2024-25 Attendance Coding

Missing school is shown to have negative impacts on students' academic performance, graduation rates and well-being. Further, high levels of school absence disproportionately impact underserved student groups. Statewide data from the Spring Student Reporting in Iowa (SRI) data collection for the 2022-23 year shows that 22.6% of enrolled Iowa students were chronically absent, defined as, *missing more than 10% of scheduled school days or instructional hours, regardless of the reason for the absence.* Increasing statewide rates of attendance will increase broad outcomes for Iowa learners.

Senate File 2435

Senate File 2435 was signed into law on May 9, 2024 with an effective date of July 1, 2024. Division VII of SF2435 details public school attendance requirements. SF2435 requires specific school actions based on a student's rate of non-exempt absences. Districts must adopt an attendance policy and, as necessary, collaborate with county attorneys, conduct school engagement meetings, and work with county truancy officers. Select exemptions are allowed at the student level.

Attendance Coding

Our education system works to ensure consistency of attendance coding decision- making and practice between schools.

Iowa's definition of a student absence is adapted from the U.S. Department of Education and in accordance with the Office for Civil Rights' guidance,

> *A student is absent if they are not physically on school grounds or are not participating in an expected and school-directed activity under the direction, supervision or instructional guidance of educational staff at an approved off-grounds location for at least half the school day.*

Frequently Used Codes

A wide range of student attendance scenarios exist across, within and between schools. Likewise, different absence coding options exist across the multiple Student Information Systems (SIS) used in Iowa's schools. The student absence definition and accompanying SIS reporting configuration will be used by schools to code attendance. Public schools are encouraged to code and report attendance in accordance with the coding configuration presented in Table 1. Schools may continue additional local coding decisions, yet additional **local decisions do not replace or supplant the recommended coding**.

It is strongly recommended all districts adopt the following codes universally, and if not, at minimum add the six **bolded** codes below for district tracking purposes. All codes should be set up following the instructions in the appropriate school's SIS appendix:

- Appendix 1: Infinite Campus
- Appendix 2: PowerSchool
- Appendix 3: JMC

Table 1

Frequently Used Codes	

● SRP - School Related Participant [1]
  ○ Field trip
  ○ Extra-curricular activity participant
● SRNP - School Related Non-participant
  ○ Student attending a school sponsored event, but not participating
● MED - Medical
  ○ Illness, Hospitalization
  ○ Treatment, Appointment
● ISS - In School Suspension [1]
● OSS - Out of School Suspension
● CV - College visit
● UN - Unexcused absence
  ○ Skipped class
  ○ Absent - no parent contact
	● FAM - Family leave
	  ○ Vacation/Out of town
	  ○ Funeral
	  ○ Parent excused
	  ○ Family emergency, Car trouble
	● SOV - School Office Visit [1]
	  ○ Nurse's office
	  ○ Counselor's office
	  ○ Principal's office
	● **GRDX - Completed grad. requirements [2]**
	● **CRTX - Court exempt [2]**
	● **RELX - Religious exempt [2]**
	● **MEDX - Medical exempt [2]**
	● **IEPX - IEP exempt [2]**
	● **504X - 504 exempt [2]**

[1] Do not count against a student's daily absence(s) and attendance summary.
[2] Used for SF2435 Truancy exemptions; these **are** still marked as absences in the attendance code setup.

With the continuation of ESSA accountability and the new state requirements (i.e., SF2435), the following attendance decisions are made:

1. Is the student absent or present? (page 1 definition)
2. If absent, is the absence exempt from student-level consequences per SF2435?

Senate File 2435 Exemptions

The following are allowable exemptions under SF2435. School teams have available information to make accurate decisions on whether or not a student's absence is exempt from student-level consequences per SF2435. The judicious use of exemptions aid schools in the identification of students whose attendance patterns warrant additional support and interventions.

Table 2

SF2435 Exemptions (Recommended SIS Code)	Appropriate Code
Graduated (GRDX)	Completed the requirements for graduation or has obtained a high school equivalency diploma
Court Ordered (CRTX)	Excused for sufficient reason by any court of record or judge. (e.g., jury duty)
Religious (RELX)	Attending religious services or receiving religious instructions
Medical (MEDX)	Unable to attend school due to **legitimate** medical reason(s)
Individualized Education Program (IEPX)	Individualized Education Program (IEP) that affects attendance
Section 504 (504X)	Section 504 plan under of the Federal Rehabilitation Act that affects attendance

Attendance Decision Making

It will be the responsibility of building staff to accurately, consistently and objectively use an exemption when reliable and credible evidence exists. Appropriate use of exemptions will be vital to accurate coding and intervention practices to increase student attendance. The following scenarios are provided as examples of decisions that would be made according to the Absent definition on page 1 and allowable SF2435 exemptions in Table 2.

