Bringing Attendance Home

KEEP YOUR CHILD ON TRACK IN MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

Showing up for school has a huge impact on a student's academic success starting in kindergarten and continuing through high school. Even as children grow older and more independent, families play a key role in making sure they get to school safely every day.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Students should miss no more than 9 days of school each year to stay engaged, successful and on track to graduation.
- Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with schoolwork, dealing with a bully or facing some other potentially serious difficulty.
- By sixth grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that a student may drop out of high school.
- By ninth grade, regular and high attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than eighth-grade test scores.
- Missing 10 percent, or about 18 days, of the school year can drastically affect a student's academic success.
- Students can be chronically absent even if they only miss a day or two every few weeks.
- Attendance is an important life skill that will help your child graduate from college and keep a job.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Make school attendance a priority

- Talk about the importance of showing up to school every day; make that the expectation.
- Help your child maintain daily routines, such as finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep.
- Try not to schedule dental and medical appointments during the school day.
- Don't let your child stay home unless truly sick. Complaints of headaches or stomachaches may be signs of anxiety.

Help your teen stay engaged

- Find out if your child feels engaged in class and feels safe from bullies and other threats. Make sure he is not missing class because of behavioral issues and school discipline policies. If any of these are problems, work with your school.
- Stay on top of academic progress and seek help from teachers or tutors if necessary. Make sure teachers know how to contact you.
- Stay on top of your child's social contacts. Peer pressure can lead to skipping school, while students without many friends can feel isolated.
- Encourage meaningful afterschool activities, including sports and clubs.

Communicate with the school

- Know the school's attendance policy, including incentives and penalties.
- Talk to teachers if you notice sudden changes in behavior. These could be tied to something going on at school.
- Check on your child's attendance to be sure absences are not piling up.
- Ask for help from school officials, afterschool programs, other parents or community agencies if you're having trouble getting your child to school.

For more on school readiness, visit attendanceworks.org and sde.ok.gov/attendance-families

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