

## Salina Public Schools USD 305

1511 Gypsum Ave.  
Salina, KS 67401  
(785)309-4700  
[usd305.com](http://usd305.com)



### Media Release

Date: November 8, 2022

Contact: Jennifer Camien, Public Information Director, (785) 309-4723

---

## Salina Public Schools Revamps Its Approach to Absenteeism

This fall, Salina Public Schools administrators refreshed their approach to absenteeism. One shift they made is toward more and earlier communication about absences between schools and families. The goal is to reduce the number of students who reach the point of chronic absenteeism.

This year, each school receives absenteeism data about its students from a district team. Using these weekly updates, school leadership teams monitor attendance patterns. Students can fall behind if they miss just one or two days every few weeks, so early intervention is key. Support and resources are connected to families and often the assistance helps reduce missed school days.

If a student misses 10 percent or more of the days school has been in session, they are considered chronically absent. Being chronically absent from school makes it hard for a student to keep up with the pace at which they are expected to learn and grow, causing the student to fall behind. When the level of chronic absenteeism is reached, the school sends letters home or places phone calls to the parents/guardians. When absenteeism continues, school staff meet with the family and student to put interventions into place.

Educators know that a number of factors can contribute to chronic absenteeism. By keeping an open line of communication, school staff work with families to build good attendance habits.

Absenteeism has been an issue schools have battled historically through the lens of truancy. School attendance during COVID-19 was affected by sickness and quarantines. When all schools returned to normal operation during the second half of the 2021-2022 school year, the absenteeism rate was higher than normal.

With that information in tow, district leaders recalibrated, grounding their strategies in a collaborative approach between school, parents and students.

###