Table 3

| Exempt Scenarios	Decision 1 Absent or Present	Decision 2 Exempt per SF2435?
Attending community college course, CTE placement	Present	NA
School-directed/supervised activity (e.g., FFA Conference, Art Show, Class Trip)	Present	NA
In School Suspension (ISS)	Present	NA
Youth Shelter/Detention Center [1]	Present	NA
Medically homebound/Medical excuse but completing work [1]	Present	NA
Participating in state athletic competition, Show Choir, art show	Present	NA
Watching classmates in state athletic competition, Show Choir, art show	Absent	No
Out of School Suspension (OSS)	Absent	No
Absent, parent excused, no reason given	Absent	No
Family Vacation, funeral, "Out of town"	Absent	No

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Exempt Scenarios	Decision 1 Absent or Present	Decision 2 Exempt per SF2435?
Car trouble, vehicle accident	Absent	No
Helping family (e.g., planting, harvest, working shift at family business)	Absent	No
College visit, not school directed/supervised	Absent	No
Arrived to school then skipped classes	Absent	No
Absent, no parent contact	Absent	No
Absent, parent cites "Family Reasons"	Absent	Local [2]
Absent, parent excused with reason given	Absent	Local [2]
Planned medical treatment	Absent	Local [2]
Medical appointment; Home ill	Absent	Local [2]
Parent or sibling medical emergency	Absent	Local [2]
Religious service or education	Absent	Yes
Court-directed activity, Jury Duty	Absent	Yes
IEP that restricts attendance	Absent	Yes
Section 504 plan that restricts attendance	Absent	Yes
Left country, prolonged absence, transfer process initiated	Exit student, see Appendix 4	

[1] Requires a Service Provider/Facility on enrollment record
[2] Schools will make decision, based on information available, if an absence is exempt per SF2435

These examples do not capture all attendance scenarios, yet provide robust examples of the decisions schools will make. Building teams will be knowledgeable of the definition and able to objectively apply (1) The definition for student absence, and (2) SF2435 exemptions, when applicable. The goal is to accurately determine the rate at which students are absent from school or expected school-directed activities. **Overuse or misuse of exemptions has the potential to misrepresent student attendance and miss those who should receive additional attention and support.** Decision-making can be summarized:
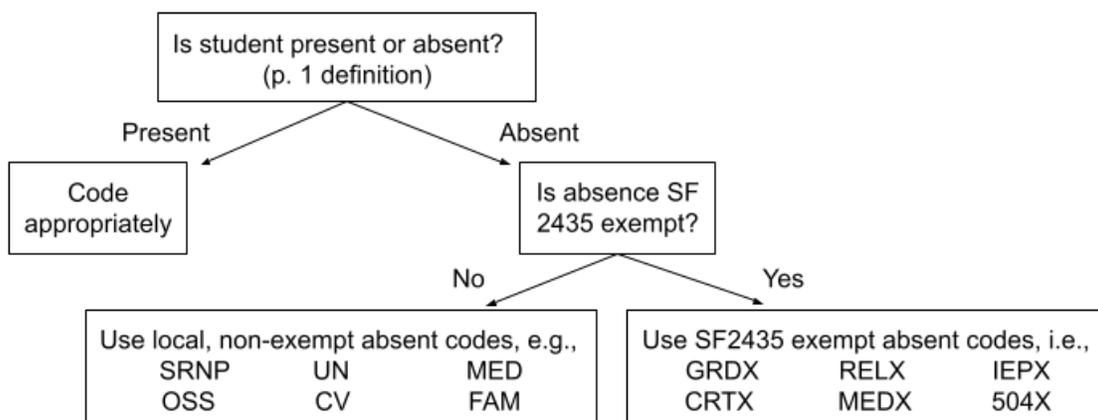
Additional Factors Affecting Attendance Data

Enrolling and Exiting

The accuracy of attendance data can be increased with timely and appropriate student enrollment and exit procedures. The scenarios and actions provided in Appendix 4: Enrolling and Exiting Students describe the common scenarios where schools accumulate absences unnecessarily due to not properly or promptly exiting students who are no longer attending. Timely enrollment and exiting decisions will increase attendance data accuracy.

