CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

CHARTER TERM 2021 - 2026

2020/2021
ENCORE EDUCATION CORPORATION
16955 Lemon Street, Hesperia, CA 92345

Preface

Improving Equitable Education

Encore Education Corporation is dedicated to providing innovative and equitable education to all of its students. One of the ways that this happens is by making sure that the students attend school every day.

Encore's absence policies and procedures are paramount to making sure that Encore can meet this goal.

Contents

Introduction

In the 2018/2019 school year, Encore High School in Hesperia experienced a rise in Chronic Absenteeism. This was due to several contributing factors. As a result of this Dashboard Benchmark (2018/2019), Encore created a plan to improve attendance and decrease chronic absenteeism.

Admittedly, prior to the Dashboard Calculation for Chronic Absenteeism (that started in 2018 and was available for two Dashboard cycles before the pandemic), Encore's data for absenteeism relied heavily on the overall attendance rate and not chronic absenteeism. Starting in 2019, Encore implemented several processes to help reduce chronic absenteeism in a rapidly changing education fabric. Unfortunately, the global pandemic shut down schools in March of 2020 and as a result, hindered the ability to measure the progress made with the new policies and procedures in place.

Encore continues to work on the goal to improve chronic absenteeism, even during the pandemic, although Encore is unsure of how the extended Distance Learning time will affect chronic absenteeism. Encore believes that chronic absenteeism will get worse as students and families have learned new habits over the course of the yearlong school shutdown.

Definition of Chronic Absenteeism

According to the California Department of Education, "Students are considered chronically absent if they are absent **at least 10 percent** of the instructional days that they were enrolled to attend in a school."

California Dashboard Calculations

The following excerpt has been taken directly from the California Department of Education website for definitions of processes. This has been placed in this report to help define metrics and benchmarks for Encore staff training in this department.

For most of the other measures, the desired outcome is a high number or percent in the current year and an increase from the prior year. For this measure, however, the desired outcome is a low chronic absenteeism rate, which means a low percent in the current year and a decline from the prior year rate.

Calculations

In the 2019 Dashboard, performance on this measure is determined by (1) the percent of students in a school or district or student group who were absent for 10 percent or more of instructional days they were enrolled to attend, and (2) whether results (i.e., the chronic absenteeism rate) increased or declined between the prior year and the current one.

Current Year Chronic Absenteeism Formula

Number of Students Absent for 10 Percent or More of Instructional Days

divided by

Enrollment

Difference from the Prior Year Chronic Absenteeism Formula

*Current Year Chronic Absenteeism Rate **minus** Prior Year Chronic Absenteeism Rate*

Determining a Performance Level

Based on the current year and prior year data, a performance level (or color) will be given for this measure. The performance level is determined by using a five-by-five colored grid.

Example: Temple Middle School has the following chronic absenteeism data:

In the current year, its chronic absenteeism rate was 7.0 percent (i.e., 7 percent of its students were absent at least 10 percent of the instructional days)

From the prior year to the current one, the chronic absenteeism rate increased by 3 percent

Using the five-by-five grid for Chronic Absenteeism, we see that a chronic absenteeism rate of 7 percent is considered "Medium" (see left column). At the same time, an increase of 3 percentage points from the prior year is significant (see top row). On the grid, "Medium" and "Increased Significantly" intersect at the Orange performance level.

Performance Level	Increased Significantly from Prior Year (by 3.0% or more)	Increased from Prior Year (by 0.5% to less than 3.0%)	Maintained from Prior Year (declined or increased by less than 0.5%)	Declined from Prior Year (by 0.5% to less than 3.0%)	Declined Significantly from Prior Year (by 3.0% or more)
Very Low 2.5% or less in Current Year	Yellow	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue
Low More than 2.5% to 5.0% in Current Year	Orange	Yellow	Green	Green	Blue
Medium More than 5.0% to 10.0% in Current Year	Orange Temple Middle School	Orange	Yellow	Green	Green

High **More than 10.0% to 20.0% in Current Year**	Red	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow
Very High **More than 20.0% in Current Year**	Red	Red	Red	Orange	Yellow

Main Causes for Chronic Absenteeism at Encore

With the ever changing schedules and agendas and as technology changes the fabric of education forever, chronic absenteeism is going to continue to become an easy way for people to be able to manage their families. Encore Education Corporation is working to make sure that families continue to place the importance of education in the hands of their teenage children, even when times are tough.

