



Using Parent Meetings to Increase Attention to Attendance

Throughout the course of a school year, schools hold meetings with parents. Each meeting is an opportunity to increase awareness among parents of the importance of promoting excellent school attendance for the long-term academic success of their children and the steps that they can take on their own and in partnership with others to get their students to school every day.

Here are possible ideas to cover during meetings with parents. Consider this list. What makes sense for your school? What else would you want to cover? How might you use the attached attendance handout for parents?

- Share data on attendance and chronic absence for your school alerting them to areas of concern and goals for improvement.
- Educate parents about research demonstrating the negative impact of school absences on academic achievement and funding for your schools if school attendance is used to determine how education resources are allocated in your state. Consider using the handout provided with this unit.
- Orient parents to school policies and expectations for student attendance and on-time arrival. Help parents understand that school staff is monitoring attendance and staff will reach out to find out what is preventing a child from getting to school when children are frequently absent.
- Create opportunities for parents to share common barriers and effective strategies for getting their children to school. Consider asking parents who go the extra mile to get their children to school despite challenging conditions to share their stories. Use the 2nd page of the handout for this unit to stimulate discussion by asking parents to discuss their reactions to the ideas for what parents can do and offer their insights about what they would add.
- Encourage parents to meet other families living nearby so they can, as needed, help each other with transporting or walking children to school.
- Inform parents about how your school's attendance incentive program works; offer tips for how they can support it at home.
- Provide parents with information about local community organizations and resources that can offer valuable economic and social supports.