

Board Talking Points

October 2025

As we settle into the year 2025-2026, our districts are focused on a critical indicator to improve student achievement: attendance. Since COVID, districts throughout the United States experienced declining attendance at all grade levels. Our state and region are not immune to this problem.

To address poor attendance and Chronic Absenteeism, school leaders are implementing multiple proactive strategies and programs. Through the Everyday Matters state contract, IMESD provides support for our 21 districts. Ronda Smith, former teacher and principal, coordinates the program, which includes a plethora of on-line support materials for three student groups:

- Tier I (ALL STUDENTS): There exists a great deal of literature regarding the statistics of regular attendance, why attendance is important, and how to support students who become truant. This folder contains universal support for districts, classrooms, messaging for parents, and community resources.
- Tier II (SOME STUDENTS) The Tier II folder provides school-wide systems and ideas for interventions if a student begins to show truancy issues. It contains ideas for identification and appropriate responses through an individualized problem-solving model.
- Tier III (CHRONICALLY ABSENT STUDENTS) This folder contains resources for interventions for the most chronically absent students and their families. A process and template are provided if a district determines a citation is necessary.

School attendance is a major focus for the obvious reason: If students aren't present, they can't learn. To stem the tide of Chronic Absenteeism, families and communities, and schools must work together to intervene on an individual student basis.

MISSION

To provide outstanding customer service to our school districts in four areas: special education, technology, school improvement, and administrative services.

VISION

IMESD strives to ensure the success of every child by providing equitable services to close the opportunity gap. We are committed to the values of antiracism and multiculturalism.