



NEWS RELEASE

For additional information, please contact David Jespersen by phone (402-471-4537) or email (david.jespersen@nebraska.gov)

OCTOBER 23, 2025

Nebraska Department of Education Highlights Communities Improving Attendance

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) released new data showing significant progress across the state in reducing chronic absenteeism. The data, spanning the 2021-22 through the 2024-25 school years, shows that communities are successfully implementing targeted strategies to ensure more students are present for learning.

The NDE reports that 66 out of Nebraska's 93 counties (70%) experienced declines in chronic absenteeism among their students during the last four years.

"These reductions are the product of strong partnerships and a lot of hard work among parents, school leaders, teachers, and community members who are working together to help more of our children show up for school every day," said Dr. Brian Maher, Nebraska Commissioner of Education.

Several counties are particularly noteworthy for achieving substantial, double-digit reductions in chronic absenteeism, demonstrating the rapid impact of focused community efforts:

County	2021-22 Chronic Absenteeism Rate	2024-25 Chronic Absenteeism Rate	Reduction
Box Butte County	37%	18%	19 percentage points
Cheyenne County	29%	9%	20 percentage points
Clay County	26%	13%	13 percentage points
Dakota County	26%	12%	14 percentage points
Frontier County	26%	12%	14 percentage points
Grant County	23%	10%	13 percentage points
Keith County	33%	22%	11 percentage points

The success achieved across the state highlights the effectiveness of varied, localized strategies. Examples of these successful approaches include:

- **Bancroft-Rosalie Community Schools:** Integrated chronic absence into their Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), meeting regularly to identify root causes. The district partnered with Tribal Transit to remove transportation barriers by providing rides for Native American students living on the Omaha Reservation. They also established flexible opportunities for students who miss more than seven days to make up lost instructional time.
- **Arapahoe-Holbrook Public Schools:** Made reducing chronic absenteeism a top priority, focusing on consistent and clear communication of attendance expectations. Staff committed to more frequent, personal conversations with

students and guardians to reinforce the importance of daily attendance.

- **Millard Public Schools:** Employs a dedicated group of 13 social workers who drive systemic improvement. School teams use data in building-level MTSS meetings to develop positive, personalized solutions. District staff also participate in the Metro Omaha Education Consortium (MOEC) Attendance Task Force, leading a community-wide Attendance Awareness Campaign that engages local businesses and health care providers.
- **Alliance Public Schools:** The high school, which once faced a 59% chronic absenteeism rate three years ago, reduced that rate to 25% last school year through focused efforts. This was driven by the assistant principal making it a personal responsibility to improve positive relationships and create a greater sense of belonging. The school created a program ensuring every student had at least one trusted adult who met with them weekly in small groups, coupled with a positive attendance messaging initiative.
- **Sidney Public Schools:** Takes a student-centered and solutions-based approach, beginning with creating a positive, welcoming school culture through pep rallies, spirit clubs, and small group advisory sessions. School leaders focus heavily on strengthening parent engagement through regular communication between guidance counselors and teachers.

These early successes demonstrate that achieving the State Board of Education's goal to cut chronic absenteeism in half over the next five years is possible.

The NDE encourages communities to build on this initial success and utilize these proven strategies to inspire even greater impact.

Additional resources and support can be found by visiting the NDE's [chronic absenteeism webpage](#), [family engagement framework](#), and [Attendance Works](#).

####

David Jespersen
Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Education
402-471-4537
david.jespersen@nebraska.gov
@NDE_News