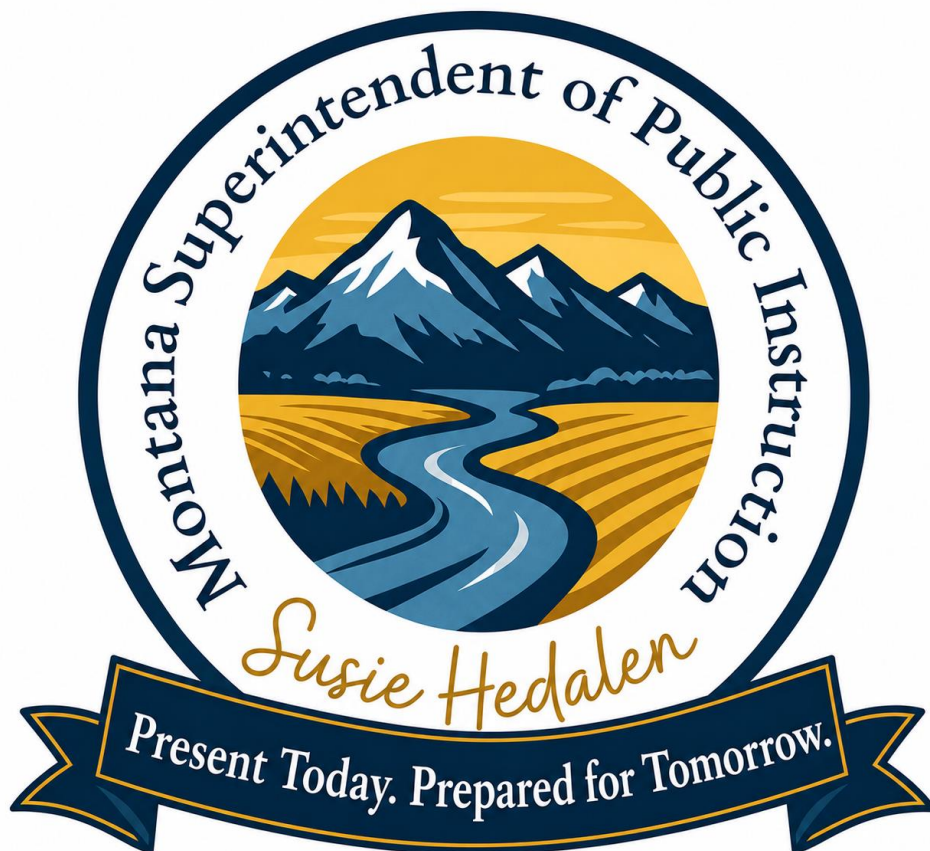


MONTANA

K–12 Attendance Intervention Planner

*A Tiered, Evidence-Based Framework for
Identifying, Planning, Documenting, and Monitoring Attendance Interventions*



1 Purpose & How to Use This Planner

This planner gives [Attendance Teams](#) a single, working document for the full attendance intervention cycle, from identifying which students need support, through selecting and documenting interventions, to monitoring progress and deciding when to exit a student from support. It is designed to be utilized during and after a meeting, not to be filed away after one.

The framework draws on the Attendance Works/FutureEd Attendance Playbook, OPI Three-Tier Framework, the U of M Check & Connect model, the What Works Clearinghouse practice guide (NCEE 2017-4028), and guidance from the National Center for School Engagement (NCSE) and the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE).

This planner includes:

- A three-tier MTSS framework for matching support to need
- A root-cause / barrier identification checklist
- An MTSS decision process for selecting the right level of intervention
- An evidence-based intervention menu organized by tier
- An intervention documentation log
- A progress-monitoring log
- A family communication log
- Exit criteria for phasing a student out of or off support

2 [Three-Tier MTSS Framework](#)

Research consistently shows that schools implementing attendance supports within an MTSS framework achieve better outcomes than relying on punitive responses alone. Match the intensity of support to the level of need — start light, and escalate only as data shows it's needed.

Tier	Students	Example Supports
Tier 1	All students	Positive school climate, universal attendance campaigns, recognition systems, universal family messaging
Tier 2	10–19% of days absent	Check-in/check-out, attendance mentoring, attendance contracts, family meetings
Tier 3	20%+ of days absent	Wraparound services, intensive case management, intensive family supports, community agency partnership

3 Root-Cause / Barrier Identification Checklist

Before selecting an intervention, identify why the student is missing school. Effective interventions address the underlying barrier rather than treating absence as a compliance issue on its own. Check all that apply, based on the attendance conversation with the student and family.

