

# **IDEAS FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS TO INCREASE STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

## **MAKE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE A HIGH PRIORITY IN YOUR HOME:**

1. Discuss the importance of going to school every day with your children.
2. Get your child to school on time. Arrange for transportation or child care as needed.
3. Develop a daily schedule and stick to it. Encourage and help your child prepare for school each evening. Packing backpacks, preparing lunch and selecting clothes the night before can reduce morning stress.
4. Don't plan family vacations and non-emergency doctor and dentist appointments for times when your child should be in school.

## **MAINTAIN GOOD COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL:**

1. Make sure your child's school has your most up-to-date contact information. Schools will call when your child has missed a day of school and it is important that you are able to receive that call, and get the information. Try not to set up a situation where there is a temptation for your child to erase a message from your answering machine/voicemail. If you keep a cell phone with you during the day, be sure the school has that number as your primary emergency number.
2. Monitor your child's daily attendance.
3. Meet your child's teacher on a regular basis.
4. Sign and return all contracts and letters from the school in a timely manner.
5. Attend parent/teacher/student conferences as needed.

## **UNDERSTAND AND FOLLOW ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND LAWS:**

1. Schools expect 100% attendance from all students.
2. Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that their students attend school every single day.
3. Students are deemed truant following three unexcused absences and /or tardy for more than any 30-minute period during the school day.
4. Work with school personnel to remedy any attendance problems. Attend truancy hearings when no other remediation has worked.

## **PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE EDUCATION OF YOUR CHILD:**

1. Know what is going on in your child's life at school and elsewhere. Ask them about school each day.
2. Alert school personnel if you become aware of problems in the school or problems that are otherwise out of your immediate control.
3. Communicate often with your child's teachers.
4. Demonstrate the value of education by volunteering at school.

### **Tips that may also increase attendance:**

- If you sense there is a problem, call your child's teacher and the school before the problem becomes overwhelming.
- **Be calm** – when communicating with your child, be responsive but not over-reactive. Keep his/her self-esteem in mind and think about what you want your actions and words to accomplish. *Remember, it is how you say what you say, as well as what you say*, that has an impact with both your child and the school.
- **Be a team member** – work with the school. Hear the concerns and reflect on them.
- **Be a coach** – help your child work through the problem. Avoid telling him/her what to do, but assist in helping him/her choose the best plan. Involve your child in every step of the problem-solving process. This is how she will come to accept responsibility for it. Provide the structure and guidelines necessary for making constructive choices.
- **Be an assistant** – plan with your child the actions that will overcome the problem. Keep in mind that you want to treat the cause, not the symptoms. Include your child's school in the plan.
- **Be a leader** – set the example by actively demonstrating the importance of showing up to school every day, prepared and ready to learn.
- **Be a cheerleader** – celebrate small gains. Notice when he/she has made an effort to improve independently. Encouragement and recognition for specific goals are more powerful than general praise.

## KEEPING KIDS IN SCHOOL (KKIS)

### **Business Partnership Program**

Truancy is a major issue facing communities across the country. For this reason, \_\_\_\_\_ School and the City of \_\_\_\_\_ have created the Keeping Kids in School campaign. The KKIS Task Force developed a community strategy to improve regular school attendance. By becoming a business partner, your company endorses the importance of regular school attendance.

#### **How Can Businesses and Employees Benefit?**

- Good school attendance promotes academic success that leads to a qualified and competent work force.
- Education improves the quality of life for members of the community.

#### **What Can Businesses Do to Help?**

- Promote the importance of regular school attendance by disseminating information to employees and customers.
- Partner with a school to provide mentors for students with attendance problems and/or offer incentives and awards to recognize student and faculty efforts to improve attendance.
- Provide financial assistance for promotional efforts to educate students and parents on the importance of regular school attendance.
- Cooperate in efforts to identify students who may be truant by reporting students who are in businesses during school hours.
- Utilize school attendance as a measure for assessing reliability of students hired for summer and part-time employment opportunities.
- Establish working hours for student employees that do not interfere with school attendance and academic performance.
- Provide recognition for student employees and/or children of employees for good or improved school attendance.
- Display the Keeping Kids in School emblem in your business to show your support.



## Everyone who's anybody will be there....Encouraging School Attendance

- Our school regularly assesses attendance and ways to improve it.
- Our school effectively communicates the importance of attendance in a culturally sensitive way.
- Our school reaches out to families when children miss extended periods or are frequently absent in order to identify and address barriers to school attendance.
- Our school effectively engages parents in their children's education.
- Our school provides a safe place to learn.
- Our staff makes an effort to get to know students and their families.
- Our school has a high rate of staff turnover.
- Our school experiences a high absenteeism rate for teachers.
- Our school provides adequate materials in order for the student to learn.
- Our school provides support and assistance to families in developing routines that promote consistent school attendance.
- The school works with the community to provide resources (food, clothing, social supports) to ensure children attend school.
- Workshops are provided to families which deal with understanding policies/procedures, managing illness, and communication which can impact attendance.
- Our families feel welcome in our school.
- Our school respects and works effectively with the different compositions of family structure (divorced, incarcerated, grandparents, gay/lesbian, single parent, etc.)
- Our school/district provides high quality preschool programs.
- Our school has systems in place to support positive transitions into elementary, middle, and high school.
- Our school has an "attendance team" and/or designated staff to meet challenges.
- Our school makes home visits after 5 days of consecutive absences.
- Our school celebrates perfect attendance.