

# SPARK!

*Igniting digital learning through shared experience*

Leader Edition

## HOW CAN SCHOOL LEADERS EFFECTIVELY MANAGE ATTENDANCE IN A HYBRID LEARNING ENVIRONMENT?

● Natascha Brooks Genova, Assistant Principal of Instruction at Crossroads FLEX High School

Hybrid learning has revolutionized the way students engage with their studies. Blending traditional classroom experiences with virtual learning opportunities has opened doors to flexibility and enriched educational experiences. However, this model poses unique challenges when it comes to tracking and ensuring consistent student attendance. Tracking attendance is more than a mere headcount; it influences student performance assessment and connection to the school community.

One solution is to implement a weekly seat-time requirement for each grade level. Freshmen, who need the most support adapting to high school and a hybrid learning environment have 10 required seat-time hours each week, while seniors, who have developed the self-motivation and responsibility required by our school model, have 6 hours of required seat time each week. Seat time hours consist of actual time in synchronous class periods plus any additional time on campus devoted to completing schoolwork, engaging in extracurriculars, or meeting with school staff. Students “clock-in” when they arrive on campus, and “clock-out” when they leave. As an example, we use [Alltimely](#), our online attendance management system.

Conversely, student’s online hours are not tracked; rather, their engagement in online discussion boards, assignment submissions, and their preparedness for in-person class lessons become their own natural attendance markers online.

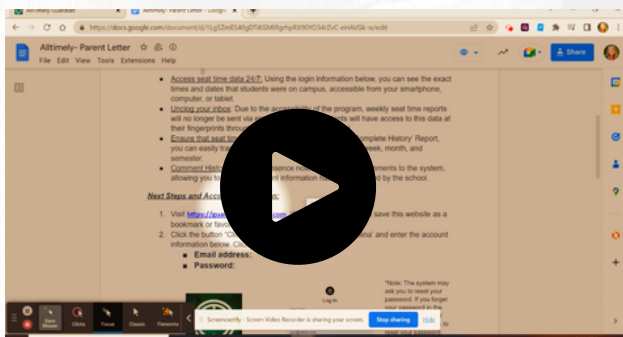
## RESOURCES

[Crossroads FLEX Seat Time Commitment Form](#)

[Planning Interventions for Students with Attendance Issues](#)

[Guide to Attendance, Participation, and Engagement Data in Virtual and Hybrid Learning Models](#)

## TUTORIAL VIDEO ON ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



## TRADE SECRETS

- **Engagement Initiatives:** Implementing interactive and engaging teaching methods keeps students motivated and invested in attending in-person classroom activities. Extracurricular activities have also boosted student’s connection to the school community and increased attendance efforts.
- **Establishing Clear Policies:** Instituting clear attendance policies and expectations fosters accountability. In addition to expectations in our school handbook and student/parent orientation, reminders regarding attendance are included in our weekly message and daily announcements.
- **Communication and Support:** Regular communication with students and families has been crucial to our attendance success. Weekly seat-time reports are sent to students and parents emails, and an online portal allows 24/7 access to seat-time data for parents. An attendance team meets biweekly to review processes and initiate support when students are struggling to meet attendance expectations.
- **Leveraging Technology:** Creating a robust attendance-tracking tool was a challenge, and we have had many iterations of Excel spreadsheets and mail merge documents through the years. Ultimately, we found a creative way to use [Alltimely](#), a system traditionally used to track student tardies or attendance in school events. The ability to have a reliable system to track attendance has been a game changer for our school.

## NATASCHA BROOKS GENOVA



Natascha Brooks Genova is the Assistant Principal of Instruction at Crossroads FLEX High School in Cary, NC. She is passionate about blended learning and has presented on this topic at the NCTE National Convention. Mrs. Genova is a co-author of the book *Applying the Flipped Classroom Model to English Language Arts Education* and her research has been included in multiple publications. She holds a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree from the University of Virginia and K-12 Principal Licensure from Gardner-Webb University. She is a National Board Certified Teacher.