- *Geographically Undesirable* - Encore Education Corporation is home to a regional school. This means that the school is home to students that live all over, within a 90 minute drive of the physical location of the school. While Encore's transportation program helps students make sure they come to school every day, it does not instill a value in making sure attending school every day is a top priority. When you do not live close to the school, there are many factors that work against coming to school every day. These factors, tied in with the technological advantages of education, make it easy to miss a day of school.
- *Inconvenient* - Encore has a large population of socioeconomic disadvantaged children that are enrolled in the school. This means that, as a teenager, they are oftentimes part of the adult contributors within a hard working household. When their younger siblings are sick or not in school yet, the working adults in the household will lean on the teenage Encore student to care for their siblings when they are not in school.
- *Technology* – While the move of technology is exciting and helps keep trends moving forward, it also gives students an opportunity to miss "in class" instruction because the makeup work can be as significant as being in class. This has been proven by the technological advances that have been made to Distance Learning during the global pandemic of COVID-19. Even prior to the world shutdown, students and parents were already making fundamental changes to their beliefs that students need to be present on campus every day to get a comprehensive education.
- *Home School Transition* – Since inception thirteen years ago, Encore has always been the traditional seat based program that students that were in Home School prior to attending a traditional school would enroll in. As a result, their approach to school and attendance is very different than students that have been attending school in a traditional way since they started
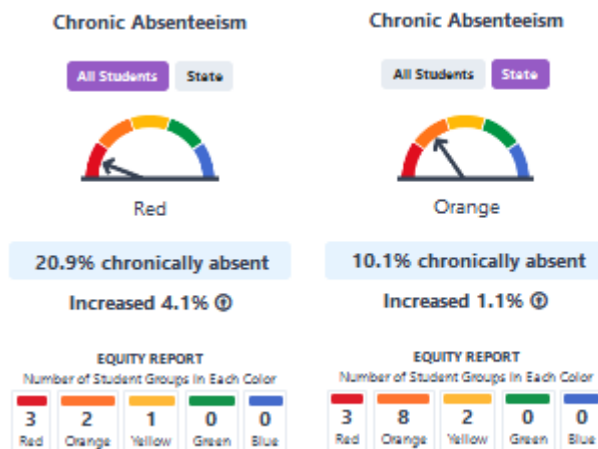
school in kindergarten. Families that are coming from the Home School Education world are more likely to be chronically absent. Home School transition students account for about 13% of Encore's student population.

- *High Risk Youth* – Encore High School has a population of families that are using the programs offered by Encore as a "last chance" effort to get their students to be actively engaged in school. Many of these incoming students had attendance issues at their prior schools, had undergone SARB or SART prior and are hoping to make a change at Encore. These students have either been expelled from prior schools and have completed their service to return to their District school and are opting for a different type of school, have had multiple suspensions from prior schools, have been on behavior contracts, or have been victims of severe bullying. For most of them, chronic absenteeism is a hard habit to break. This population accounts for about 8% of Encore's enrollment.

Dashboard Data

California Dashboard is still fairly new. With only two years of chronic absenteeism, Encore is showing a growing trend from the 17/18 and 18/19 school year of individual students missing more than 10% of their school year. The following Dashboard data is from the 18/19 school year. No data is available for the 19/20 school year due to the global pandemic and shut down of California schools in the spring of 2020.

Chronic Absenteeism

All Students | State

Red

20.9% chronically absent

Increased 4.1%

EQUITY REPORT
Number of Student Groups in Each Color

3	2	1	0	0
Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue

Chronic Absenteeism

All Students | State

Orange

10.1% chronically absent

Increased 1.1%

EQUITY REPORT
Number of Student Groups in Each Color

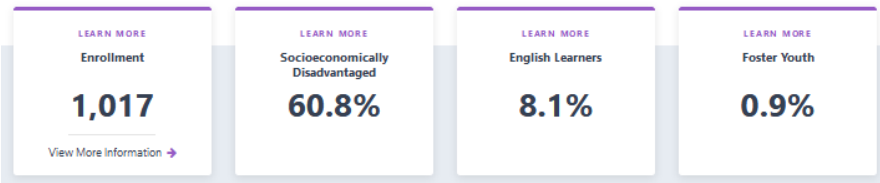| 3	8	2	0	0
Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue

These first two charts show that in the 18/19 school year, not only did Encore increase in chronic absenteeism by 4.1% year over year, but that Encore has a 100% higher rate of chronically absent students than the overall state average.