Period, Partial and Whole Day Attendance

Each student information system uses settings to define how individual student period attendance is combined to create a daily absence value that also feeds into the student attendance summary used to calculate chronic absenteeism reporting. Refer to the appropriate SIS appendix for setup:

- Appendix 1: Infinite Campus

- Appendix 2: PowerSchool

- Appendix 3: JMC

Attendance coding and reporting continues to be required for the three following educational placements:

- Statewide Voluntary Preschool Programs (SWVPP)
- 4+ Programs
- Online and Virtual School Attendance

Attendance codes are not expected for students enrolled in youth shelters or detention centers as these facilities do not report to SRI. Districts with students enrolled in these facilities are designated with appropriate service facility types.

Appendix 1: Infinite Campus

SRP, ISS, SOV

The directions below (SRP, ISS, SOV, etc.) assume that the district is adopting the recommended attendance codes listed in Table 1.

Attendance Office > Attendance Code Setup

AttendanceExcuse Detail

*Code

SRP

*Description

School Related

Status	Excuse
Present ▼	Exempt ▼

☐ Display code in behavior resolution

☐ Use code in virtual attendance posting

AttendanceExcuse Detail

*Code

SOV

*Description

School Office Visit (nurse, counselor, principal)

Status	Excuse
Present ▼	Exempt ▼

☐ Display code in behavior resolution

☐ Use code in virtual attendance posting

AttendanceExcuse Detail

*Code

ISS

*Description

In School Suspension

Status	Excuse
Present ▼	Exempt ▼

☐ Display code in behavior resolution

☐ Use code in virtual attendance posting

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SF 2435 Codes

AttendanceExcuse Detail

*Code
GRDX

*Description
Met Grad Requirement exempt

Status: Absent
Excuse: Excused

☐ Display code in behavior resolution
☐ Use code in virtual attendance posting

AttendanceExcuse Detail

*Code
CRTX

*Description
Court exempt

Status: Absent
Excuse: Excused

☐ Display code in behavior resolution
☐ Use code in virtual attendance posting

AttendanceExcuse Detail

*Code
RELX

*Description
Religious exempt

Status: Absent
Excuse: Excused

☐ Display code in behavior resolution
☐ Use code in virtual attendance posting

AttendanceExcuse Detail

*Code
MEDX

*Description
Medical exempt

Status: Absent
Excuse: Excused

☐ Display code in behavior resolution
☐ Use code in virtual attendance posting

AttendanceExcuse Detail

*Code
IEPX

*Description
IEP exempt

Status: Absent
Excuse: Excused

☐ Display code in behavior resolution
☐ Use code in virtual attendance posting

AttendanceExcuse Detail

*Code
504X

*Description
504 exempt

Status: Absent
Excuse: Excused

☐ Display code in behavior resolution
☐ Use code in virtual attendance posting

All other attendance codes from Table 1 or district defined:

AttendanceExcuse Detail

*Code
Abs

*Description
Absent

Status: Absent
Excuse: Excused

☐ Display code in behavior resolution
☐ Use code in virtual attendance posting

*Code and Description will vary by attendance code, but Status will be Absent and Excuse will be Excused.

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Period, Partial and Whole Day

If Whole Day Absence is left blank, Infinite Campus calculates using 240 minutes.

If Half day Absence is left blank, Infinite Campus calculates using 120 minutes.

Appendix 2: PowerSchool

SRP, ISS, SOV

The directions below (SRP, ISS, SOV, etc.) assume that the district is adopting the recommended attendance codes listed in Table 1.

School Management > Attendance > Attendance Codes

Label	Value
Code	SRP
Description	School Related Participant
Presence Status	● Present ○ Absent
Code Categories	☑ Excused ☐ Tardy ☐ Unexcused
Points	
Teacher Can Assign	No ▾
Lock Attendance Record when Administrator Entered	☐
Considered in ADA Calculations	☑
Counts Towards Membership	☑
Sort Order for Display	1 ▾

Label	Value
Code	ISS
Description	In School Suspension
Presence Status	● Present ○ Absent
Code Categories	☑ Excused ☐ Tardy ☐ Unexcused
Points	
Teacher Can Assign	No ▾
Lock Attendance Record when Administrator Entered	☐
Considered in ADA Calculations	☑
Counts Towards Membership	☑
Sort Order for Display	1 ▾

Label	Value
Code	SOV
Description	School Office Visit (Nurse, C
Presence Status	● Present ○ Absent
Code Categories	☑ Excused ☐ Tardy ☐ Unexcused
Points	
Teacher Can Assign	No ▾
Lock Attendance Record when Administrator Entered	☐
Considered in ADA Calculations	☑
Counts Towards Membership	☑
Sort Order for Display	1 ▾

