

Increase Attendance

by Strengthening Family-School Partnerships

Research indicates that schools with strong family-school engagement practices are better poised to curb absenteeism. This research-based chart shows you how to elevate traditional attendance strategies and strengthen partnerships with your families.

Impactful strategies should include:

- ✓ **Actionable data** to help identify students with too many absences.
- ✓ **Positive engagement practices** with families and students.
- ✓ **Training for school staff and families** on creating a positive culture of attendance.

Traditional Attendance Strategies	Elevated Attendance Strategies
Focus on students physically missing a school day and aim to get students in the building.	Focus on students missing hours of instruction and aim to support increased student access to learning.
Inform families of student absences and tardies via daily or weekly automated robocalls.	Build rapport with families by contacting them via personalized, welcoming phone calls BEFORE chronic absenteeism arises and throughout the year.
Send attendance contracts and/or formal letters outlining legal obligations for students to attend school.	Schedule home visits or conferences with families to discuss challenges that affect attendance and determine individualized strategies to support student learning.
Post a "You are tardy/late" sign in front of the school after the bell rings.	Minimize intimidating language at the front door and focus on positive messaging, such as: "We're glad you're here! Please sign in at the front office to receive a tardy pass to class." Include a gentle reminder of the school's start time.
Share the attendance goals of the school in the school newsletter.	Share attendance goals along with current school attendance data and facts using multiple modes of communication (bulletin boards, social media, websites, etc.).
Implement an attendance initiative that is tied to incentives for students once the school year begins.	Implement ongoing attendance initiatives/campaigns before the school year begins to promote good attendance habits for students and families.
Celebrate perfect attendance with quarterly or semesterly attendance awards.	Host inclusive attendance ceremonies that recognize school-wide or grade-level improvement. Include families to celebrate their efforts and make them feel like an important part of your school's vision. Tie attendance to instruction and help internalize the value of everyone showing up to learn.
Give families an attendance report during parent-teacher conferences with a summary of the total number of days missed.	Discuss student attendance data and how it may impact academic performance during parent-teacher conferences.
Form an attendance team with school staff that designs one-way communication and initiates targeted attendance intervention.	Include families on the attendance team and empower them to co-design and lead attendance initiatives with other families.