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The student population of the 18/19 school year according to Dashboard:

ENCORE JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS

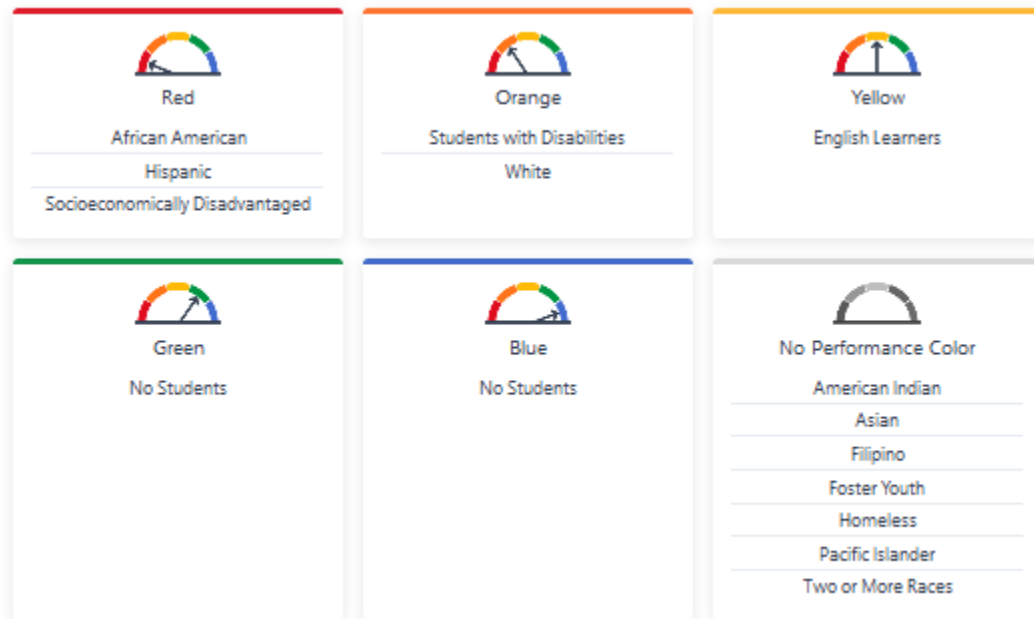**Student Population**

Explore information about this school's student population.

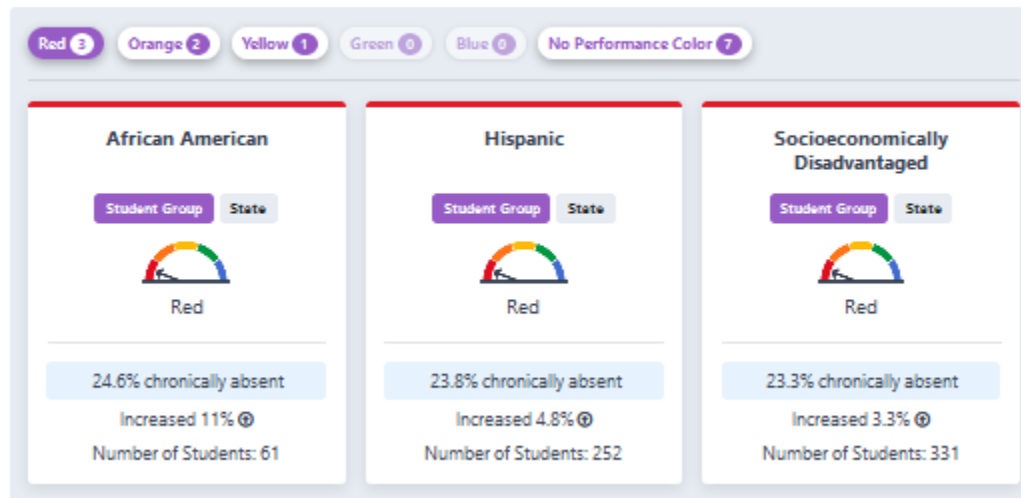| LEARN MORE	LEARN MORE	LEARN MORE	LEARN MORE
Enrollment	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	English Learners	Foster Youth
1,017	**60.8%**	**8.1%**	**0.9%**
View More Information →			

This means that about 35 students per grade level were chronically absent during the 18/19 school year. Encore estimates that about 23 students per grade come from home school situations and about 14 students per grade level come in as high risk students. While Encore's overall absenteeism efforts need to include goals to help at risk and homeschool students with the transition to traditional school, it is noteworthy that these two groups account for about 37 of the 35 chronically absent students in each grade level at Encore.

