

# STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

## PRINCIPALS

- Cultivate a schoolwide culture of attendance by 1) starting outreach before the school year begins, 2) using existing activities to communicate the importance of regular attendance, 3) promoting attendance incentives, 4) creating an attendance awareness campaign.
- Use chronic absence data to determine need for additional supports. A strong attendance data system includes qualitative and quantitative data, data disaggregation of groups of students, identifying individuals who are missing 10% of their enrolled days and goal-setting.
- Develop staff capacity to adopt effective attendance practices by identifying an attendance team that creates an action plan, creates a tiered system of supports, participates in professional development and engages in community partnerships.
- Advocate for resources and policies to improve attendance by advocating and sharing best practices across schools and collaborating with district leadership and school board leaders on leveraging resources.
- Promote a strong, positive culture of family engagement and support by creating strong, regular communications with parents and multiple opportunities for family engagement activities to create a positive, welcoming culture.

## TEACHERS

- Create a nurturing, engaging classroom that will encourage children to come to school. Work with colleagues to develop and implement a school-wide system of incentives and reward for good attendance.
- Reach out to frequently absent students to find out in a supportive manner why they are missing school and what would help them attend more regularly.
- Show students and families that you care when they miss school. When students are regularly absent from school, express concern and care for their absence.
- Work with parents to stress the importance of education and to learn about any barriers to good attendance.
- Encourage families to partner with other school staff – such as social workers, counselors or nurses – as well as community agencies to get needed supports to help children and families solve a significant barrier to getting to school.

## OTHER SCHOOL STAFF

- **OFFICE STAFF:** Ensure accurate attendance reports are available and create a culture of attendance by interacting in a positive manner with students and their families.
- **ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL:** Work with staff to promote and organize a more comprehensive approach to improving attendance that begins with prevention and only resorts to the courts as a last resort.
- **COUNSELOR:** Work with students and families with a prior or emerging pattern of chronic absence to unpack barriers to attendance and develop plans for overcoming them.
- **NURSE:** Assess if a student is well enough to attend class or stay home due to illness. Help manage chronic health issues such as asthma. Provide access to services and encourage families to avoid missing school for medical appointments.
- **FRYSC:** Identify barriers to attendance faced by students and families. Help support access to a wide variety of family supports including food, clothing, transportation and medical care.

- Adapted from [Attendance Works](#)



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