

LANE EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT

Procedures for Documenting and Referring Students for Non-Attendance

Communication between the ESD and school district personnel at every step is a key factor in the success of the non-attendance process.

Oregon Laws:

The person responsible for student attendance should be familiar with the ORS regarding unexcused absences: 339.005, 339.010, 339.030, 339.040, 339.055, 339.065, 339.080, and 339.090.

Public School Suggestions:

If a student has unexcused absences, a file should be started in which the following should be placed:

- Copies of all letters to parents
- All documentation including anecdotal records regarding home visits, conferences, and phone calls
- Attendance printout of all absences - with unexcused absences noted (include a key for absences)

A parent is required to comply with the compulsory school attendance law when their student is between the ages of 6 and 18 (regardless of enrollment status). When a student has a minimum of 8 unexcused half-day absences in any four week period, they are non-compliant with the law. Students who have been dropped from the rolls and/or are not enrolled anywhere are also considered to be non-compliant at the neighborhood public school.

One exception to this law is for students who are five years of age and are enrolled in the public school. The parents are legally required to have the student attend on a regular basis while enrolled. If a student who is five years of age reaches a minimum of 8 unexcused half-day absences in any four week period, he or she is determined to be non-compliant with the compulsory school attendance law.

A notification may be sent to the parent by the school explaining the attendance irregularities and informing them of the action the school will take if the student's attendance does not improve (i.e. referral to the Lane ESD non-attendance office, and ultimately, if necessary, to the court). Sample letters are available upon request.

Occasionally the Lane ESD and their attendance advocate receives erroneous information from the parent, guardian or the student. This information is considered investigative in nature and is not necessarily factual.

Home School:

Students between the ages of 6 (by September 1) and 18 who withdraw from Lane County public schools to home school are required by law to register with Lane ESD. Students who have withdrawn from their public school to home school but have neglected to enroll with Lane ESD are non-compliant with the compulsory school attendance laws at their neighborhood public school. The neighborhood school may initiate a non-attendance referral for these students.

Referral to ESD:

Non-attendance may be part of a larger problem. If all the school's available internal and external resources have been exhausted and the problem continues, a referral to the non-attendance department at the Lane ESD may be warranted.

To initiate the Lane ESD non-attendance process, please choose from the following three options:

- **Option 1:** Lane ESD non-attendance department will send the required parent notice by certified mail. This option does not include a home visit but fulfills the statutory requirement to provide notification to the parent(s). Please forward the following documents:
 1. Non-Attendance Referral Form – Mark the box for “Lane ESD Processing ONLY”
 2. A printout listing all unexcused/excused absences for the school year. If one isn't available you may indicate on the referral form what days are unexcused, when the student was dropped for non-attendance, and/or any extenuating circumstances that do not excuse the student from school
 3. Other documents to attach: doctor's notes, non-attendance letters to parent(s), school and/or teacher reports outlining attempts made to remedy the situation with the family, etc.

- **Option 2:** Lane ESD attendance advocate conducts an investigation with a visit to the home and delivery of the required parent notice. Please forward the following documents:
 1. Non-Attendance Referral Form – Mark the box for “Attendance Advocate Investigation/Home Visit”
 2. A printout listing all unexcused/excused absences for the school year. If one is not available, you may indicate on the referral form what days are unexcused, when the student was dropped for non-attendance, and/or any extenuating circumstances that do not excuse the student from school.
 3. Other documents to attach: doctor’s notes, non-attendance letters to parent(s), school and/or teacher reports outlining attempts made to remedy the situation with the family, etc.
 4. The following are suggestions for additional documentation that may be helpful during/following the truancy investigation:
 - a. Any available documentation outlining the school's and/or attendance department's attempts to work with the student and family. This may include, but is not limited to, conferences with the principal, vice principal, school counselor, school attendance person, social worker, community agent, and/or teachers.
 - b. Any reports outlining attempts the school has made to either modify the student's program or seek alternative educational programs
 - c. Any description available as to the parent's involvement, attitudes, strengths, and weaknesses
 - d. Any description or statements of the student that may show attitude and problems, which contribute to the truancy problem

- **Option 3:** If the student does not maintain regular attendance following the initial referral, the public school may refer the student for a follow-up investigation. Please forward the following:
 1. Non-Attendance Referral Form - Mark the box for “Continued Non-Attendance/Follow-up Investigation”
 2. An updated printout listing all unexcused/excused absences since the initial referral, or, indicate the date the student was dropped for non-attendance.
 3. Any additional communications with the family since the initial referral

ESD Support:

The following is support that the schools can expect from the Lane ESD non-attendance department:

- A notification letter explaining the attendance/truancy laws (including notification of parental rights to request an IEP or re-evaluation of current IEP) will be provided to the parent/guardian (Option 1 and 2).
- If an investigation and home visit is requested (Option 2 and 3) the attendance advocate will make a report that will include a synopsis of the interactions and conversations as well as a recommendation for further action if the problem should continue. A copy of this report will be forwarded to the referring school.
- The Lane ESD and the attendance advocate will maintain communication with the school at all times. Open communications between school personnel and the Lane ESD non-attendance office is essential.

Be sure to communicate all changes in status as soon as possible (e.g., student moving, another parent taking custody, student being removed from home, student transferring to another school).

ASSOCIATED FEES:

Option 1: Lane ESD processing without investigation/home visit for districts with enrollment exceeding 1,000 students –

\$30 per student for Lane ESD processing
\$45 per hour for follow-up work with a half-hour minimum

Option 2 and 3: Lane ESD non-attendance investigation/home visit or follow-up services for districts with enrollment exceeding 1,000 students –

\$135 per student for investigations/home visits
\$50 per hour for follow-up work with a one-hour minimum

Mileage will be added for districts outside a 25-mile radius.