Further Dashboard Data results:

Red	Orange	Yellow
African American	Students with Disabilities	English Learners
Hispanic	White	
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged		

Green	Blue	No Performance Color
No Students	No Students	American Indian
		Asian
		Filipino
		Foster Youth
		Homeless
		Pacific Islander
		Two or More Races

This particular Dashboard shows where each subgroup population resulted during the 18/19 school year. From this Dashboard, it can be concluded that the diverse groups are performing pretty equally low in the area of chronic absenteeism. Encore took this data and put into place a global approach to chronic absenteeism in the 20/21 school to the best of our abilities (based on distance learning and a global pandemic.)

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Explore Groups By Performance Level

Red **3**   Orange **2**   Yellow **1**   Green **0**   Blue **0**   No Performance Color **7**

African American	Hispanic	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged
Student Group · State	Student Group · State	Student Group · State
Red	Red	Red
24.6% chronically absent	23.8% chronically absent	23.3% chronically absent
Increased 11% ⊕	Increased 4.8% ⊕	Increased 3.3% ⊕
Number of Students: 61	Number of Students: 252	Number of Students: 331

This Dashboard shows the increases by subgroup that were placed into the "red" Dashboard so Encore would be able to globally approach chronic absenteeism in each subgroup. Encore's goals and efforts for improvement have been shaped by the Dashboard results of 18/19.

- African American subgroup increased chronic absenteeism 11% from the prior school year.
- Hispanic subgroup increased chronic absenteeism by 4.8% from the prior school year.
- Socioeconomically Disadvantaged subgroup increased chronic absenteeism 3.3% from the prior school year.

All of these subgroups were targeted for improvement based on the global changes made within the Encore organization for the 19/20 school year. These improvement goals will be outlined later in this report.
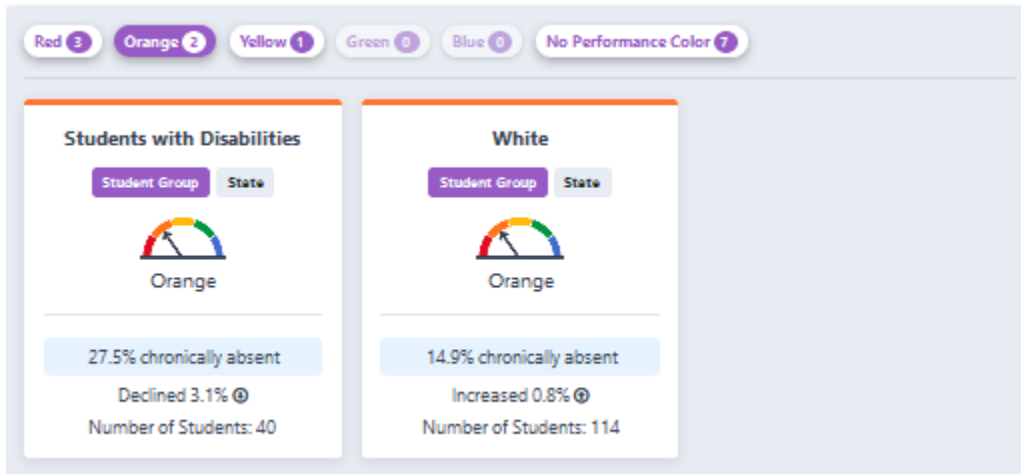
This Dashboard shows the increases by subgroup that were placed into the "orange" Dashboard so Encore would be able to globally approach chronic absenteeism in each subgroup. Encore's goals and efforts for improvement have been shaped by the Dashboard results of 18/19.

- Students with Disabilities subgroup decreased chronic absenteeism by 3.1% from the prior school year. Encore added a specific strategy skills class for higher needs students during the 18/19 school year with the goal of increasing engagement for students with disabilities. This decrease is one of the positive measurable outcomes from adding this course.
- White subgroup increased chronic absenteeism by .8% from the prior school year.

