



Strive HI Chronic Absenteeism Exemptions Due to COVID or other Medical or Psychiatric Reasons

Are COVID quarantined students eligible for exemption from Chronic Absenteeism?

Only if the student meets the existing medical exemption criteria for Chronic Absenteeism.

What are the criteria for a medical exemption?

A student may be exempted from the Chronic Absenteeism measure if a healthcare provider* note is provided that documents the student was absent from school for 11 or more consecutive instructional days due to a medical or psychiatric illness. Medical exemptions can be filed annually via the Strive HI appeals process. For reference, see the 2020-21 appeals memo "[2020-21 Strive HI Performance System Appeals July 2, 2021 – July 21, 2021.](#)"

**A Department of Health order to quarantine is considered documentation by a healthcare provider, and the documentation must explicitly state the duration of quarantine and must meet the 11 or more consecutive instructional days criterion.*

Why are excused absences counted against a school?

The purpose of the Chronic Absenteeism measure is to identify students not attending a significant amount of classes (15 or more instructional days) and thus not receiving instruction. It is not intended to attribute absences to the fault of the school, but rather, to identify the extent a school's students are missing instruction.

As a school, I don't have any control over COVID cases and potential outbreaks. How can I be held accountable?

Results for Chronic Absenteeism, like other measures used to identify schools, are publicly reported as required by the U.S. Department of Education. Chronic Absenteeism, as mentioned earlier, is a measure that identifies the number of students who may need additional academic support to "catch up" on missed learning due to their absences. Such reporting is not intended to blame schools, but rather it is to meet federal requirements for transparency, and most importantly, to provide supports and resources to the lowest performing schools and subgroups.

My school community doesn't necessarily understand the purpose of the accountability system and just sees any negative result as the school's fault.

In this time of COVID, it is more important than ever to provide context to Strive HI results. Schools should consider the following options which are part and parcel of their Fall 2022 Strive HI reports:

- The "Our Story" section of the Strive HI report allows schools to share their vision, unique experiences, initiatives, success/challenges, and anything deemed important for readers to understand about their school.
- The "Local Measures" is similar to the Our Story section of the report but focuses on measures and data important to a school but not reported under Strive HI. It is an opportunity to share data that a school would want the reader to be aware of beyond that which is reported for Strive HI.
- Beginning with Fall 2021 reporting, contextual information/data related to the impact of COVID, will be included with Strive HI reports. This information will include participation rates, students' learning modalities, and access/connectivity information to provide context given the pandemic along with the common and unique challenges schools have had to face. With respect to Chronic Absenteeism, data showing the number of students impacted by COVID quarantining or other COVID related absences may be reported for the 2021-22 school year (Fall 2022 report) to the extent such data are collected.

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