

2020-21 Attendance on Fridays and Attendance for Virtual Students

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the District policy concerning virtual student attendance?

AA432 – Student Attendance and Teacher Disclosure Statements defines learner validated attendance. This policy outlines how to take attendance for virtual students using multiple measures of participation through evidence of learning, participation, communication, and/or duration/frequency minimums.

How is a student considered virtually present?

Students will be considered “virtually present” if they meet a minimum criteria for participation at least once per instructional week. There are a variety of measures that may be used to determine if a student participated online, virtual at-home, blended or competency-based learning including, but not limited to:

- Evidence that validates student learning (e.g., online or offline assignment submission; rubric-scored written work; presentations; artistic performances and products; research projects; formative assessment results; progress toward academic goals; student portfolios; demonstrated competency assessments; explicit self-reflections on what students have learned related to institutional programs such as service learning; student ratings of their knowledge, skills, and reflections on what they have learned over a course of a specified period of time)
- Evidence that validates student participation (e.g., login data; discussion boards; completion of math and literacy supplemental software; virtual conferencing participation; classroom response systems (surveys/polls/quick checks); observations of field work; internship performance; service learning; clinical experiences; feedback from computer-simulated tasks; Social/Emotional Learning tools; number of student hours spent on activities related to a course)
- Evidence that validates student communication (e.g., emails from students or other electronic messages; student surveys; conversations by phone; feedback exchanges via learning management system; assignment pick-up/drop-off)
- Duration/Frequency minimums for student participation (e.g., minimum student login or teacher contact requirement; minimum hourly requirement, per day or week, when students are engaged in course work; required periodic contact with a licensed educator)

A student who minimally participates at any point in the previous week is considered “virtually present” for the entire week. We are looking for ways to consider the student present. Only students that have had NO contact, participation, or have not met the minimum criteria to be marked present should be marked absent.

Virtual students who have not met the minimum criteria to be considered present by the last day of the school week will be marked “unexcused absent” for the entire week.

When do I take attendance for virtual full-time students?

A student must demonstrate minimum participation at least once per instructional week. If a student has demonstrated minimum participation at least once by the last day of an instructional week, they are considered

“present” for the instructional week; a daily mark of attendance is not required. If a student has not demonstrated minimum participation at least once by the last day of an instructional week and has not been marked in Skyward with a valid excuse, they should be marked as “absent” for the entire instructional week (including Friday). Students who are “absent” for ten consecutive days must be withdrawn following established District procedures.

Example: On Friday, September 18, 2020, any teacher of a virtual course should review student participation for the instructional week running from Friday, September 11, to Thursday, September 17. Students who have not participated during this period should be marked as absent for each instructional day of this period (including Friday). Students who have participated during this period do not need to have attendance changed and may remain with the default Skyward entry. Teachers of virtual courses should repeat this process at the end of each instructional week.

Counting the “instructional week” from Friday to the following Thursday allows students who demonstrate participation over the weekend to be appropriately counted in membership.

Teachers should change the attendance for virtual students who do not demonstrate participation. They may do this by accessing the “Take Daily Attendance - By Name” screen for the course the student is enrolled in. At the right-hand side of the screen is historical attendance for the last three weeks. Double-clicking in the box for the student and date will allow the teacher to change attendance. Once attendance has been updated, the virtual teacher should contact the assistant principal or Attendance Office of the student’s home base school to advise them of the student’s current status.

How do I take attendance for virtual part-time students?

Students that alternate between virtual and in-person participation in the same class must similarly demonstrate minimum participation at least once per instructional week. Minimum demonstrated participation may include in-person or live (streaming) online participation or any of the virtual participation options. Students will be considered present until the end of the instructional week; at that point, students that have not demonstrated minimum participation through either in-person or virtual methods (or has not been marked in Skyward with a valid excuse code), must have their attendance updated.

Teachers may, at their administrator’s direction, use the “P” code (described below) on Monday-Thursday to mark students alternating between virtual and in-person as participants. This can signal to the teacher that the student has already demonstrated participation for the week (either virtually or in-person) and allows that student to be filtered out as not physically present should a need for contact tracing or other accountability arise.

How often is attendance taken for virtual students?

Once per instructional week. A virtual instructional week is from the previous Friday through Thursday of the current week. This allows students who demonstrate participation over the weekend to be appropriately counted in membership.

Do I mark a student absent if they have not logged into Canvas during the week?

Not necessarily. Canvas may not be the only evidence of student learning, participation, communication or duration/frequency minimums. While Canvas may be one measure for minimum participation it usually is not the only measure used.

How do I take attendance on Friday?

Attendance on Fridays has been re-enabled. Teachers do not need to mark attendance for all students; their participation is assumed on Fridays. However, students who attend in-person sessions may be marked with the “P” code to allow schools to monitor their physical participation and location in the building and/or account for students in the event of an emergency.

Students who have been absent for every day but Friday in the last 10 instructional days can be marked absent for those Fridays and withdrawn from enrollment. Established practices of parent contact and intervention should be followed prior to withdrawing a student for 10 days of non-attendance or non-participation.

Every class and/or section taught will be available to mark attendance on Friday. (I.e. Both A and B day classes/sections will show in Skyward on Friday).

Information Systems has had to manually re-enable attendance for Fridays. If a teacher is not able to enter attendance on a Friday, they should contact the Information Systems Help Desk (x88737) for assistance.

What if a student has not met the criteria for “minimum participation”?

At the end of the instructional week, if the student did not demonstrate minimum participation at least once through either in-person or virtual methods (or has not been marked in Skyward with a valid excuse code), their attendance must be updated for the entire week to reflect the lack of participation. The student would be marked as absent for the entire week.

Teachers should notify the attendance office at the student’s home school when a student is marked absent for the entire week.

Skyward now has a “P” in the attendance screen. What does that mean?

A “P” is now available to mark students who come to school on Friday. This will allow the school to monitor participation and location in the building and/or account for students in the event of an emergency. Students marked with a “P” are marked as attending and are considered to have met the criteria for “minimum participation”.

Teachers may, at their administrator’s direction, use the “P” code on Monday-Thursday to mark students alternating between virtual and in-person (blended learning) as participants. This can signal to the teacher that the student has already demonstrated participation for the week (either virtually or in-person) and allows that student to be filtered out as not physically present should a need for contact tracing or other accountability needs arise.

How is attendance used for grading?

While attendance may be an indicator of academic performance it may not be used for grades.

Who do I talk to if I have a question about taking attendance?

The attendance office and administration at your school will provide the guidance. Should they not be able to answer your questions please feel free to call Planning and Enrollment. Questions or issues with Skyward should be directed to the Information Systems Help Desk (x88737)

Does communication with a parent mean a student has minimally participated?

It depends. The standard for minimal participation is “evidence that validates student learning, participation, communication or duration/frequency minimums” one time per week. When communication with the parent results in a student minimally learning, participating, communicating or meeting a duration/frequency minimum it may be counted as minimal participation.