These subgroups were also targeted for improvement based on the global changes made within the Encore organization for the 19/20 school year. These improvement goals will be outlined later in this report.
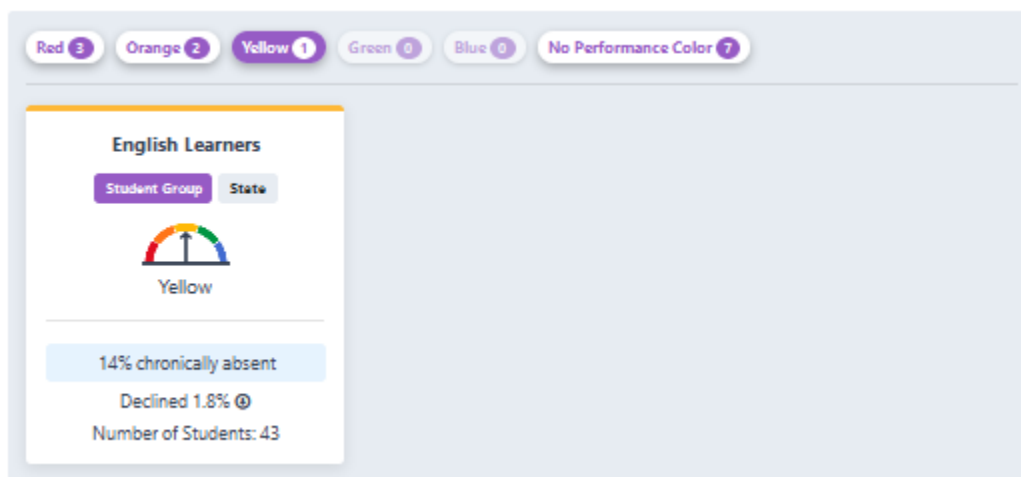
This Dashboard shows the decreases by subgroup that were placed into the "yellow" Dashboard so Encore would be able to globally approach chronic absenteeism in each subgroup. Encore's goals and efforts for improvement have been shaped by the Dashboard results of 18/19.

- English Learners subgroup decreased chronic absenteeism by 1.8% from the prior school year. Encore added a specific English as a Second Language class that is A-G approved as a year of English for English Learners during the 18/19 school year with the goal of increasing engagement for English learner students. This decrease is one of the positive measurable outcomes from adding this course.

This subgroup was also targeted for improvement based on the global changes made within the Encore organization for the 19/20 school year. These improvement goals will be outlined later in this report.
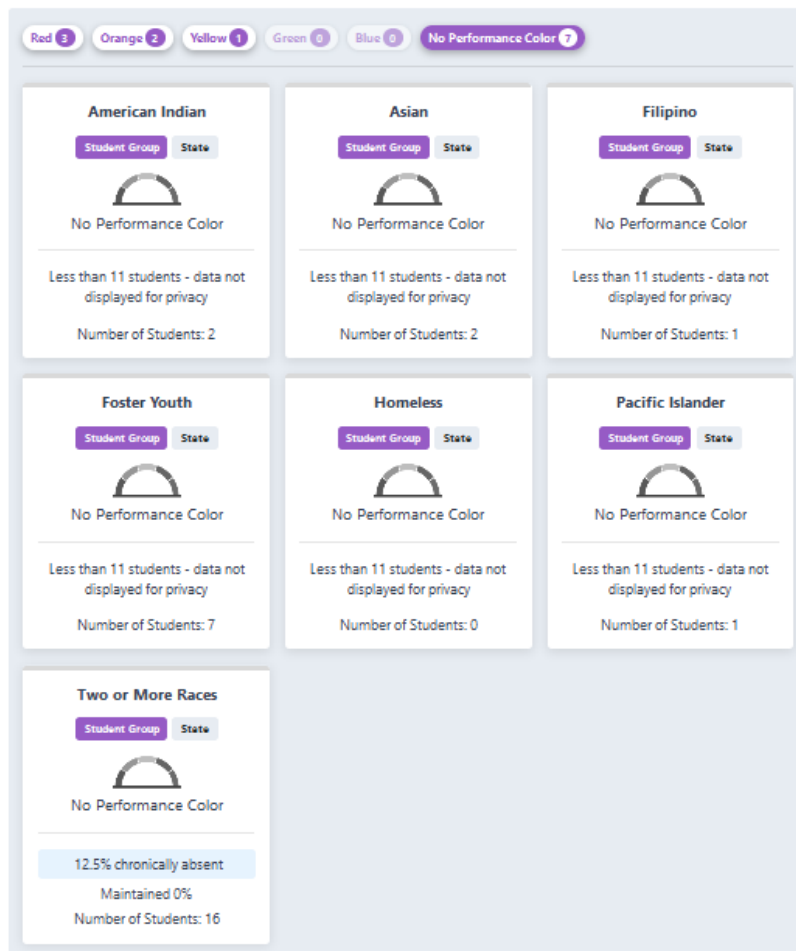
Red 3   Orange 2   Yellow 1   Green 0   Blue 0   No Performance Color 7

