



School Attendance Information

Ellensburg High School
2022-2023



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Attendance: What We Need From Students - EVERY DAY

Ellensburg High School is making a special effort to ensure that all students fully benefit from their education by attending school regularly and on time. Students should arrive on time and ready to learn.

Daily Attendance

Regular participation in classes is critical to student success. It helps to keep students motivated and keeps them connected with their teachers and peers. Parents are still expected to contact the EHS attendance office to notify or excuse student absences (509) 925-8303.

Did You Know?

- Students should be expected to participate in school five days a week
- Missing 10 percent (or about 18 days) increases the chance that your student will not read or master math at the same level as their peers.
- Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two days every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.
- By being present at school, your child learns valuable social skills and has the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with other students and school staff.
- Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with school work, dealing with a bully or facing some other potentially serious difficulty.
- **By 9th grade, regular and high attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than 8th grade test scores.**

Family & School Partnership

Call To Excuse Absence

All ESD attendance and truancy policies will apply to all students. When students are ill or will be missing school for any reason, parents will be expected to contact your child's school to report absences as you have done in prior years (509) 925-8303 or (509) 933-7609.

Communication

Parent-Teacher communication is a vital cornerstone to maintain the relationship between the school and parents. Teachers are the parents' first point of contact for academic questions. For students to succeed in learning, parents are expected to maintain responsiveness to email,



newsletters, phone, and or video communications with the teachers and the school. Parents should encourage their students to communicate directly with their teachers when issues or absences arise. Professional, courteous two-way communication is always encouraged. A list of contact information is provided at the end of this document and all staff emails can be found on our [Ellensburg High School website](#).

Other Suggestions

- Set a regular bed time and limit the use of electronic devices after a predetermined time.
- Prepare for school the night before, finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep.
- Find out what days your student should be in the building for in person hybrid instruction.
- Avoid appointments and extended trips when school is in session.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor, or another parent.
- Keep track of your student's attendance. Use the Skyward Mobile app to follow your students' attendance and grades on a daily basis.
- Talk to your student about the importance of attendance and online participation.
- Talk to your students' teachers or school counselors if you notice sudden changes in behavior. These could be tied to something going on at school.

What Is An "Excused" or "Unexcused" Absence?

A school principal or designee has the authority to determine if an absence meets the above criteria for an excused absence. <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=392-401&full=true>

Excused absences include:

- (1) Illness, health condition or medical appointment (including, but not limited to, medical, counseling, dental, optometry, pregnancy, and in-patient or out-patient treatment for chemical dependency or mental health) for the student or person for whom the student is legally responsible;
- (2) Family emergency including, but not limited to, a death or illness in the family;
- (3) Religious or cultural purpose including observance of a religious or cultural holiday or participation in religious or cultural instruction;
- (4) Court, judicial proceeding, court-ordered activity
- (5) Post-secondary, technical school or apprenticeship program visitation, or scholarship interview;
- (6) State-recognized search and rescue activities consistent with RCW 28A.225.055;
- (7) Absence directly related to the student's homeless or foster care/dependency status;
- (8) Absences related to deployment activities of a parent or legal guardian who is an active duty member consistent with RCW 28A.705.010;
- (9) Absences due to suspensions, expulsions or emergency expulsions imposed pursuant to chapter 392-400 WAC if the student is not receiving educational services and is not enrolled in qualifying "course of study" activities as defined in WAC 392-121-107;



- (10) Absences due to student safety concerns, including absences related to threats, assaults, or bullying;
- (11) Absences due to a student's migrant status; and
- (12) An approved activity that is consistent with district policy and is mutually agreed upon by the principal or designee and a parent, guardian, or emancipated youth.

Unexcused absence: If the reason for your child's absence is not in this list, then it would be "unexcused."

What Is The Difference Between Chronic Absenteeism & Truancy?

Attendance is a critical building block for student learning. Attendance means that students are actively engaged in daily learning activities.

Truancy generally refers to unexcused absences. If a student misses school without a valid excuse, the student might be considered "truant." When a student is truant, schools are required to:

- Notify the family;
- Meet and work with the family and student to figure out barriers for regular attendance.
- Try different strategies to help improve the student's attendance. If that doesn't work, a student and family can be referred to a Community Engagement Board or to court.

Chronic Absenteeism refers to all absences; excused or unexcused

- If a student misses school a lot, even with a valid excuse, the law now requires schools to meet and work with the family to figure out why, and make a plan to help the student get to school regularly

Washington State Attendance Requirements For The 2021-2022 Year

- The law requires that students are in school, full-time, every day, on time, unless there is a valid excuse.
- For more information, please see <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=28A.225.020>



Can Parents Be Held Responsible For Their Child's Truancy?

