

Talking Points for Use with Families: Why Every Day Matters

Helping families understand why attendance matters is an important part of improving attendance. Refer to these talking points to have productive conversations about a child's attendance. Keep all attendance discussions helpful, constructive and focused on finding solutions.

Good attendance is a habit that will help your children do well in school.

- Children can suffer academically if they miss 10% of the school year. (That's 14 days for districts on a four-day schedule and 18 days for districts on a five-day schedule.) That can happen before you know it—even by missing just one day every two weeks.
- It doesn't matter if these absences are excused or unexcused. They all represent lost time in the classroom and a lost opportunity to learn.
- Preschool is a great time to start building a habit of good attendance. In fact, studies show that poor attendance in preschool can predict absenteeism in later grades.
- Attendance matters as much in kindergarten as later years. Studies show many children who miss too many days in kindergarten and first grade can struggle academically in later years. They often have trouble mastering reading by the end of third grade.
- By middle and high school, chronic absence is a strong warning sign that without support, a student is at risk of dropping out.
- Too many absent students can affect the whole classroom, slowing down instruction.