

## ECEAP Attendance B-215

To encourage attendance, Contractors must, at minimum:

- Inform families of the benefits of regular attendance.
- Support families to promote each child's regular attendance.
- Track the Contractor's average daily attendance, analyzing causes and patterns of absenteeism, and developing a plan to improve attendance if that average falls below 85 percent.
- Partner with parents to address obstacles to attendance when a child has multiple unexplained absences or is at risk of missing ten percent of class days per year.
- Consider the slot vacant and offer it to a family on the waiting list if the child's attendance does not resume after these efforts.
- Retain records of children's daily attendance in ECEAP classes for at least three years after a child exits ECEAP.

Contractors must write and implement a policy when families are scheduled to be out of the area for an extended amount of time due to vacation or similar circumstance. This policy must:

- Establish a maximum number of days the family can be out of the area before a contractor begins the process of enrolling the next child on the waiting list.
- Ensure staff and families discuss plans before the family leaves.
- Meet family needs as best as possible.
- Align with the requirement to fill vacant slots within 30 days.
- Making efforts to re-engage families if a child stops attending.

To support regular attendance of children experiencing homelessness, contractor's must address transportation needs. Strategies may include:

- Collaborating with a school district.
- Coordinating car pools with other families.
- Providing bus passes for public transportation.
- Engaging with community partners.
- Offering a temporary alternative attendance plan.

Contractors may contact the state ECEAP office for technical assistance if they have exhausted attendance and transportation strategies for children experiencing homelessness. Contractors must receive written approval from the State ECEAP office before implementing alternative attendance plans.

Staff promotes the importance of attendance and the benefits to regular attendance to each family from initial enrollment through ongoing conversations and sharing resources. The trusting relationships established between staff and families strengthens child and family attendance and communication around attendance. Attendance is discussed from the beginning of the relationship and continues throughout the child's participation in the program. These conversations and collaborations increase if children's attendance falls below 85% as well as if there are patterns of missed class days.

Each day a child misses a class day without notification from a family member as to the reason of absence, an attempt to contact the family will be made. If a child misses three consecutive days without any contact with the family, other efforts may be used to contact the family if available as well as the Family Advocate. For example, email and emergency contact information or an attempted home visit may be some of the additional efforts. Staff will make every effort to re-engage the family and child in

classroom participation. An attendance plan may be used with the permission of the Family Services Program Manager. All communications, meetings and efforts will be documented in the data system.

At each Direct Service Team meeting:

- Staff will discuss child/family attendance
- Each site will have on-going conversations at their Direct Service Team meetings or Technical Assistance meetings about attendance and patterns.
- Staff utilize attendance information to:
  - Analyze classroom and individual child attendance patterns to identify children and families that might need intensive case management.
  - Discuss if additional case management might be beneficial in the form of home visits, conferences, developing a written attendance plan etc. These plans will be initiated with the direct service staff in partnership with the Family Services Program Manager.
  - Look at and analyze classroom and individual child attendance that drops below 85%

### **Homelessness**

If a child is unable to attend class regularly due to transportation challenges related to homelessness status, staff will make every attempt to connect the family to community resources that will meet their need of transportation. School districts, coordination of families and community resources may also be a resource to support family's attendance. As a last resort, department funds may be used to support a child's attendance. Transportation assistance should be discussed with the Family Services Program Manager and supervisor as needed.

### **Ongoing Attendance or Disengagement**

If a child stops attending class and every effort described in the Performance Standards and procedure has been exhausted, direct service staff will initiate contact with the Family Services Program Manager and develop a plan for the next steps.

A letter will be sent to the family requesting contact no more than 5 days after the letter should be delivered. If the family does not initiate contact within that time, the slot will be considered vacant.

When a program option or individual classroom falls below 85%, the program will analyze the causes of absenteeism to identify systemic issues that may contribute to the absentee rate. Program attendance is monitored monthly with Policy Council and the OESD 114 Board.

### **Special Circumstances:**

If a family will be missing more than three weeks of class due to vacation or similar circumstances, the child will be exited from the program and put back on the wait list. The child will be considered for future enrollment vacancies after they return. The program will assign a child to fill this vacancy based on the highest priority in ELMS. Any plan for a child to have a planned absence for more than 1 week must be discussed with the Family Services Program Manager and documented in the data system.