



SCHOOL FUNDING AND FINANCE

The math

**ADA = SUM OF
ATTENDANCE COUNTS ÷
DAYS OF INSTRUCTION.**

So, if a student misses nine days during the 180-day school year, the district loses 5 percent of the funding a student with perfect attendance would generate.

ADA is not the same as enrollment. Enrollment is the total number of students signed up to attend the school. ADA reflects how often those enrolled students actually go to school.

School finance is something that affects us every day, but its complexity can baffle even the most determined among us. To fully understand how school finance works, you'd have to study concepts like revenue targets, Tier I entitlements, guaranteed yields, and recapture. Like the U.S. Tax Code, it has many rules and exceptions.

Attendance is linked to funding

Complex funding calculations aside, there is one simple thing that parents of schoolchildren can agree on: We want our child's school to get as much money as it needs to give students a great education. You may feel that school finance is beyond your control when the Legislature is deciding how much aid to give public schools. However, there are two significant pieces of the school finance puzzle that you can contribute. The first is: Make sure to vote in school bond and tax ratification elections. When these elections are held, the schools need voter approval to raise money for construction projects, major repairs, technology upgrades, and many other things a school needs. The second is:

Make sure your child attends school.

Here's how attendance and funding are related: School districts in Texas receive state funding based in part on Average Daily Attendance (ADA) numbers. ADA is a figure that indicates the average number of students who attend a particular school district in a school year. ADA is a key number in a formula that ultimately determines how much money your school gets from the state.

The bottom line

Your school loses money when your child is absent. At the same time, the school must still pay for teacher and staff salaries, operations, building maintenance, electricity, and all the other expenses involved with running the school.

So there are two good reasons—educational and financial—to aim for a great attendance record.