

Absenteeism



Did you know?

Chronic absenteeism is a red alert that students are headed for academic trouble and potentially dropping out of high school.

15 DAYS >

In Hawaii, students are labeled chronically absent if they miss 15 or more days of school for any reason.

1. Chronic absenteeism is one of our most powerful predictors of whether students succeed.

- Even when we account for factors like poverty, previous performance, and disadvantage, students who are chronically absent perform worse than their peers.
- Chronically absent students have lower GPAs than their peers the year they were chronically absent and the year after.
- Chronically absent students score lower on reading and math exams, and make slower gains than their peers.
- Students who are chronically absent one year are 35 percent more likely than their peers to be chronically absent the next year.

2. Too many Hawaii students are chronically absent.

- Nearly 1 in 5 Hawaii public school students were chronically absent in each of the last four years
- Nearly 1 in 4 students from economically disadvantaged families and nearly 1 in 3 students with disabilities were chronically absent in each of the last four years
- Chronic absenteeism occurs in every grade.

3. Chronic absenteeism is a priority for Hawaii public schools.

- Chronic absenteeism is a key metric in the joint Board and Department of Education Strategic Plan.
- Chronic absenteeism is part of the school accountability system known as the Strive HI Performance System.
- Educators can regularly view students' absenteeism data through secure, online portals and system leaders, including principals, CASs and the Deputy Superintendent, receive regular reports on chronic absenteeism rates.

4. Chronic absenteeism can be invisible or difficult to notice.

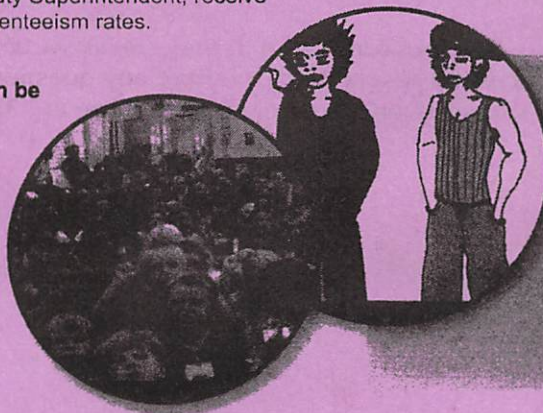
- Missing 15 days of school can happen by missing less than two days a month.
- Multiple sporadic absences, such as a 1 – 2 month, cause as many academic challenges as consecutive absences do.

5. Students miss school for many reasons, some of which we can help avoid.

- Students cannot attend: they have medical emergencies, illness, or persistent health problems; have family responsibilities that require them to work; transportation issues; involved in juvenile justice system or have been suspended.
- Students will not attend: they avoid going to school because they feel unsafe or unwelcome at school, perhaps due to bullying, harassment, or embarrassment issues
- Students do not attend: they or their family do not see the value of being in school, prefer to do other things, or aren't being held accountable for missing school.

6. We can act together to prevent and address chronic absenteeism.

- Public awareness campaigns, parent engagement efforts, and community efforts can help students and families understand the importance of going to school.
- Family, school, and community partnerships can help reduce barriers to attendance, such as health, employment, truancy, and transportation issues.
- School schedules can take into account "high-absence" days, such as the day after Halloween, days with short weeks and days following breaks.
- Schools can create positive school environments where students have high expectations and a safe and engaging environment to learn.
- By monitoring attendance, we can drive early and targeted intervention students are on-track, or are already, chronically absent.



'Be Pono – Be in School'

Windward District's 2nd annual "Be Pono – Be in School" contest helped promote school attendance among its 17 participating schools. Students and schools vie for prizes while learning about the value of getting to school every day. See the results on the DOE website: bit.ly/BePono15

Dear Ohana Liholiho:

One goal we have this year is to ensure that every student attends school regularly.

Showing up for school has a huge impact on a student's academic success starting in kindergarten and continuing through high school. Even as children grow older and more independent, families play a key role in making sure students get to school safely every day and help them to understand why attendance is so important for success in school and in life.

We realize some absences are unavoidable due to health problems or other circumstances. But, we also know that when students miss too much school— regardless of the reason – it can cause them to fall behind academically. Your child is less likely to succeed if he or she is chronically absent— which means missing 15 or more days over the course of an entire school year. Research shows:

- Children chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade are much less likely to read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade.
- By 6th grade, chronic absence is a proven early warning sign for students at risk for dropping out of school.
- By 9th grade good attendance can predict graduation rates even better than 8th grade test scores.

Absences can add up quickly. A child is chronically absent if he or she misses just two days every month!!

Clearly going to school regularly matters!

We don't want your child to fall behind in school and get discouraged. Please ensure that your child attends school every day and arrives on time. Here are a few practical tips to help support regular attendance:

- Make sure your children keep a regular bedtime and establish a morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Ensure your children go to school every day unless they are truly sick (fever, vomiting, etc.).
- Avoid scheduling vacations or doctor's appointments when school is in session.
- Talk to teachers and counselors for advice if your children feel anxious about going to school.
- Develop back up plans for getting to school if something comes up (friends or family).

As with every school year we will be putting in the effort to teach your children about the importance of attendance. However, please understand that they count on you to make sure they make it to school every day and on time. You will always be that special someone your child can count on so please help us develop the habit of timeliness in him/her. This will be expected of each of our students as they move on into colleges and careers.

Let us know how we can best support you and your children so that they can show up for school on time every day. We want your child to be successful in school! If you have any questions or need more information please contact your child's teacher or on our main school line at 733-4850.

Aloha and Malama Pono,

Liholiho Elementary School Staff