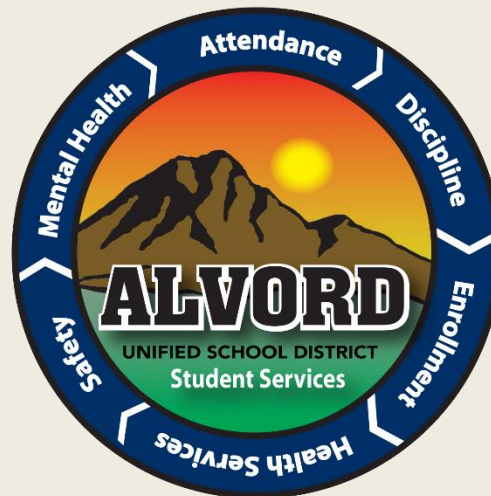


# REBOUND WITH ATTENDANCE



## WHY ATTENDANCE MATTERS

ALVORD UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
STUDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT



# Topics to Cover



- The Impact of Truancy – academics, public safety, economy
- Common reasons why children are not coming to school every day
- Suggestions to help promote attendance



# CA Education Code §48200



- In California, every child between the ages of 6 and 18, is required to attend school.
- Every parent or guardian of a child between the ages 6-18 is legally mandated to ensure that their child attends school.

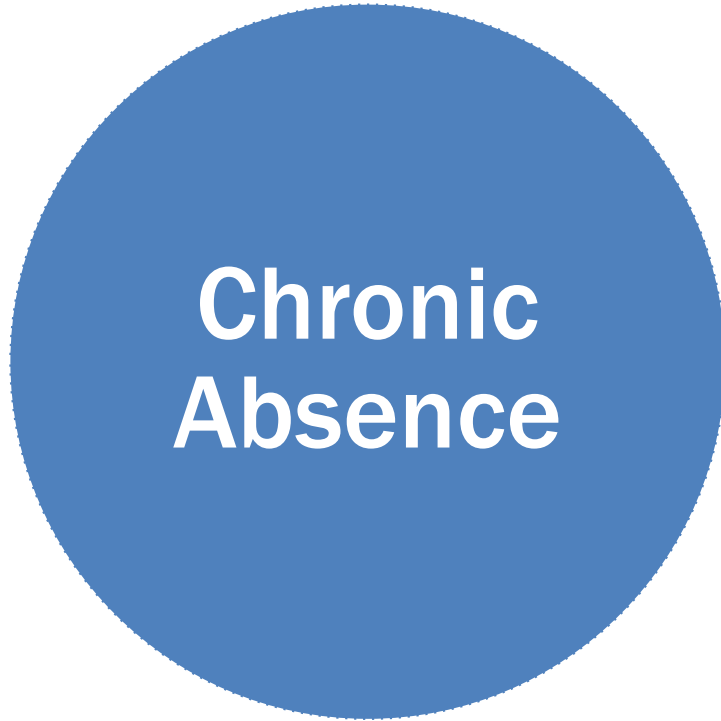


# Key Terms



- Truancy: 3 unexcused absences and/or tardies for more than a 30-minute period within the same school year (or any combination of the above)
- Chronic Truancy: missing 10% or more of the school year for unexcused reasons
- Chronic Absence: missing 10% or more of the school year for any reason, excused or unexcused





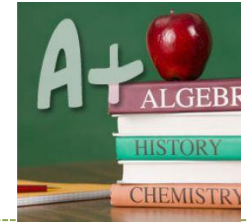
# Consequences of Truancy and Chronic Absenteeism



- Academic Impact
- Public Safety Impact
- Economic Impact



# Impact on Academic Success



- Students who cannot read proficiently by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade will not graduate from high school on time
- Students who missed 10% of Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade scored, on average, 60 points below students with good attendance in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading tests, and nearly 100 points below on math tests\*



\*Attendance Works

# The Link Between Absenteeism and Dropout Rates



Chronic absenteeism is one of the strongest predictors of dropping out, even more than suspensions and test scores.





# Impact on Public Safety



Truant students are more likely to:

- Have substance abuse problems
- Have a higher risk of joblessness, homelessness, and poverty
- Be victims of crime
- Have more social and emotional problems
- Have more contacts with law enforcement

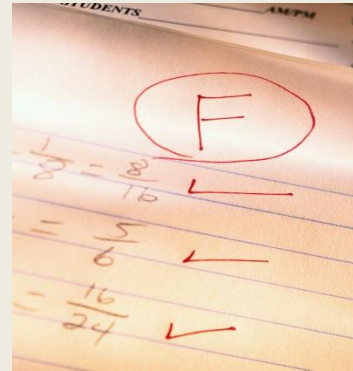


# Why Are Students Missing School?



- Some common reasons:

- Boredom/lazy
- Feeling far behind
- No clean uniform/clothes
- Starts too early
- Babysitting younger siblings
- Being bullied –report to the school immediately
- Anxiety – this may require extra support such as counseling or therapy. Ask the school for resources and follow through with any referrals



# Excused vs. Unexcused Absences

## Excused

- Personal Illness/  
Medical Appointment  
(after school is best)
- Bereavement  
(attending funeral of an immediate family member as defined by Ed. Code)
- Court appearance  
(if child's presence is required)
- Observance of a religious holiday

