

Student Attendance

September is National Attendance Awareness Month!

School is back in session. School leaders, faculty and staff have worked hard to ensure a smooth opening for the 2015-16 school year. It's time to make sure that our students are showing up ready to learn. The first step is to support all students and families in understanding the importance of strong daily attendance.



Colorado by the Numbers: Alarming Truancy Rate

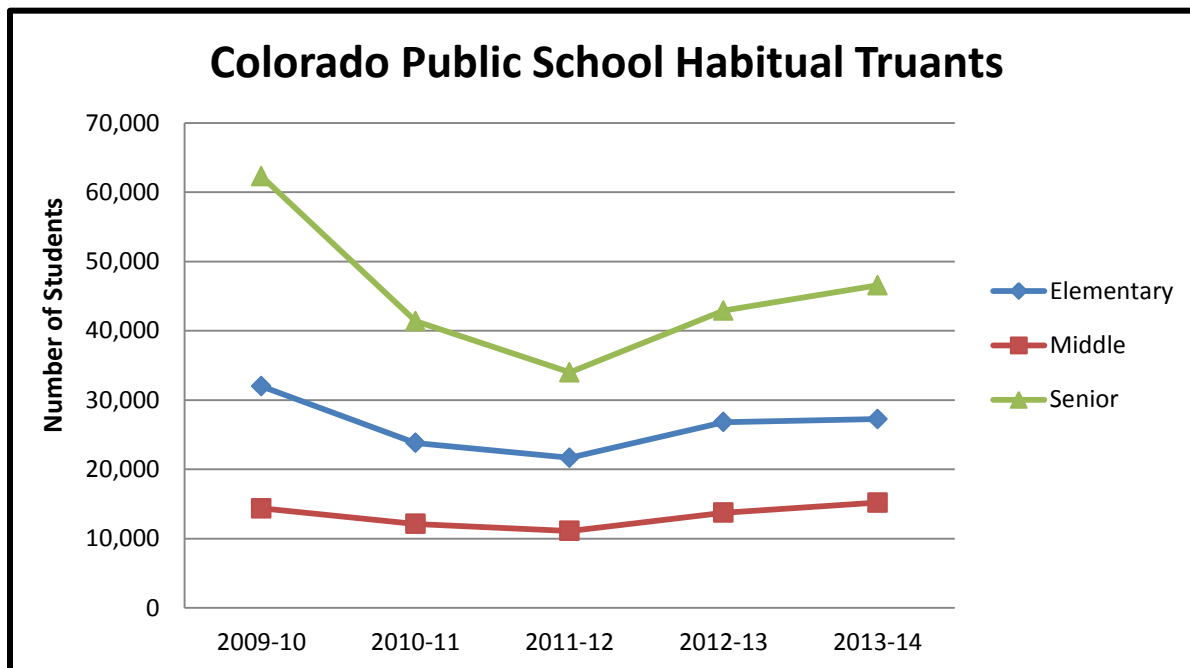
Take a closer look at Colorado's performance in attendance.

State Attendance Rate:

- 2011-12 – 94.4%
- 2012-13 – 93.8%
- 2013-14 – 93.6%

State Truancy Rates

- 2011-12 – 1.8%
- 2012-13 – 2.1%
- 2013-14 – 2.2%



Overall, Colorado has seen an increase in the absenteeism and truancy over the past several years. Notably, there has been a significant increase in the number of habitual truancy across all grade levels. From the 2011-12 school year to the 2013-14 school year, the number of habitual truants have increased to 88,991 from 66,772. Habitual truants are defined as students of compulsory school attendance age (6 to 17) who have had four unexcused absences in one month or 10 unexcused absences in one school year. For more statistics on Colorado's attendance, check out the [State of Colorado Truancy Data](#).

Best Practices for Increasing Attendance

There are a variety of approaches schools can take to increase student attendance. Below are several strategies schools can utilize. Click on the link to read more about the research for the particular strategy.

- [Focus on 9th-Grade](#) – Improvements in long-term outcomes are made when schools focus on students' 9th-grade year.
- [Focus on Middle School](#)– Students' middle school attendance rate and GPA are the best indicators to determine their high school success. Targeted interventions aiding students' transition from middle school to high school could improve academic performance.
- [Mentoring Programs](#)– The effects of absenteeism are reversible with the help of mentors, incentive programs, and awareness campaigns.
- [Parent engagement](#)– Engaging parents in their child's educational career is a key strategy in improving attendance and academic performance.
- [School-based health centers and health interventions](#)– School-based health centers and interventions have a direct impact on educational outcomes, such as attendance.

Attendance Toolkits

There are various attendance toolkits school and district leaders may utilize to improve student attendance and student outcomes.



District Leaders:

- [The Power of Positive Connections Toolkit](#)
 - A step-by-step approach to establishing a team and culture promoting regular attendance, identifying at-risk students and crunching data to understand where to concentrate resources at a district level.
- [Tracking Tools](#)
 - District leaders can register to use free tools to track chronic absences developed by Applied Survey Research to develop self-calculating spreadsheets for school districts (especially useful for small districts).

Principals:

- [Leading Attendance: A Toolkit for Principals](#)
 - Provides templates, tools and messaging for school leaders, as well as examples of schools across the nation that have improved their attendance rates.

Teachers:

- [Teaching Attendance: Everyday strategies to help teachers improve attendance and increase achievement](#)
 - The toolkit provides teachers with strategies to establish culture of attendance and engage parents and students.

Engaging Parents and Families:

- [Bringing Attendance Home: Engaging parents in preventing chronic absence](#)
 - The toolkit contains research demonstrating the positive relationship between parent involvement and attendance, materials to share with parents and families and interactive exercises to do with parents.