Possibly, yes.

- If a child is truant, a parent might face a court hearing, and possible fines or community services.
- If a child has 7 unexcused absences in a month, or 15 cumulative unexcused absences in a school year, a school district can file a petition with the juvenile court against the parent, the child or both.
- If a court finds that a parent failed to ensure their child attends school as required, the court can hold the parent responsible with a fine of not more than \$25 for each day of unexcused absence.

I'm Having Trouble Getting My Child To Attend...

Our Commitment

- Ellensburg High School wants to work with you and your child to reduce or eliminate absences. We realize there are a wide variety of reasons students are absent, anything from health appointments, internet access to transportation challenges.
- We have many individuals in our building prepared to help you if you or your student are facing challenges getting to school. Counselors, teachers, administrators would love to assist in finding ways to help your student attend.
- We promise to track daily attendance, to notice when your student is missing from class, communicate with you and work to understand and identify barriers and supports available to overcome these challenges, so your student can attend school.

School Interventions

- We are required to tell you every time your child is absent without an excuse. It might be by phone call, or in writing.
- Conference: If your child has 3 unexcused absences in a month, the school should schedule a conference with you and your child to try to understand what is causing the absences.
- Assessment: For students in middle school or high school who have between two and five unexcused cumulative absences in a school year,, the school must ask them to take the "WARNS" (the Washington Assessment of Risks and Needs), or another assessment, to try to understand what might be causing the absences.
- You can read more about the WARNS at the Washington State University WARNS website, here: <https://warns.wsu.edu/>.



School District Policies and State Law

It is important that you understand our school policies and procedures, as well as Washington State Law, to ensure your child is successful in school. State law for mandatory attendance, called the **Becca Bill**, requires children from age 8 to 17 to attend a public school, private school, or a district-approved home school program. Children that are 6- or 7-years-old are not required to be enrolled in school. However, if parents enroll their 6- or 7-year-old, the student must attend full-time. Youth who are 16 or older may be excused from attending public school if they meet certain requirements. <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.225>

Unexcused Absences (3 or more in a month)

If your student has three unexcused absences in one month, state law (RCW 28A.225.020) requires we schedule a conference with you and your student to identify the barriers and supports available to ensure regular attendance. The district is obligated to develop a plan that may require an assessment to determine how to best meet the needs of your student and reduce absenteeism. A conference is not required if your student has provided a doctor's note, or pre-arranged the absence in writing, and the parent, student and school have made a plan, so your student does not fall behind academically.

Unexcused Absence (7 in a month or 15 in a school year)

If your student has seven unexcused absences in any month or fifteen unexcused absences within the school year, we are required to file a petition with the Juvenile court, alleging a violation of RCW 28A.225.010, the mandatory attendance laws. The petition may be automatically stayed and your student and family may be referred to a Community Truancy Board, or you and your student may need to appear in Juvenile Court. **ELLENSBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT & Community Engagement Board** has been created to work with students and parents in this capacity. If your student continues to be truant, you may need to go to court.

Stay Connected

Skyward: Ellensburg School District's student management platform. Skyward houses your child's grades, attendance, and access to teacher emails. There is a Skyward app in your app store on your smart device and you can get your login information from any of the secretaries or counselors at Ellensburg High School.

Email: An important communication tool for students, staff and parents to remain connected through the school year. All staff will be checking emails daily and you can generally expect a response from a staff member in about 24 hours time. All Ellensburg High School staff emails can be found at the end of this document and on our [website](#).



EHS Office Staff

Shirley Weyand (509) 925-8302

Principal's Secretary

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Attendance Secretary

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Kari Seamons (509) 933-7609

Attendance Office Secretary

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Melissa McCracken (509) 925-8361

Athletic Department Secretary

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Counseling Office Secretary

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Counseling Office Secretary

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Assistant Principal/Security & Safety

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Cole Kanyer (509) 925-8315

Assistant Principal/Athletic Director

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Ole Hall (509) 925-8306

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Beau Snow (509) 925-8304

Principal

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Shannon Panattoni (509) 925-8322

CTE Director

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Haley Naboychik (509) 925-8314

ASB/Activities Coordinator

haley.naboychik@esd401.org

EHS Counseling Team

Kyoko Cleveland

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Counselor for all students with last names that begin with letters A-G

Rachael Crosby

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Counselor for all students with last names that begin with letters H-P

Jesse Holsworth

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Counselor for all students with last names that begin with letters Q-Z



Teacher Directory

Name	Subject Area	Email
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Nip Tucker
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Eric Wickwire
Karissa Wilson
Taylor Wilson
Brittanie Wyler
Liz Zentner
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Thank you!