## Unexcused = Anything Else

- Family Vacation
- “Don’t feel good”
- Babysitting
- Transportation

\*Absences must be reported within 5 days or they will be unexcused



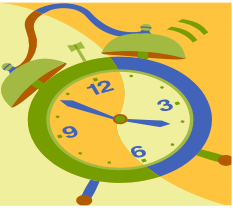
**\*Caution: Even excused absences contribute to chronic absenteeism!**

# “My Child is Sick Today”



- When children (not the parent) are ill, they may be excused from school.
  - Asthma –The #1 chronic cause of school absenteeism each year, but should not be an obstacle since it can be managed. Have plan in place at school.
  - Guidelines on when to keep a student home.
    - ✦ Page 40 of the ***Annual Notification of Rights and Responsibilities of Parents, Guardians, and Students.***





# Do Tardies Really Matter?



- It is important for students to be on time every day.



- Develop an important habit for success throughout life.
- Missed instruction results in falling behind in class.
- Coming in late affects others by disrupting the class and the learning that is taking place.
- It is disrespectful to the teacher and peers.
- Students who are consistently tardy feel embarrassed.

**It is better to get to school late than not at all!**

# Chronic Truancy – What Happens Next?



- Schools must try to resolve attendance issues through intervention: sending letters, having parent/student conferences, offering support and resources.
- When truancies (or unexcused absences) continue the case may be referred to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB).
- Families will be required to appear before the SARB panel to establish and commit to an action plan to improve attendance.



# SARB Hearing



- At the hearing, the student will be placed on a contract requiring participation in interventions which may include counseling or tutoring.
- All parties, both the family and school site, are to follow-through and do their part.

# SARB Hearing (cont.)



- Failure to improve attendance may result in a referral to the Truancy Diversion Program which requires families to go to court (ages 11 and up).
- D.A. Mediation is available for parents with younger students.



The most accurate predictor of student achievement is not income or social status, but **PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION.**



# What Can Parents Do?



- Make education a priority at home.
- Talk to your child about the importance of education.
- Establish a basic routine, i.e. going to bed early, homework time.
- If your child seems reluctant to go to school, find out why. Absenteeism is usually a symptom of something else.
- Always have a back-up plan to help you get your child to school.



# What Can Parents Do? (Cont.)



- **Communicate with the school.**
  - Do not let a language barrier stand in the way of your child's academic success.
  - Always call the school when your child will be absent and get make-up work from the teacher.
- If you need additional support, ask for resources.
- Get involved in parent programs.



# What Can Parents Do? (Cont.)

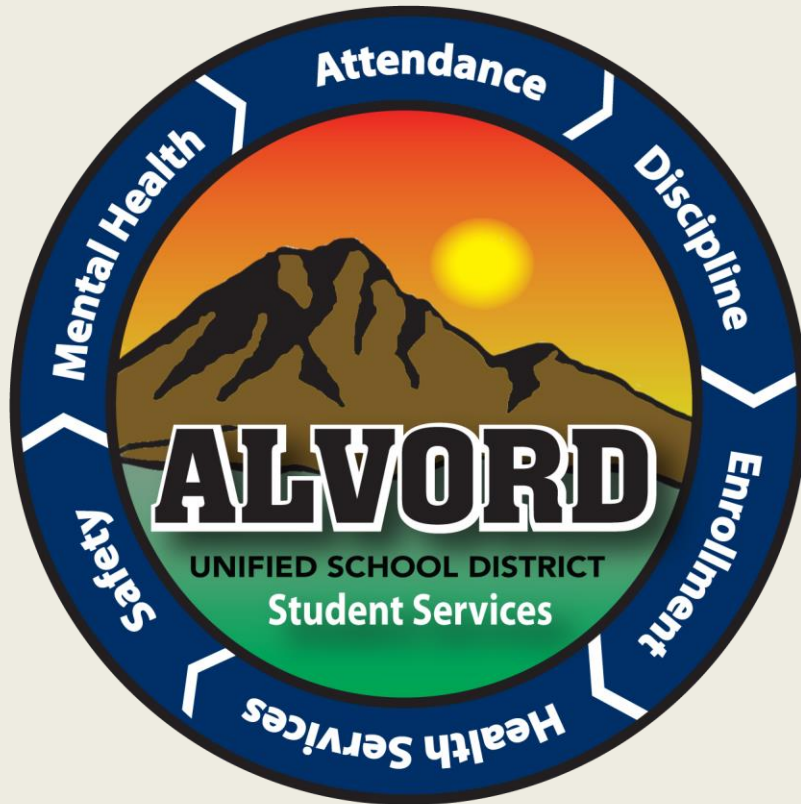


- Spread the message that school attendance is important, and it's the law.
- Be informed about legal obligations and the benefits of an education.
- Share this information with other parents.
- Let your children know that attending school is their “job” until they graduate -- Employers look for responsible employees and that starts with good attendance.



# Questions?

## Student Services (951)509-5139



### Ian Fish

- Assistant Director of Student Services
- 951-509-5139
- [ian.fish@alvordschools.org](mailto:ian.fish@alvordschools.org)