Barriers	Aversion	Disengagement	Misconceptions
• Chronic and acute illness • Family responsibilities or home situation • Poor transportation • Housing and food insecurity • Lack of access to needed services • System involvement • Unpredictable schedules for learning • Lack of access to tech • Impact of trauma • Violence in the community	• Struggling academically and/or behaviorally • Unwelcoming school climate • Social and peer challenges • Anxiety • Unfair disciplinary and suspension practices • Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations • Caregivers had negative educational experiences	• Lack of challenging, engaging instruction • Bored • No meaningful relationships to adults or peers in school • Lack of enrichment opportunities • Lack of academic and behavioral support • Failure to earn credits • Need to work conflicts with being in high school	• Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused • Missing two days per month doesn't affect learning • Lose track and underestimate TOTAL absences • Assume students must stay home for any symptom of illness • Attendance only matters in the older grades • Suspensions don't count as absence



www.attendanceworks.org September 8, 2025

Barriers to Attendance

- ☐ Health - chronic illness, dental/vision needs, untreated medical condition
- ☐ Mental health - anxiety, depression, school avoidance
- ☐ Housing instability or frequent moves
- ☐ Transportation challenges
- ☐ Sense of belonging
- ☐ Family caregiving responsibilities (siblings, family member illness)
- ☐ Employment related conflicts
- ☐ Economic hardship (work, lack of childcare, lack of clean clothing/supplies)
- ☐ Bullying, school safety concerns, or negative peer relationships
- ☐ Disengagement - student doesn't feel connected to school or coursework
- ☐ Academic struggles contributing to avoidance
- ☐ Family does not view attendance as a priority / misunderstands its impact
- ☐ Court involvement, juvenile justice, or child welfare involvement
- ☐ Other (describe below)