SF 2435 Codes

Label	Value
Code	GRDX
Description	Graduation Requirement Ex
Presence Status	○ Present ◉ Absent
Code Categories	☑ Excused ☐ Tardy ☐ Unexcused
Points	
Teacher Can Assign	No ∨
Lock Attendance Record when Administrator Entered	☐
Considered in ADA Calculations	☑
Counts Towards Membership	☑
Sort Order for Display	1 ∨

Label	Value
Code	CRTX
Description	Court Exempt
Presence Status	○ Present ◉ Absent
Code Categories	☑ Excused ☐ Tardy ☐ Unexcused
Points	
Teacher Can Assign	No ∨
Lock Attendance Record when Administrator Entered	☐
Considered in ADA Calculations	☑
Counts Towards Membership	☑
Sort Order for Display	1 ∨

Label	Value
Code	RELX
Description	Religious Exempt
Presence Status	○ Present ◉ Absent
Code Categories	☑ Excused ☐ Tardy ☐ Unexcused
Points	
Teacher Can Assign	No ∨
Lock Attendance Record when Administrator Entered	☐
Considered in ADA Calculations	☑
Counts Towards Membership	☑
Sort Order for Display	1 ∨

Label	Value
Code	MEDX
Description	Medical Exempt
Presence Status	○ Present ◉ Absent
Code Categories	☑ Excused ☐ Tardy ☐ Unexcused
Points	
Teacher Can Assign	No ∨
Lock Attendance Record when Administrator Entered	☐
Considered in ADA Calculations	☑
Counts Towards Membership	☑
Sort Order for Display	1 ∨

Label	Value
Code	IEPX
Description	IEP Exempt
Presence Status	○ Present ● Absent
Code Categories	☑ Excused ☐ Tardy ☐ Unexcused
Points	
Teacher Can Assign	No ∨
Lock Attendance Record when Administrator Entered	☐
Considered in ADA Calculations	☑
Counts Towards Membership	☑

Label	Value
Code	504X
Description	504 Exempt
Presence Status	○ Present ● Absent
Code Categories	☑ Excused ☐ Tardy ☐ Unexcused
Points	
Teacher Can Assign	No ∨
Lock Attendance Record when Administrator Entered	☐
Considered in ADA Calculations	☑
Counts Towards Membership	☑
Sort Order for Display	1 ∨

All other attendance codes from [Table 1](#) or district defined:

Label	Value
Code	A
Description	Absent
Presence Status	○ Present ● Absent
Code Categories	☑ Excused ☐ Tardy ☐ Unexcused
Points	1
Teacher Can Assign	Yes ∨
Lock Attendance Record when Administrator Entered	☐
Considered in ADA Calculations	☑
Counts Towards Membership	☑
Sort Order for Display	2 ∨

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Period, Partial and Whole Day

In PowerSchool, the School Management > Attendance > Attendance Conversions determine the thresholds for half-day or whole-day absences. Consult with PowerSchool tech support for appropriate conversion setup.

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Appendix 3: JMC

Period Attendance > Data > Edit Reasons and Cutoffs

The following shows the setup for codes listed in Table 1.

	Include in Conversion	Number	Reason
Edit	☐	0	SRP
Edit	☑	1	SRNP
Edit	☑	2	MED
Edit	☐	3	ISS
Edit	☑	4	OSS
Edit	☑	5	CV
Edit	☑	6	UN
Edit	☑	7	FAM
Edit	☐	8	SOV
Edit	☑	9	GRDX
Edit	☑	10	CRTX
Edit	☑	11	RELX
Edit	☑	12	MEDX
Edit	☑	13	IEPX
Edit	☑	14	504X

SRP, ISS, and SOV should not be checked for 'Include in Conversion'. This will allow a student to be counted absent for a specific class period but that absence will not be included in the daily attendance or attendance summary total.

All other absence codes must be checked 'Include in Conversion'. The absence will count but the school will be able to view the reason to know whether or not to include the absence in the tracking for Truancy.

Half day and full day attendance is set using the number of periods.

Number of Periods to be considered absent for half or full day:

	Grade	Half Day	Full Day
Edit	0	4	9
Edit	1	4	9
Edit	2	4	9
Edit	3	4	9
Edit	4	4	9
Edit	5	1	2

Appendix 4: Enrolling and Exiting Students

The accuracy of building attendance data can be increased with timely and appropriate student enrollment and exit procedures. One set of practices that can significantly affect chronic absenteeism data is how and when schools handle exiting students who are no longer attending the school. The following scenarios and actions cover some of the more common situations where schools often accumulate absences unnecessarily due to not properly or promptly exiting students who are no longer attending.

