



every day counts

ATTEND TODAY -
ACHIEVE TOMORROW!

Joining Forces to Improve Student Attendance: How Community Partners Can Help!

As members of the Oakland community, we all have an interest in seeing our young people succeed in school. Each of us benefits when children thrive, and every one of us wants to see each student in our city attend school every day, graduate from high school and go on to a successful college or work experience. Yet, too many of our students miss school too often and too many fail to graduate. Experience tells us that if our schools can work together with families as well as the community, we can make a difference in the lives of the children living here.

Whether you are sports coach, a local business owner, a librarian, a leader in the faith community or an outreach worker, you have a unique relationship with an opportunity to influence parents and students when it comes to going to school, every day and on time.

Please partner with us in sending the message—loud and clear—that every day counts. If students attend today, they will achieve tomorrow!

Here are some points that you can cover with parents of local students:

STUDENTS SUFFER SOCIALLY AND ACADEMICALLY WHEN THEY ARE ABSENT

- ✓ If students miss just 10% of the school year – even a few days every month—they will suffer academically and won't be able to keep up with their peers.
- ✓ Attendance matters as early as Kindergarten. Studies show that children who miss too many days in kindergarten and first grade are more likely to struggle academically in later years. Often, these students have trouble mastering reading by the end of third grade.
- ✓ When children come late to school on a regular basis, they often completely miss the morning lesson—which is often reading and/or math. Think about it—if a child comes 20 to 30 minutes late to school every day, he or she may never be present to learn how to read!
- ✓ When kids miss too much school, they are less likely to make friends, bond with their teachers or feel comfortable in a classroom setting.

STUDENTS THRIVE WHEN THEY ARE IN SCHOOL EVERY DAY!

- ✓ Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school--and themselves.
- ✓ Regular, on-time attendance is a good habit that is learned at a very early age, beginning in kindergarten or pre-school.
- ✓ Good attendance in the early years actually helps children succeed in high school, college and work.
- ✓ Students who are in school every day are less likely to become victims of crime, or to commit a crime themselves.





HOW YOU CAN HELP—MAKE IT YOUR BUSINESS!

We need your commitment, your voice and your partnership to make sure that the youngest citizens of our community are in school every day.

Whenever you find yourself in a position to speak with a parent about his or her child, touch on the topic of the importance of regular school attendance.

- ✓ Ask the parent how his/her children are doing in school. If you are told that a student is struggling, ask about attendance.
- ✓ You may be able to help a parent who is struggling to get his or her her child to school on time.
- ✓ Get to know the kids who live in your neighborhood, play in your local parks, come to your library. Get to know their parents or guardians and their siblings, too.
- ✓ Talk to the kids—ask them if they miss a lot of school. Try to find out why—are there issues with transportation, safety, bullying, academic struggles? Identify what would help motivate them (for example, connecting better with their teacher, participating in sports or attending an afterschool program) to go to school more.
- ✓ Think about creating incentives, prizes or awards for kids with good or improved attendance.

Ask yourself: can you assist to organize a walking school bus, help in creating a safe route to school, or mentor or tutor a student?

If you are interested in serving as a volunteer or mentor register with Be a Mentor at _____

If you would like to volunteer to work in an OUSD school contact:

Phone: (510) 273-1580
FAX: (510) 273-1581
E-mail: volunteers@ousd.k12.ca.us

