



Early Childhood Division- Pre-K

Standard Operating Procedure

1. Area of Focus – ERSEA - Attendance

Regular attendance is encouraged in order for children to receive the most benefit possible from their participation in Early Childhood programs. There are four processes that guide staff in their efforts to maintain the required average daily attendance (ADA), document absences and manage absenteeism. The ADA rate for the Early Childhood program is 90%. If the ADA percentage falls below 90%, the staff analyzes the causes of absenteeism, including the pattern of absences for each child, as well as the number of absences that occur on consecutive days.

2. Scope

- Documenting daily attendance
- Monitoring daily attendance
- Managing irregular attendance and chronic absences
- Analyzing monthly average attendance

3. Prerequisites

- Enter daily attendance in the student management system
- Parent orientation – inform parents that regular attendance is expected and emphasize the importance of regular attendance

4. Responsibilities

Teaching Staff
Instructional Advisor
ERSEA Team
ERSEA Manager
Head Start Director
Family Engagement Staff

5. Procedure

- If the ADA percentage falls below 90%, family services staff:
 - Document the reasons on the monthly ADA reporting form and in the student management software.
 - Analyze reasons to determine if action steps should be taken.
 - Document the specific reason when there is an illness.
 - Document other justified reasons for absences such as:
 - a. Family has transportation problems
 - b. Family crisis
 - c. Family illness
 - d. Other family issues
- In the event that a parent fails to notify the teacher of an impending student absence, the teacher or assistant will call the parent, within 1 hour of school starting, to identify the reason why the child did not come to school.
- Family services staff make daily visits to the classrooms to check the sign-in sheets. Where there is an absence, staff follows the following procedures:



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- Document all contact and support related to attendance in the case notes in the student management system.
- For up to three consecutive days, the staff attempts phone contact.
- If no contact is made after three days, the family services staff attempts a home visit.
- During the home visit, the family engagement specialist (FES), will do the following:
 - Identify the cause of the absenteeism.
 - Emphasize the benefits of regular attendance for the child and parents/guardian.
 - Assist the family to find solutions to any special family circumstances or problems by offering support, referrals, or resource information.
 - Determine when the child will return to school.
- If family is not at home, a note is left giving the parent two days to respond. If the family does not respond, the family services worker will begin the termination process. If the child returns, the termination process is stopped.
- If the child's attendance does not improve, the FES will collaborate with the parent to create and implement an attendance improvement plan.
- Call contact, reasons for absences, and the attendance improvement plan is entered into case notes in the student management software.
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6. References

- Head Start Performance Standards
 - 1302.16
- Shelby County School Board Policy 6009; 6014; 6016
- Home Visit Letter
- Enrollment/Termination Form

7. Definitions

- Chronic absenteeism - defined as missing ten percent or more of the academic year for any reason, including excused and unexcused absences, suspensions and time missed due to changing schools.
- Average Daily Attendance (ADA) - the average number of students present per day over a given period of time.