



**APPLETON AREA**  
**SCHOOL DISTRICT**



# AASD Vision

Working together, students, families, staff, and community will ensure that each graduate is academically, socially, and emotionally prepared for success in life

**Every Student, Every Day**

★ We know there is a positive relationship between school attendance and student success

★ We need the City's help in getting our teenage students to come to school so they can realize this vision



# From the Wisconsin Department of Education

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## What is the purpose of truancy laws?

Since regularly missing school has a significant impact on student achievement and positive youth development, truancy laws aim to deter students from skipping school, encourage students to attend, and encourage caregivers to get kids to school. The hope is to ultimately increase graduation rates, improve the workforce, build community, support well-being, reduce the risk of negative outcomes, and increase protective factors and positive outcomes.



# AASD High School Students

## HABITUAL TRUANCY

Missing all or part of 5 or more school days in a semester without an excuse.

2017-2018	2018-2019	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
34.6%	35.0%	28.7%	33.0%	40.2%

## CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Missing 10% or more of total school days, including both excused and unexcused absences. Missing 10% of eligible school days (18 days for the full school year).

2017-2018	2018-2019	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
12.2%	15.2%	33.9%	25.5%	23.7%

## STUDENTS WHO MET BOTH HABITUAL TRUANCY and CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM THRESHOLDS

% of students	# of students	Not on track to graduate!
20.3%	921	811

★ **20.3%** of high school students, which totals **921**, were both habitually truant and chronically absent last year

★ **293** high school students missed **50** or more days of school last year



# Outcomes for students who are not successful:

- **The likelihood of a high school student who is living in poverty earning a living wage by age 30 increases from 21% to 58% with strong academic achievement (Paths of Opportunity, What it Will Take for All Young People to Thrive)**
- **A student who is chronically absent in one year out of the five years from 8th through 12th grade is seven times more likely to drop out of school. (AASA School Administrator)**
- **High school dropouts are nearly four times as likely to be receiving government assistance by age 27, more than three times as likely to have been arrested, and twice as likely to use illicit drugs (National Library of Medicine)**
- **70% of adults in the prison system cannot read and write above the 4th-grade level (Correctional Education Association)**
- **As adults, we cannot allow teenagers to continually make decisions that will negatively impact their future.**



Attending school provides students with emotional support. Associating with peers and interacting with staff members who care about their well-being is an important factor in a student's social and emotional development.



- Dean of Students
- Social Worker
- School Counselor
- Math Interventionist
- Literacy Interventionist
- Coaches
- Club Advisors
- Interpreters
- Paraprofessionals
- Principal
- LMC Specialist
- School Psychologist
- Youth Advocate
- Assistant Principal



# Current Support System for Students

Over the past five years, the AASD has continually added support for students who are struggling with consistent attendance. During this time, we have added two full-time Attendance Coordinator Positions and seven part-time positions. Below is our three-tier system of support.

## **Universal**

- Implementation of best practices for belonging, connection & engagement
- Attendance is talked about & part of the school culture
- Accurate attendance taking practices
- Recognition of positive/improved attendance
- Attendance team meets at least every other week
- Family engagement, education and supports
- Attendance letters & other family communication (electronic 3 & 7 day letters are sent automatically)

## **Tier 2 Strategies & Supports**

- Attendance education lessons (elementary & middle)
- Walking school bus (elementary)
- Attendance letters (5 & 10 day letters as determined by the attendance team)
- Targeted intervention with Student Success Advisors and Coordinators, Youth Advocates
- Mentoring
- Check in/Check out
- Student success plans
- Home visits
- SAIG
- Attendance incentives
- TRAC referral (secondary)

## **Tier 3 Strategies & Supports**

- Check & Connect
- School based mental health referral
- Alternative education support (high school)
- Alternative plans for non-attendance/school avoidance
- Brief Behavior Plan
- Home visits/intensive outreach
- County prevention referral (elementary)
- Community referral
- County truancy referral (ages 10-17)\*

\*During the 2023-2024 school year, a total of 116 county truancy referrals were made for middle and high school students, which is equivalent to only 4.9% of the students (2,371) who met the criteria for habitual truancy.



# Former Support System for Students

## Level 1 Strategies

- Conference with Dean of Students or Assistant Principal (no attendance team)
- School counselor intervention
- At-risk teacher intervention (high school only)
- Initial communication with family

## Level 3 Strategies

- In-school or out-of-school suspensions
- A citation for truancy and mandatory court appearance

## Level 2 Strategies

- Detentions
- In-school suspensions
- Additional communication with family
- Civics lesson with AASD, APD, and County Judge
- Sent to or visited by the TRAC/ Mobile TRAC Center for truancy counseling (Provided by the Boys and Girls Club of the Fox Valley).





# Truancy Ordinance

- ❖ The statutory citation for truancy can be found within Compulsory School Attendance, Wis. Stat. sec. 118.15, and School Attendance Enforcement, Wis. Stat. sec. 118.16.
- ❖ **Prior to 2019**, the City of Appleton enforced the State statute with an ordinance that was supported by Appleton Area School District staff and City of Appleton School Resource Officers. This support often included a student attending “Truancy Court”. The following dispositions were available to the court.
  - **An order for the student to attend school.**
  - **Suspension of a student’s vehicle operating privileges.**
  - **An order for the student to participate in counseling or a supervised work program.**
  - **An order for the student to remain at home except during hours in which the student is attending religious worship or a school program.**
  - **An order for the students to attend an educational program.**
  - **An order for the student to be placed in a teen court program.**
  - **A forfeiture of not more than \$500 plus costs.**
  - **An order placing the student under formal or informal supervision.**
  - **An order for a student to report to a youth report center.**
- ❖ During the 2018-2019 school year, concerns were raised by community members regarding outcomes of the use of truancy dispositions, specifically “Truancy Court”. Due to these concerns, the AASD ceased allowing “Truancy Court” to take place in our middle and high schools.
- ❖ On August 21, 2019, the Appleton Common Council repealed the truancy ordinance ending the City’s involvement with school attendance.
- ❖ Over the past five years, chronic absenteeism for many high school students has resulted in poor academic, social, and emotional outcomes. We believe a support system for students must have a consequence option for those students who are unwilling to engage with us.



# What are we asking for from the City of Appleton?

- ★ An ordinance that would support student success
- ★ The ordinance would be used when our three-tiered system of support has not helped a student consistently attend school
- ★ The Common Council determines the dispositions that would be available to the court
- ★ Implemented during a 4-semester trial period, followed by a review of impact