American Indian	Asian	Filipino
Student Group State	Student Group State	Student Group State
No Performance Color	No Performance Color	No Performance Color
Less than 11 students - data not displayed for privacy	Less than 11 students - data not displayed for privacy	Less than 11 students - data not displayed for privacy
Number of Students: 2	Number of Students: 2	Number of Students: 1

Foster Youth	Homeless	Pacific Islander
Student Group State	Student Group State	Student Group State
No Performance Color	No Performance Color	No Performance Color
Less than 11 students - data not displayed for privacy	Less than 11 students - data not displayed for privacy	Less than 11 students - data not displayed for privacy
Number of Students: 7	Number of Students: 0	Number of Students: 1

Two or More Races

Student Group   State

No Performance Color

12.5% chronically absent

Maintained 0%

Number of Students: 16

This final Dashboard shows the populations of students that are too small to provide indicators on the California Dashboard. The students represented in this Dashboard are covered by the global goals and procedures for overall chronic absenteeism improvement during the 20/21 school year.

Goals for 19/20 to Improve Chronic Absenteeism

There were a lot of improvements made to the overall process of attendance during the 19/20 school year, which would improve the overall attendance rate of Encore students. During the 18/19 school year, Encore was running a 94% overall attendance rate for the entire school population. It was the goal of 19/20 to improve the overall attendance rate by at least 2%, moving to a 96% overall attendance rate.

Goals for 19/20

- Move attendance taking methods from negative attendance to positive attendance with the expertise and training of Aeries for teachers and staff.
- Move attendance efforts out of the main office and into a separate office so the attendance clerk could perform the routine parent phone calls to verify attendance.
- Put the Department Chairs in charge of making sure that the attendance was verified by teachers in a more efficient manner.

There is not attendance data for the 2020 Dashboard due to the global pandemic, however, the efforts and changes made to attendance through March of 2020 showed improvement of the overall attendance rate for the 19/20 school year up until the school closure on March 13.

Goals for 20/21 to Improve Chronic Absenteeism

There were additional improvements made to the overall process of attendance during the 20/21 school year, which would globally improve the overall attendance rate of Encore students. It is important to note that at least for the first semester of 20/21, Encore (and the rest of the state of California) did not have in person classes due to COVID-19. Encore believes that the process of Distance Learning has deeply skewed the results of attendance throughout California and 20/21 will not be a good year to measure chronic absenteeism progress.

With that said, Encore took advantage of the "down time" to work on more intensified training with the attendance clerk during first semester, with more training and targeted results planned for second semester. Although students are not on campus, Encore's attendance clerk has been working with Leadership to improve the department.

- Two weeks of CEO training for customer services and updates to logistics and processes for the attendance role took place in September 2020.
- Parents and students are notified via email every day an absence occurs. (Tardies are not being counted during Distance Learning.)
- An attendance verification form was added to the bottom margin of the home page on the website so absences can be verified in a timely manner.
- Short term independent study resources were updated.
- Parents are mailed a notice at the end of each attendance reporting period if there are any outstanding absences that have not been verified by parent.
- Parents of students that have missed 5 or more days of school are being physically contacted by the attendance clerk to discuss attendance plans and support for how to improve attendance.

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Goals to Improve Chronic Absenteeism – Looking to 21/22

There is no attendance data for the 2020 Dashboard due to the global pandemic. The Chronic Absenteeism Goals and efforts were revised going into the 19/20 school year, however, full implementation of all process and frameworks were prepared for the 20/21 school year. For the 21/22 school year, Encore believes that a complete outline of chronic absenteeism and strategies on how to target students with a history of absences will have to be put into place because Encore believes that chronic absenteeism after the global pandemic is going to be a worldwide problem to address. Goals and strategies will be researched and created for the 21/22 school year prior to the start of the new school year.

The goals for the 21/22 school year, will be defined in a goals plan prior to the start of the new school year based on the second semester of school during the pandemic, but the overall goal for the 21/22 school year is for counseling to work directly with the attendance clerk to target the specific chronically absent students by subgroup to employ a one on one approach to improving their chronic absenteeism.

