Attendance Automated Launch Facilitator (ALF) Data File Specification.

A file to be used with the Attendance ALF…

MUST be a comma-delimited ASCII text file.

SHOULD have a ".csv" extension, but MAY have any extension, such as .txt or .rpt, so long as the data contained remains comma-delimited ASCII text.

MUST NOT be open in another application while the ALF is running.

MUST contain one record per phone-number, though a person with multiple phone-numbers MAY have multiple records (one for each person/number combination).

MAY contain a header row.

MUST be stored in a directory to which the user who runs the ALF has read access on a currently mounted volume.

MUST NOT contain more than 15,000 records, not including a header row if one is present.

Records within the file…

MUST contain four fields in the following order:

  PHONE NUMBER ,EXTENSION,ABSENCE DATA,STUDENT NAME

The PHONE NUMBER field (1) …

MUST contain a single phone number of exactly ten digits (both the three-digit area-code and phone number).

MUST NOT contain leading ones, zeros, country codes, or other prefix.

MUST NOT contain extensions, though extensions MAY be dialed if placed in their own field.

MAY contain spaces, dashes, parenthesis, the letter "x", or slashes.

MUST NOT contain other characters or symbols.

The EXTENSION field (2) …

MUST be present, even if empty, if any later fields within the record contain data.

MUST contain only numerals, *, or #. (i.e. they keys on the telephone).

MUST be 16 characters or less in length.

The ABSENCE DATA field (3)…

MUST be 64 characters or less in length.
MUST be present, even if empty, if any later fields within the record contain data.
MAY contain any alpha-numeric character.
MUST have value surrounded by double quotes if there are any commas within the text.
MUST contain information about the student's absence to be spoken by the text-to-speech engine in the dynamically generated portion of each call, such as one or more of the following: day of the week, date, number of periods, specific periods missed, and so on.
MAY include MAY be populated (by some other program) with a generic term, such as "today" or "two or more periods" if more specific attendance data is not available.
NOTE: dates in the format of 10/23/08, 10/23/2008, "Oct. 23, 2008", "Monday, Oct. 23rd" and similar have been tested and verified for proper interpretation and pronunciation by the text-to-speech engine. Other date formats MAY be used at your discretion, but SHOULD be tested for pronunciation prior to use.

The NAME field (4)…

MUST be 64 characters or less in length.
MAY contain any alpha-numeric character.
MUST have value surrounded by double quotes if there are any commas within the text.
SHOULD contain the student's name to be spoken by the text-to-speech engine in the dynamically generated portion of each call.
MAY include both first and last name, subject to the rules above.