- Monitor that all teachers submit attendance for every day/meeting.
- Use a variety of reminders to submit attendance (PA, email) before daily automated calls go out.
- Develop a system to check that the daily attendance is updated and discrepancies are rectified.
- Check that subs have submitted attendance.
- Consider using an attendance “booth” in the mornings to track and sign in students who arrive tardy to school.
- Use a Combating Chronic Absenteeism (CCA) team to meet weekly to examine attendance data, identify students with attendance concerns, and align critical interventions/supports.

### **RESOURCES**

[Attendance Resources 2020-21 SY](#)

[HCS HERE! Protocol](#)

[HERE! Presentation 2020-21](#)

[Tips to Support Families and Students](#)

[Best Practices for Combating Chronic Absenteeism](#)

[HCS System of Care to Increase Student Attendance, Participation, and Engagement](#)

[Strategies for Collecting Updated Student Contact Information](#)

**PLEASE CONTACT US if you have any questions or requests for support!**

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