The Chief Operating Officer/Dean of Students will also hold workshops for parents on how to improve attendance and the importance of attendance.

Procedures for Attendance Clerk

Encore believes in cooperative training and professional development in all departments. The basic process for cooperative training and professional development is that a member of school leadership, usually the CEO, will work specifically within a department or position for a significant amount of time to be able to identify efficiency, logistics, and processes. Through the collaborative learning, new systems evolve and are implemented. The purpose for this type of training and development is to make sure that the CEO has a full understanding of the scope of work that is given to every employee AND the staff member in the role has a large role in determining and outlining each piece of their job. This type of cooperative training is ongoing and is revised regularly.

Basic Attendance Daily Procedures

EMAILS – When you first arrive at 7:00 am, you will start the day by making changes in the daily attendance based on emails received from parents and students. This should be the first hour of every day and should conclude by 8:00 am.

PHONE CALLS – Staring at 8:00 am, make phone calls based on the active phone call log on your Excel List.

Update your Excel List based on the daily report –

Run a report that has any student that has missed five or more school days for the semester.

Add new students to your Excel List to update your phone call list.

For all of the new students added to the Excel List, you will immediately send them an email asking for them to clear/verify their absence(s).

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On Thursdays for students that you have not heard back from – A letter will be sent home. Use the template from "Absence Verification USPS Letter." This letter will be physically mailed home.

RUN THE DAILY REPORT – Once you have completed the phone calls, you will always be working one day behind on the daily reports.

- The first report that you are going to run is the ALL DAY CODE from the prior day. You need to close out the attendance from yesterday and put in all day codes for yesterday.
- The next report you are going to run is called the "Students with 1 or more periods absent" report. You should be running for this report daily.
- First, check the absences for any IS students that may have been marked absent. Update their absences to present using the "J" code "Asynchronous." You are using this code for IS students so they are not being notified daily that they missed school. NOTE: This attendance might be changed at the end of grading periods should the student not complete the work to verify attendance.
- Then, check for anomalies. Fix anomalies that have easy answers. (An example of an anomaly would be if 800 students were marked absent for the same class period.)
- Anomalies from teachers should be addressed to the teacher directly. Email the teacher, Dean of Academics (Julia Dolf) and BCC Human Resources (Ashlin Barkdull/Curtis Peterson).
- Rerun the report. Use the new report to set up the email letter.
- Set up the absence verification letter for automatic email. This email is called "Prior Day Absence Verification" on your drive. This email is going to be used for absences on the prior day only.
- **CLEAR THE DAILY REPORT USING EMAILS** – Once you have sent out the new report from today via email, you will then check your email for verification from the students that were on your report from the prior day. (The students that you reached out to via email yesterday.) For the ones that responded, clear their absences as necessary.
- **PHONE CALL LIST** – After clearing yesterday's absences through email, update your Google Sheets call list and make phone calls for new absences from the report run yesterday that were not responded to via email.
- **RUN ALL DAY CODE REPORT** – At the end of every school day at 3:20 pm before you go home. The all-day code report will count if a student did not attend any class on that school day. Run the report for both junior and high school separately.
- **AUTOMATED EMAIL BLASTS** – Through Aeries, there is already a set of communication that will automatically be sent out to the parents and the students as absences occur.
  - **Multiple All Day Absences** – Email notification is sent on Saturdays
  - **Multiple Period Absences** – Email notification is sent on Tuesdays at 2:00 pm
  - **Period Absences Summary** – Email notification is sent daily, Monday through Friday at 3:00 pm
  - **All Day Absences** – Email notification is sent daily, Monday through Friday at 4:00 pm
  - **Uncleared Prior Absences** – Email notification is sent on Mondays at 8:00 am

- **Uncleared Prior Day Period Absences** – Email notification is sent on Wednesdays at 9:00 am
- **WHEN IT IS REPORT CARD TIME** – Run in Aeries "Absence Verification Worksheets." Once these are run, they should be mailed home. Worksheets should be mailed home at all grade reporting periods:
    - *Progress Reports*
    - *1st Quarter Grades*
    - *Progress Reports*
    - *Semester Grades*
    - *Progress Reports*
    - *3rd Quarter Grades*
    - *Progress Reports*
    - *2nd Semester Grades*