

## When students are unable to attend school for 10 days or more: Information for Families

We understand that life circumstances—such as travel, illness, or family emergencies—can sometimes make it difficult for students to attend school for extended periods of time. To help navigate these situations, ODE offers this resource to provide clarity on Oregon’s **10-day drop policy**. This resource can help families navigate these situations and explain Oregon’s 10-day drop policy and how extended absences affect school enrollment.

In this resource, you will find information to help you:

1. Understand the 10-day drop policy.
2. Communicate with the school.
3. Explore learning options while your student is away from school

### What is the 10-Day Drop Policy?

In Oregon, if a student is absent for **10 consecutive school days** without any academic engagement (whether in-person or virtual), schools are required by state law to **unenroll** the student from active enrollment. For an extended, pre-planned, or known absence, unenrollment will occur when the school is notified of the absence (e.g., the family will be out of country for 3 weeks). This ensures that schools report enrollment accurately, as it directly affects how schools receive state funding.

It is important to note that this policy is *not* intended to be punitive. It is simply a requirement for schools to comply with state funding guidelines. The policy is **not** a reflection on the student’s commitment to learning or the family’s circumstances.

### How Does the Policy Work?

- **Unenrollment:** After 10 consecutive days of absence without academic engagement, schools must remove the student from active enrollment.
- **Re-enrollment:** Once the student is ready to return to school, re-enrollment is often a quick and straightforward process. Reach out to the school to facilitate your student’s return to their school routine.

### What are Options When There is an Extended Absences?

If your student will be away for an extended period, but you have access to the Internet or other communication tools, it may be possible to keep students academically engaged during their absence. Some districts provide **virtual/distance learning** options, allowing students to continue participating in their education remotely. This can help your scholar remain enrolled and engaged in learning daily, even while not physically present in the classroom.

Each school district handles these situations differently, so we encourage you to contact your school as soon as possible to discuss the options available. Your school may offer:

- **Online assignments or virtual participation** through various education platforms.
- **School work/projects** that can be completed independently, while also maintaining substantive interactions with your student's teacher each day. Substantive interactions are *ways to show that a student is actively involved in learning*, even if they're not in the classroom. Here are some examples, and there may be other similar ways to show how students are meaningfully engaging with schoolwork:
  - **Participating in a video class:** Actively joining and taking part in an online class or video lesson.
  - **Two-way communication with a teacher:** Having a meaningful back-and-forth conversation with a teacher through chat, text message, a communication app, or email.
  - **Phone calls:** Having a longer phone call with the teacher or educational staff. For younger students, this can include phone calls between the teacher and the parent or guardian.

By staying academically engaged through these methods, your student can continue their learning and could remain enrolled in their school during an extended absence. However, if engagement is not possible, the school must follow the state's 10-day drop policy, and your student will need to be re-enrolled upon their return.

### What are ways to support your student during absences?

1. **Communicate with your school:** If you know your student will be absent for an extended period, reach out to your school immediately. The school can work with you to determine the best plan for keeping your student engaged in their education.
2. **Explore available options:** Ask your school about **virtual learning** or **other applied learning projects** to ensure your student can stay on track during their absence.
3. **Plan for re-enrollment:** If your student must be unenrolled due to the 10-day drop policy, re-enrolling when they return is typically a simple process. The school will help guide you through these steps.

We understand that absences, whether planned or unexpected, can pose challenges for families. Our priority is to ensure that every student has the opportunity to continue their education, even when they cannot be physically present at school. The **10-day drop policy** is a state requirement, and we are committed to working with you to find solutions that support your student's learning.

Please don't hesitate to contact your local school or district office with any questions or concerns regarding your student's attendance or the 10-day drop policy. We are here to assist you in any way we can.