



Transforming Attendance Through Family, School, and Community Partnerships

Castle View High School, Douglas County School District

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Castle View High School (CVHS), located in the Douglas County School District, implemented a targeted initiative for the 2024-25 school year to reduce chronic absenteeism, aiming to decrease the rate from 33% to 26%. With a focus on improving student engagement, academic achievement, and school climate, the school launched a multi-tiered approach to attendance that integrated data analysis, family engagement, and community resources.

The planning and implementation involved CVHS leadership, deans, counselors, teachers, attendance staff, and family engagement teams. External partners such as the Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) and the district's communications team also played critical roles. The school contributed insights through newsletters and communication platforms, helping shape effective strategies.

CVHS implemented a series of interventions to improve attendance and student success. These included weekly attendance reviews by staff, targeted interventions for at-risk students, and school-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) such as the "Show Up, Show Out, Show Down" program, which publicly celebrates strong attendance. Communication tools like the Smore platform and an "Attendance Corner" in newsletters helped clarify absence policies and reached over 5,000 families in multiple languages. The Rock Program, a Tier 2 support for underclassmen, offered structured study halls, mentorship, and daily check-ins—helping 110 out of 120 students progress without further intervention. Educators were empowered with email templates, tracking tools, and a revised protocol requiring family outreach before escalating attendance issues. These efforts resulted in a drop in chronic absenteeism to 20%, reduced tardies and detentions, and a 50% decrease in suspensions. The culture of accountability, combined with personal phone calls and proactive and positive recognition, improved student outcomes and overall school climate.

Staff evaluated the initiative through attendance data, behavioral trends, and feedback from families and staff. While the school exceeded its attendance goals, challenges included extended absences during holidays, mental health issues, and legal limits on enforcing attendance for older students. CVHS addressed these through increased mental health support and adaptive, student-centered interventions.

To replicate this practice, build strong internal systems for a multi-tiered approach using data review, engage families with clear, inclusive communication, and foster a school culture that celebrates attendance. The greatest success comes when families see and hear how schools are building relationships and offering support.