Scenario	Action
* Has not been in attendance for two weeks (or the threshold for the district's attendance policy) and the parent will not return phone calls.	Exit Code '32' after the last day of physical attendance. If the student needs to be "kept active" for reporting purposes, create a new enrollment with Entry Code '55' and mark the enrollment state-excluded.
* Going on a trip out of the country for several weeks.	Exit Code '1' and Destination Code '9' – Transfer out of country after the last day of physical attendance. If the student needs to be "kept active" for reporting purposes, create a new enrollment with Entry Code '55' and mark the enrollment state-excluded.
States they are transferring to another district but no record request has been received.	Exit Code '1' and Destination Code '13' – Transfer to unknown after the last day of physical attendance. Once the record request is received, update the exit information accordingly.
States they are moving out of state but no record request has been received.	Exit Code '1' and Destination Code '13' – Transfer to unknown after the last day of physical attendance. Once the record request is received, update the exit information accordingly.
Completed the registration process, but decided to not attend at the district.	Exit Code '13' No Show on the same day as the Entry Date and clear any attendance. Mark the enrollment as State Exclude.
Moved over the summer, but a record request did not arrive until a few weeks after the start of the year.	Infinite Campus: Use Exit Date prior to the first day of school. PowerSchool: Use Exit Date as the first day of school. JMC: Use Exit Date as Day '0' Prior to School Year.
Was expelled.	Exit code '5' Expelled on the date the expulsion was issued. Infinite Campus: Exit date and removal date must be the same. PowerSchool: Exit date must be one day after the removal date. JMC: Exit date and removal date must be the same. If the expelled student must be "active" to access online coursework, create a new enrollment with Entry Code '55' and mark the enrollment state-excluded.
Has an IEP or 504 and the plan states the student attends less than a full day of school.	Make sure the FTE (percent enrolled) and schedule reflects the amount of time the student is being served by the district.

*The Iowa Department of Education encourages districts to expedite the re-enrollment process for these students if they return; the students should be re-enrolled immediately upon return with no delay to prevent additional days missed.

Appendix 5: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. **When does SF2435 and the new ESSA accountability index go into effect?**
   SF 2435 is effective July 1, 2024.
   Pending final approval from the U.S. Department of Education, the updated ESSA accountability index (ISPP) will be implemented in Fall of 2024.

2. **What is the difference between Average Daily Attendance (ADA) and Chronic Absenteeism (CA)?**
   Average Daily Attendance (ADA) is the percentage of all students' attendance on a given day aggregated for the year. Chronic Absenteeism is the percent of students missing ≥10% of scheduled school days, regardless of the reason for the absence. For example,

	School A	School B
500 Students	100 attend 97% 100 attend 94% 100 attend 93% 100 attend 92% 100 attend 82%	100 attend 98% 100 attend 97% 100 attend 94% 100 attend 86% 100 attend 83%
Average Daily Attendance	91.6%	91.6%
Chronic Absenteeism	20%	40%

3. **How are school's local criteria for "Excused," "Unexcused" or similar related to the six SF2435 exemptions?**
   There are two attendance decisions that must be made, 1) Was the student present or absent? If the student was absent, 2) was the absence exempt per the six SF 2435 exemptions? The first decision factors into overall chronic absenteeism data according to the ESSA accountability requirements and the second determines if a school implements corrective measures under SF 2435. Additional local coding practices are permissible but do not circumvent the required decision-making. To meet the requirements of SF2435, schools are encouraged to incorporate the bolded codes in Table 1 into attendance and absence coding.

4. **What are the school's responsibilities per SF2435 in terms of calls, letters home, holding School Engagement Meetings, and working with the County Attorney?**
   See Senate File 2435, pp. 22-27.

5. **How do schools make a decision if a parent's report is sufficient for an SF2435 exemption?**
   Local school teams will use the available information to make the best, informed decision if a SF2435 exemption applies to a student's absence. Teams should accurately and objectively determine the rate at which students are absent and additional attendance-related interventions are warranted to ensure students receive the supports they need. Local school teams are encouraged to work on early warning data to provide intervention and supports to prevent chronic absences and truancy.

6. **What year's chronic absenteeism data will be used for the Iowa School Performance Profiles?**
   The most recently finalized Chronic Absenteeism data will be used for inclusion in the ISPP. The ESSA designations made in the fall must use the previous year's chronic absenteeism data.

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