Notes: _____

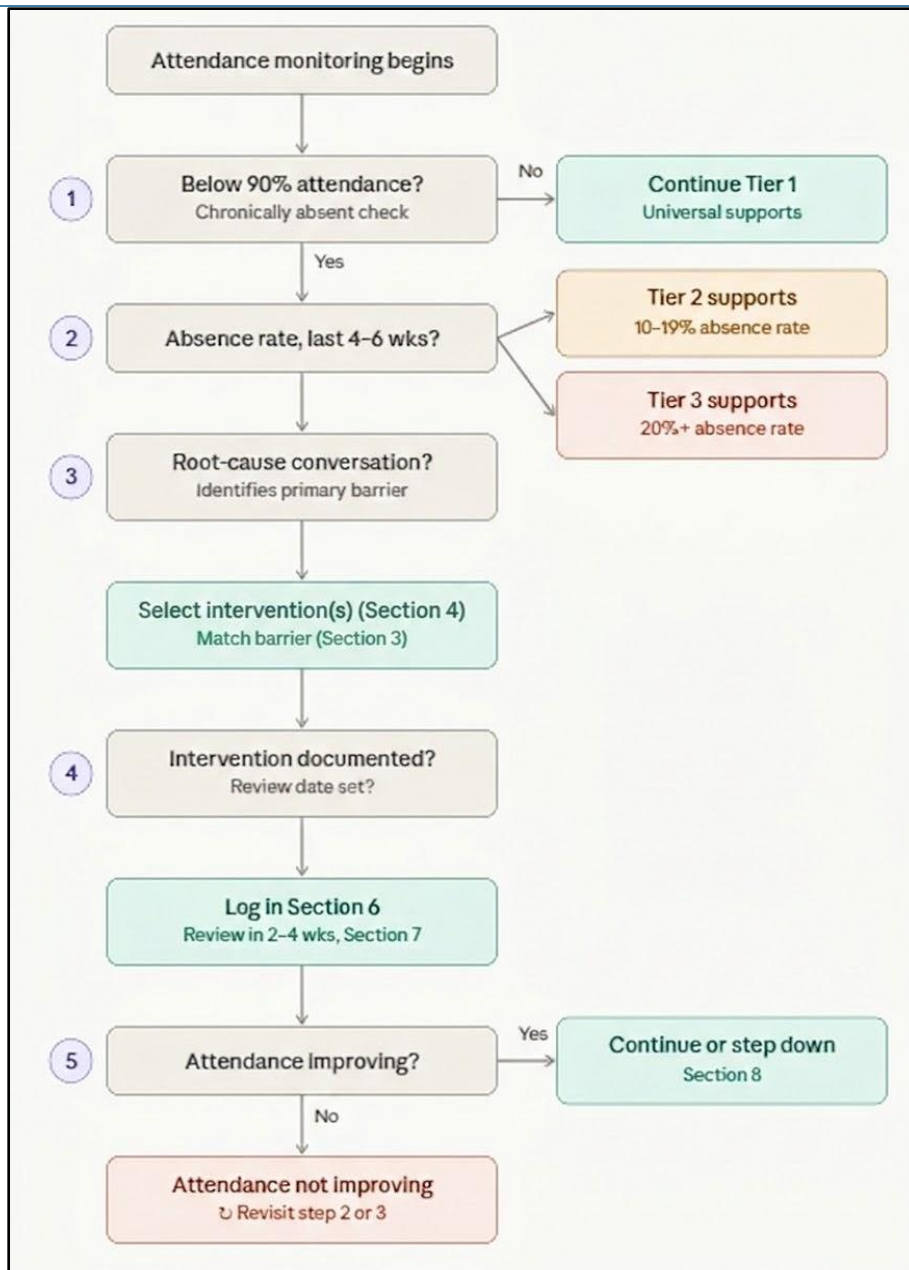
4 Evidence-Based Intervention Menu

Tier	Barrier(s)	Best Matched Intervention(s)
1	Disengagement; family doesn't view attendance as priority	Universal attendance campaign & recognition
1	Bullying/safety concerns; disengagement	Positive school climate initiatives
1	Family doesn't view attendance as priority	Universal family messaging on attendance impact
2	Disengagement; mild anxiety; inconsistent routines	Check-in / check-out with a trusted adult
2	Disengagement; academic struggles; lack of connection	Attendance mentoring (e.g., Success Mentor model)
2	Family prioritization; inconsistent routines	Attendance contracts with family
2	Multiple or unclear barriers; family engagement gap	Family meeting / home visit

Tier	Barrier(s)	Best Matched Intervention(s)
2	Transportation challenges	Transportation problem-solving
3	Multiple, complex, or chronic barriers	Case management (Check & Connect model)
3	Housing instability; economic hardship; family crisis	Wraparound services / community agency referral
3	Economic hardship; caregiving responsibilities	Intensive family support services
3	Mental health; school avoidance; anxiety	Coordinated mental/behavioral health support
3	Court involvement; child welfare involvement	Coordination with court/child welfare systems

5 MTSS Decision Process

Use this sequence in District Leadership Team (DLT), School Leadership Team (SLT), Data, or MTSS meetings to move from data to a documented plan. This is a decision process, not a rigid script. Teams should apply professional judgment at each step.



6 Intervention Documentation Log

Record every intervention assigned so the team has a running history for each student and can see patterns across the caseload. [Intervention Documentation Log Template](#)

Date	Student/ID	Tier	Intervention	Staff/ Review Date

Date	Student/ID	Tier	Intervention	Staff/ Review Date

7 Progress-Monitoring Log

Review data on a consistent cycle, every 2–4 weeks for Tier 2, weekly to biweekly for Tier 3. Progress monitoring is what separates an intervention plan from a one-time referral. [Progress-Monitoring Log Template](#)

Review Date	Attendance % (prior period)	Attendance % (current period)	Trend	Next Step
			↑ / ↓ / →	Continue / intensify / step down
			↑ / ↓ / →	Continue / intensify / step down
			↑ / ↓ / →	Continue / intensify / step down
			↑ / ↓ / →	Continue / intensify / step down
			↑ / ↓ / →	Continue / intensify / step down

8 Family Communication Log

Track outreach to families across the intervention. This record supports continuity when staff change and demonstrates good-faith engagement. [Family Communication Log Template](#)

Date	Method	Summary	Family Response	Follow-up
	Call / letter / visit			
	Call / letter / visit			
	Call / letter / visit			

Date	Method	Summary	Family Response	Follow-up
	<i>Call / letter / visit</i>			
	<i>Call / letter / visit</i>			

9 Exit Criteria Checklist

A student can step down a tier or exit support when the team confirms:

- ☐ Attendance has been at or above 90% for at least 4 consecutive weeks
- ☐ The identified barrier has been resolved or is actively and adequately supported
- ☐ The family confirms the plan is working and no new barriers have emerged
- ☐ Teacher/attendance data shows a sustained, not temporary, improvement
- ☐ A plan is in place for monitoring at the lower tier (do not exit to zero support abruptly)

If criteria are not yet met, continue the current tier or intensify per the decision process in Section 5.

10 Resources & References

Primary Frameworks

- [Office of Public Instruction](#) (OPI)
 - [Montana MTSS Attendance Pyramid](#)
- [Attendance Works](#)
 - [FutureEd Attendance Playbook](#)
 - [Attendance Playbook Guide](#)
 - [Root Cause Worksheet](#)
 - [Principal Toolkit](#)
 - [Success Mentor Toolkit](#)
- Making Caring Common Project (Harvard Graduate School of Education)
 - [Adult-to-Student Relationship Mapping Intervention Plan and Tool](#)
 - [Relationship Mapping Spreadsheet](#)

Evidence-Based

-
- [What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide](#), NCEE 2017-4028
 - [Check & Connect model](#)
 - Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Practice Guides: [family engagement](#), [student motivation](#), [behavioral supports](#), [behavioral intervention](#), [dropout prevention](#)

Additional Support

- [National Center for School Engagement](#) (NCSE) - root-cause analysis, case management
 - [National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments](#) (NCSSLE) - school climate, trauma-informed attendance, student connectedness
-